



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Green Bay**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

A Quarterly Newsletter

by and for Bereaved Parents

April/May/June 2023

**Our
Mission
Statement:**

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister, or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.



As I was struggling to think of a topic to write about for this issue of the newsletter, I went to TCF website and found this story from Darcie D Sims, "LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY"

Why does it hurt so much? Why is this grief so incapacitating? If only the hurt weren't so crushing." Sounds familiar? All of us have known hurts before, but none of our previous "ouchies" can compare with the hurt we feel. Nothing can touch the pain of burying a child.

Yet most of us have discovered that the sun still comes up. We still have to function. We did not die when our child did, even though we wished we could have, so...we are stuck with this pain, this grief and what do we do with it? Surely we can't live like THIS forever!

There are no magic formulas for surviving grief. There are a few recognized patterns for grief, but even those are only guidelines. What we do know is that the emptiness will never go away. It will become tolerable and livable...some day.

TIME...the longest word in our grief. We used to measure TIME by the steps of our child...the first word, first tooth, first date, first car...now we don't have that measure any more. All we have is TIME, and it only seems to make the hurt worse.

So what do we do? Give ourselves TIME...to hurt, to grieve, to cry. TIME to choke, to scream. TIME to be "crazy" and TIME to remember. Be nice to yourself! Don't measure your progress through grief against anyone else's. Be your own timekeeper.

Don't push. Eventually you will find the hours and days of grief have turned to minutes and then moments...but don't expect them to go away. We will always hurt. You don't get over grief...it only becomes tolerable and livable. Change your focus a bit. Instead of dwelling on how much you lost, try thinking of how much you had. Try letting good memories come over you as easily as the awful ones do. We didn't lose our child...HE [SHE] DIED. We don't lose the love that flowed between us...it still flows, but differently now.

Does it help to know that if we didn't love so very much, it would not hurt so badly? Grief is the price we pay for love. And as much as it hurts, I'm very glad I loved. Don't let death cast ugly shadows, but rather warm memories of the loving times you shared. Even though death comes, LOVE NEVER GOES AWAY!

In Peaceful Sadness, Melissa and Emily's Mom and Dad
Mickey and Steve

The Green Bay Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

meets the third Tuesday of each month at 6 p.m.
at First United Methodist Church, 501 Howe Street, Green Bay.
(Enter the parking lot off Monroe at Doty)

For further information contact:

Main Number: 920-370-3858

Sue DeLong, Remembering our Children

Mike Nieft, Steering Committee

Mickey Schmeisser, Chapter Leader/Newsletter Editor

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Sue Van Straten, Remembering our Children

Carol Wautlet, Resource Coordinator

E-mail: compassionatefriendsgb@gmail.com

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Monthly Support Group

Tuesday, April 18, 2023 6 p.m.

DVD-Whispers of Love

Tuesday, May 16, 2023 6 p.m.

Don't Be Afraid or Embarrassed to Seek Professional Help

Tuesday, June 20, 2023 6 p.m.

Lets Go On A.....Grief Vacation

Month of May Brings Tears, Fond Memories

Annette Mennen Baldwin
In memory of my son, Todd Mennen
TCF Katy, TX



The month of May is a time of many memories and many tears for mothers who have lost a child to death. The memories are tied to our natural association of May as being the "Mother's Day" month. We can't escape the reminders. Second only to the Christmas season in commercialization, Mother's Day is thrust at us in television commercials, billboards, radio spots, magazine and newspaper ads and special features, local and national news shows and each store we enter. Heart breaking, emotional, touching movies or television shows are aired in May in big part because of Mother's Day. The reminders are endless. Our emotions build and build until we think we will snap.

Most of us have memories of happier Mother's Days, time spent with our children opening their gifts and reading their special cards, talking, laughing and enjoying the moment. The counterpoint to our memories is that Mother's Day intensifies the deep void that will always remain in our lives. In the words of one mother, "One day after my son had been gone for several months, I realized that this nightmare life is my life forever." May is doubly difficult for this mother because of Mother's Day and because her son died in May. May is doubly difficult for me as my son was born in May.

Even without a birth or death anniversary, May can be extremely stressful and sad. We enter the count-down on the first day of May. Some of us begin to improve after Mother's Day passes, some of us can't let go until the month ends. Some of us suffer lingering effects for several weeks or months.

My first Mother's Day without my son was a horrifying time. No gifts, no cards, no call. I took all the cards he had given me for Mother's Day and put them on my piano....the time honored place in our home for special occasion cards. My second Mother's Day was different. I simply refused to acknowledge it. My husband gave me a card and a small gift, and we left it at that. A few tears, but we decided to relax and do things that would keep us away from the Mother's Day celebrations.

This will be my third Mother's Day without my son. I do miss him terribly; there will be no replacement for that relationship in my life. Unlike losing a parent, a spouse, a grandparent, a sibling or a friend, the loss of our child means the loss of a big part of ourselves. That is our new reality. What will I do this Mother's Day? I don't really know, but it will dawn on me that I should do one thing or another.

What you do this Mother's Day is your choice. You owe no explanation to anyone. As we walk through this grief of losing our children, we owe no explanations. Our love for our dead children lingers, and in that love is a goodness and purity that allows us to gently be ourselves. Our emotions are not intended to offend; but sometimes the pain is so overpowering that we must block out the world. And sometimes, we are able to overcome it. I will handle in the best way I can. So will you.

The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope. It takes people out of the isolation society imposes on the bereaved and lets them express their grief naturally. With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again.

Simon Stephens, founder of The Compassionate Friends



A Stepparent's Thoughts

Tony Cinocco
In Memory of Robin Ann Craney
TCF, Denver, CO



I am a bereaved stepparent – *Stepfather* to be exact. Robin Ann Craney, my stepdaughter, was killed at the hands of a drunk driver on June 8, 2001. She was 17 years old.

I have a son named Greg. His Mom remarried so I saw him on weekends, did the trips, and long summer visits as many divorced parents do. I did not get the chance to be a part of his life and see him every day. I got to hear about his activities and accomplishments *all* after the fact. When you marry someone with kids, you get another chance.

After several months of dating my (now) wife Cindy, I finally met her kids, Chris and Robin. Robin was almost 7 years old at the time. I remember that first meeting clearly because she wasn't feeling so good. She ended up getting sick and had to go home. What a first meeting that was!

After that, I became totally involved in the lives and activities of both of the children. I remember one of those nights well! Cindy and I attended parent-teacher conferences for both kids, a Cub Scout Pack Meeting and a Girl Scout Brownie Meeting...not bad for a single guy, who had been unmarried for 13 years!

Over the years, I got to know Robin's likes, dislikes, and all of her friends – *and she had a lot of friends!* I attended and participated in all of Robin's activities, supporting her in her many endeavors – including gymnastics (her favorite). I was there when she had migraine headaches, running her to the doctor when her Mother couldn't, encouraging her, supporting her – all the things Dads do for their kids. I want to tell you in no uncertain terms, being a stepparent is so much harder. You get the responsibility and, often times it seems, none of the respect. "Mom said I could so I don't have to listen to you" or "You can't tell me what to do, you are not my dad" and so forth. I tolerated and dealt with her emotional outbursts when she became incensed at anything (sometimes it seemed everything) during the teen years. All *Dads* know how trying those times can be!

Now I am a bereaved stepparent...the one in a kind of "no man's land." I am not biologically connected to Robin; I sometimes feel like an outsider around people who were *once* a family - Mother, Father, Son, and Daughter. Many of our friends have worried about Cindy and Chris. They often ask me "How is Cindy doing?" or "Is Chris OK?" Although I knew and lived with Robin for 10 years, very few ask, "How are *you* doing?" I am only the *stepparent*. The idea that this tragedy cannot be as devastating to me as it is to Robin's "real family" is incomprehensible.

One definition for the word father is "father figure: one often of particular power or influence who serves as an emotional substitute for a father." This is what I was for Robin. She loved to push my buttons – but that was part of our relationship – as frustrating as it could be. Robin is the only daughter I will ever have. I was every bit a *father* to her. I love her and I miss her.

We, the stepparents of children who have died, grieve for our children too. *Only* society puts the "Step" in the name. *Parent* is still the biggest part of who we are. We hurt because they were our children too - often without the support and understanding that is demonstrated towards the biologically connected parents. These beautiful children with whom we developed emotional bonds are now gone out of our lives; and we, too, endure the same feelings of loss and sadness.

Remembering our Children

During the three months that each newsletter covers, we include your child's birthday and the anniversary of your child's death — if we know those dates. Based upon TCF National policy, we will not print the year of your child's birth or death.

BIRTHDAYS

Matthew Daley (son of Mary Daley)	4/01	Nicole Kowalkowski (daughter of Roman & Sharon Kowalkowski)	5/09
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/02	Carson Murfield (son of Matthew & Christy Murfield)	5/10
Dana Kapla (daughter of Bob Kapla)	4/02	Chayse Michael Wilcox (grandson of Todd & Melanie Wilcox)	5/10
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/02	Jacqueline Evers (daughter of Joe & Alice Evers)	5/12
Jason Ison (son of Rene Ison)	4/04	Lance Vlies (son of Wendy Vlies)	5/12
Brittani Walker (daughter of Mary Walker)	4/04	Timmy Parent (son of Steve & Cindy Parent)	5/13
Elizabeth Turek Bigley (daughter of Albert & Mary Turek)	4/06	Luke Stempa (son of Gerri & Steve Stempa)	5/13
Mylisa Klapatch (daughter of Dennis Klapatch & Tamara Walker)	4/06	Greg Lindbloom (son of Ginger Lindbloom)	5/17
Dean Collard (son of Debbie Collard)	4/08	Kevin Betker (son of Roy "Pete" & Renee Betker)	5/24
Jason Vogels (son of Pam Vogels)	4/08	John Charniak (son of Maynard & Jeanette Charniak)	5/25
Christopher Voght (son of Tammy Viegut & Timm Gay)	4/08	Stephanie Corbeill (daughter of Sylvia & Richard Corbeill)	5/27
Craig Kozloski (son of Bobbie & David Kozloski)	4/09	Patrick Meyer (son of Dan & Anne Meyer)	5/27
Jason Kurey (son of Deb Kurey)	4/09	Nathan Crowe (son of Tom Crowe & Lisa Hanneman)	5/28
Cody Green (son of Dan & Gwen Green)	4/10	Tyffany Stevens (daughter of Lynn Pigeon)	5/28
Brandon Scheider (son of Deb Scheider)	4/10	Shannon Saldana (daughter of JoAnn Koss)	6/02
Brandon Groh (son of Cathy Groh)	4/11	Amanda Dulak (daughter of Frank & Maddy)	6/04
Kevin Kazik (son of Sally Kazik & Charlie Kazik)	4/11	Noah Froemming (son of Butch & Sara Froemming)	6/07
Tammie Gustman (daughter of Victoria Fifield & Marvin Gustman)	4/12	Aidan Hammer Fry (son of Linda Hammer & Megan Fry)	6/08
Brent Rosner (son of Tina Rosner)	4/12	Hunter Vincent (son of Bonnie & Steve Vincent)	6/08
Rebekah Puzen (daughter of Larry Puzen & Carol Schroeder-Puzen)	4/14	Sharon Ellner (daughter of Laverne Heezen)	6/09
Jacob Peters (son of Jerry & Natalie Peters)	4/15	Alex Wesner (son of Jenny Wesner)	6/09
Hailey Kreil (daughter of Virginia Kreil)	4/16	Alison Johnson (daughter of Lon & Carolyn Johnson)	6/10
Joel Bagneski (son of Bill & Kelly Bagneski)	4/19	Evan Meder (son of Randy & Margaret Meder)	6/13
Nathan Jarosinski (son of Mark & Jean Jarosinski)	4/21	Jared Gehm (son of Ken & Mary Gehm)	6/16
Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/24	Taylor Poole (son of Kelly Poole)	6/16
Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/24	Derek Waterman (son of Patricia Waterman)	6/16
Justin Plate (son of Mark & Grace Plate)	4/25	Stephen Charneski (son of James & Roberta Charneski)	6/17
Ryan Bader (son of Mark & Cheryl Bader)	4/26	Ashley MacDonald (daughter of Yvonne Cerkas)	6/18
Matthew Baudhuin (son of Jason Baudhuin & Dawn Baudhuin)	5/06	Emily Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	6/19

Shawnie Silas-Grode (daughter of Pauline Silas)	6/19	James Capelle (son of Tammy Capelle)	6/26
Nicole Ekberg (daughter of Debbie Ekberg)	6/20	Chase Lasecki (son of Steven & Linda Lasecki)	6/26
Andrew Sorensen (son of Wendy Sorensen)	6/23	Matthew Murphy (son of Kathleen Murphy)	6/26
Alyssa Steward (daughter of Wendy Steward)	6/23	Joshua Webster (son of Julie Denny)	6/26
Maria Cambray (daughter of Jack & Gerry Cambray)	6/24	John Aulik (son of Germaine Aulik)	6/27
Matt Hanson (son of Dean & Mary Hanson)	6/24	Ben Delain (son of Peter & Becky Delain)	6/29
Ian Seymour (son of Diane & Paul Seymour)	6/24	Charlotte Taugher (daughter of Angie Taugher)	6/29
Skylar Beattie (daughter of Krystle Cooley)	6/26	Steve Price (son of Jennifer & Steve Price)	6/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Andy Bell (son of Patrick & Debbie Bell)	4/02	Mark Malueg (son of Sue Malueg)	4/22
Joshua Calaway (son of Bonnie Calaway)	4/02	Marisa Nelson (daughter of Amy Nelson)	4/22
Hailey Kreil (daughter of Virginia Kreil)	4/02	Andrew (Andy) Short (son of Barbara Short)	4/22
Makayla Lego (niece of Tim & Christine Newtols)	4/02	Paige Franklin (granddaughter of Judy & Chuck Dams)	4/23
Mike Quinnette (son of Jim & Carol Quinnette)	4/02	Doug Kwiatkowski (son of Dave & Theresa Kwiatkowski)	4/23
Hannah Lynn Flauger (daughter of Daniel Flauger)	4/03	Mike Smith (son of Dave Smith)	4/23
Raina Manders (daughter of Spring Manders)	4/04	Dalon Calkins (son of Kate Calkins)	4/26
Nicolas Resch (son of Lynn & Steve Marcks)	4/04	Evan Van Lanen (son of Dan & Peg Van Lanen)	4/26
Rick Strombach (son of Donna Strombach)	4/06	Crystal (Falish) Peterson (daughter of Steve & Darlene Enderby)	4/30
Eric Barlamant (son of Jim Barlament & Penny Maraccini)	4/07	Jon Boettcher (son of Roger & Pat Boettcher)	5/05
Wendy Johnson (daughter of Tom & Debbie Johnson)	4/08	Nicole Ekberg (daughter of Debbie Ekberg)	5/09
April Erickson (daughter of Darla Nooyen)	4/09	Amanda Rose Skar (daughter of Wayne and Kim Skar)	5/09
Amy Laedke (daughter of Debra & Fred Laedke)	4/11	Noah W. Froemming (son of Sara & Butch Froemming)	5/11
Shannon Saldana (daughter of JoAnn Koss)	4/12	Adam Federwitz (son of Mary & Gary Federwitz)	5/12
Joseph Derge (son of Randy & Ann Derge)	4/14	Joseph Jacques (son-in-law of Pat Wojcik)	5/12
Megan Kelley (daughter of Bev Kelley-Miller)	4/14	Austin Reeck (son of Ann Rieckmann)	5/12
Jared Gehn (son of Ken & Mary Gehm)	4/15	Gabriela Jacques (granddaughter of Pat Wojcik)	5/13
Patton Prunty (son of Ed & Pat Prunty)	4/15	Michael Anderson (son of Ron & Lori Anderson)	5/14
Olivia DeMeuse (daughter of Cheryl DeMeuse)	4/16	Noah Thomas Campbell (son of Kelli & Craig Campbell)	5/14
Travis Christenson (son of Cherie Oettinger)	4/18	Craig Jacobs (son of John & Cathy Jacobs)	5/15
Kaitlyn Marie Schley (daughter of Jon & Ann Schley)	4/19	Michael Schermerhorn (son of Jayne Schermerhorn)	5/15

Emily Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	5/15	Taylor Poole (son of Kelly Poole)	6/08
Melissa Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	5/15	Kara Rojas-Spice (daughter of Jerry & Amy Spice)	6/08
David Staude (son of Irv & Bev Michaud)	5/15	Bruce T. Blaser Jr. (son of Bruce & Paige Blaser)	6/12
Kory Kuran (son of Carol Pomrenke)	5/17	Allison Hunt Bush (daughter of Nan & Terry Bush)	6/16
Kevin Keane (son of Mike Keane)	5/18	Riviera Konen (daughter of Jennifer & Todd Konen)	6/17
Hunter Temme (son of Lisa Temme)	5/19	Alyssa Steward (daughter of Wendy Steward)	6/18
Taylor Budysz (daughter of Krysta Budysz)	5/20	Leon Schroeder (son of Sawyer Schroeder & grandson of Marci Beck)	6/19
Matthew Baudhuin (son of Jason Baudhuin)	5/21	Ella Smetana (daughter of Frank Smetana)	6/20
Evan Meder (son of Randy & Margaret Meder)	5/22	Samantha DeLong (daughter of Joe & Sue DeLong)	6/22
Ryan Patrick Bergevin (son of Randy Bergevin & Barbara Vandenbusch)	5/25	Tara Beilke (daughter of Chuck & Judy Dams)	6/23
Dean Collard (son of Debbie Collard)	5/29	Katie Culhane (daughter of Muffy & Kevin Culhane)	6/23
Nathan Jarosinski (son of Jean & Mark Jarosinski)	6/02	Allison Fields (daughter of Leanne Fields)	6/23
Sharon Ellner (daughter of Laverne Heezen)	6/04	Heather Fuller (daughter of Leslie Tagge)	6/24
Ken Johnson (son of Kathy Johnson)	6/05	Benjamin Lynch (son of Patrick & Paula Lynch)	6/27
Ashley MacDonald (daughter of Yvonne Cerkas)	6/05	Timothy Metoxen (son of Florence Petri)	6/28
Jenah VanGroll (daughter of James & JoAnn VanGroll)	6/05	Amelia Wesner (daughter of Jenny Wesner)	6/29
Shane Bowhousen (son of Doug & Renie Bowhousen)	6/06	Michael Kirst (son of Kris Kirst)	6/30
Brent Rosner (son of Tina Rosner)	6/06		
Troy Tousey (son of Vicki & Tim Tousey)	6/06		

Love gifts were recently given by:

Michael & Mary Daley, in memory of Matthew Daley
 Gary and Mary Federwitz, in memory of Adam Federwitz
 Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
 Joyce E. Glebke, in memory of Gary and Roberta Glebke
 Mary Jo Hempel, in memory of Matthew Kiefer
 Doug and Renee LaViolette, in memory of Brian LaViolette
 Network for Good, in memory of all our children
 Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton
 Wayne and Kim Skar, in memory of Amanda Rose Skar

ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2023:

April 18: DVD - Whispers of Love

May 16: Don't Be Afraid or Embarrassed to Seek Professional Help

June 20: Lets Go On A.....Grief Vacation

Do you want to Share??

Do you want to share a picture and/or a story of your child? Would you like to write an article about how you're feeling? If you would like to submit a post for our newsletter, we would love to hear from you. We only ask that you remember copyright when submitting.

The Learning of Love Pamela Hagens

Love lives - continually gives ~ LOVE NEVER FAILS

Love never leaves & never deceives.

Love always remembers, Love sometimes grieves

Love establishes, Love includes, Love understands, Love honors, Love forgives, Love waits

...

There are secret things with Love - mysteries, moments, memories

The secret things belong to One higher, sovereign, & wiser

But the things that inspire LOVE & the things that are revealed about LOVE;

Belong to us - to our sons & daughters, to our siblings & grandparents, family & friends

~THE THINGS REVEALED ABOUT LOVE BELONG TO US~

That we may observe, honor, & remember

ALWAYS & FOREVER

Please Visit Our Website:

www.compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

All sorts of goodies are included:

- *Past Newsletters
- *Calendar of Events
- *Articles
- *Online Donations

46TH TCF NATIONAL CONFERENCE

The Compassionate Friends is accepting applications for workshops for the 2023 TCF National Conference in Denver, Colorado on July 7-9, 2023. TCF is proud that it offers a wide variety of workshops at each Conference to allow attendees many choices about grief as well as workshops presented from the perspective of the type of loss and the family relationships.



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Green Bay**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies



PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305

We need not walk alone!

Our monthly
support group
meets next on:

Tuesday,
April 18, 2023
at 6:00 p.m.

at First United
Methodist Church,
off Monroe at Doty.
Call 920-370-3858
for information.



Whisper I Love you to a butterfly
and it will fly to heaven to deliver
your message.