



**THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Northeastern WI
Supporting Family After a Child Dies**

A Quarterly Newsletter

by and for Bereaved Parents

July/August/September 2025

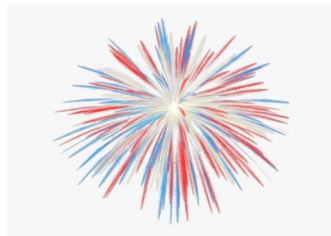
The Northeastern WI Chapter of TCF
meets the third Tuesday of each month at
6 p.m. at

**OneWay Christian Church
2071 9th St.
Green Bay, WI 54304**

**For further information contact:
Main Number: 920-370-3858**

- ♦ **Sue DeLong**, Remembering our Children
- ♦ **Joleen Krings**, Facebook Administrator / Steering Committee
- ♦ **Mike Nieft**, Meeting Facilitator/Steering Committee
- ♦ **Carol Pomrenke**, Remembering our Children
- ♦ **Mickey Schmeisser**, Chapter Leader
- ♦ **Steve Schmeisser**, Treasurer

E-mail: compassionatefriendsgb@gmail.com
Website: compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org



**Monthly Support Group
Bring along a photo of your child.**

Tuesday, July 15, 2025 6 p.m.

Let's talk about what's on your mind.
Open Forum Discussion,

Tuesday, August 19, 2025 6 p.m.

Let's talk about what's on your mind.
Open Forum Discussion,

Tuesday, September 16, 2025 6 p.m.

Let's talk about what's on your mind.
Open Forum Discussion,

Grief Work

Our first time that we attended a gathering of The Compassionate Friends, was August of 2018. Our only child, Amanda Rose, had passed away unexpectedly in May of 2018. I was trying to deal with her death on my own. I was hurt and so very angry at everyone and everything. I was not doing well at all. Mentally or physically. I wasn't sleeping, although I had returned to my job, things were not going well there either. No one I worked with had ever lost a child and therefore didn't really know how to deal with the angry person that had taken my place. They were afraid to mention my daughter or ask about how myself or Wayne were coping. They didn't want to upset me, so instead they avoided talking to me if they didn't have to and then they were all business. One of the very long sleepless nights, I decided to let my longtime friend know about Amanda's death, as I had remembered that I never called her at the time of Amanda's death. so I gave her all the details. I guess you could say that was the turning point for me, as I had forgotten that she had lost her older brother years before Amanda's death. She contacted her mom and her mom contacted me and convinced me to come to that first meeting, she even met us at the door and walked in with us.

Jump forward 7 years, I am coping better and I am great at keeping myself busy. I am so glad that I decided to walk through the doors and to this group. It is so nice knowing everyone that comes through the doors is here for the same reason I am. We understand. We can sit and listen if we don't want to talk or we can participate in the conversation. I did also go to counseling for a few years to help me regain a grip on not only my mental health, but to help me learn to regain some balance and focus on life, not just on my daughter. I have been doing my grief work, it is not always easy and while we don't have as many difficult days as we did at the beginning of this journey, we do have them. we do live a quiet, good life, even though this is not the life we had envisioned for ourselves.

Until We see you again.
You are Always in our hearts,
Amanda's Mom and Dad,

Kim and Wayne Skar

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.

“The Stone”

What Life after loss really feels like.

Used with permission
By Jessica Watson
<https://fourplusanangel.com>



The best way I can describe grieving over a child as the years go by is to say it's similar to carrying a stone in your pocket.

When you walk, the stone brushes against your skin. You feel it. You always feel it. But depending on the way you stand or the way your body moves, the smooth edges might barely graze your body.

Sometimes you lean the wrong way or you turn too quickly and a sharp edge pokes you. Your eyes water and you rub your wound but you have to keep going because not everyone knows about your stone or if they do, they don't realize it can still bring this much pain.

There are days you are simply happy now, smiling comes easy and you laugh without thinking. You slap your leg during that laughter and you feel your stone and aren't sure whether you should be laughing still. The stone still hurts.

Once in a while you can't take your hand off that stone. You run it over your fingers and roll it in your palm and are so preoccupied by its weight, you forget things like your car keys and home address. You try to leave it alone but you just can't. You want to take a nap but it's been so many years since you've called in "sad" you're not sure anyone would understand anymore or if they ever did.

But most days you can take your hand in and out of your pocket, feel your stone and even smile at its unwavering presence. You've accepted this stone as your own, crossing your hands over it, saying "mine" as children do.

You rest more peacefully than you once did, you've learned to move forward the best you can. Some days you want to show the world what a beautiful memory you're holding. But most days you twirl it through your fingers, smile and look to the sky. You squeeze your hands together and hope you are living in a way that honors the missing piece you carry, until your arms are full again.

“It has been said, “time heals all wounds.” I do not agree. The wounds remain. In time, the mind, protecting its sanity, covers them with scar tissue and the pain lessens. But it is never gone.”

— Rose Kennedy —



Grief Work is Hard Work

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



When I first began my journey of grief following the death my only child, Todd, I didn't comprehend that I would have to take an active role in what would come to be defined as "grief work." All I knew was the pain, the shock, the sorrow, the desire to go to sleep and never awaken. My child was dead, and I had no desire to live.

As the months and then the years passed, I began to realize that I was, albeit unconsciously, doing grief work. Once I realized I could not walk this road alone, I became involved in our Compassionate Friends Chapter. That was the beginning of my "grief work." A few months later I enrolled in a six week program for bereaved mothers. More grief work. I have since attended seminars, retreats and workshops. From each effort I gained something new,

Something insightful, something that eased my burden just a bit, something that helped me to cope with this, the worst, of all losses.

I consumed books. Some were about grief; others were about life. I watched movies, some about grief and some about life. I talked with friends sometimes about grief and sometimes about life.

Along the way I found that if I reached out to others, I was, once again, doing grief work. You see, I discovered that grief work is healing work. It doesn't dry my tears, nor does it mend my broken heart. Instead, it allows me to accept that I am in this place and living in this moment. That doesn't sound like much.....unless one has lost a child to death. Lost a child to death. What a horrifying thought. Yet now I can say it to others, talk with others who are raw and new in their grief and know that I have come to accept that my son is gone from this plane. My grief work will continue until I die.

When we attend workshops, seminars, special presentations, Compassionate Friends meetings and privately contemplate the depth of our loss and changes in our lives, we are doing grief work. Each of us travels this road differently, but we owe it to ourselves to do our grief work. Not easy work, not fun work, not immediately rewarding work, but this is work, just the same.



When Words Become Gifts

Nita Aasen
In memory of my sons, Erik and David Aasen
St. Peter, Minnesota

On Thanksgiving Day, 1994, two of my three young adult sons, Erik and David, were killed in a freak car accident. Years after the accident, my husband and I were at David's college alma mater for a holiday event. I was in the dessert line when a woman came up to me and said, "I saw your name tag—are you David Aasen's mom?" After doing a double take (it had been some time since I had been asked what used to be a rather common question), I replied with much appreciation, "Yes, I am!" With those three, almost magical, words this person gave me five gifts.

Her first gift was saying David's name. Instead of just thinking to herself, Hmmm, I bet that's David Aasen's mom but I better not say anything, she said something. Her second gift was sharing a story with me about how her daughter, a classmate of David's, still treasures the friendship she and David shared. Acknowledging that I'm still a mom was her all-important third gift. While my sons' deaths have resulted in my becoming a bereaved mother, death cannot take away the fact that I am, and always will be, Erik and David's mom.

The fourth gift was permission to share a bit of my grief journey with her. Since their deaths, I explained, there haven't been any truly easy, carefree, feeling-on-top-of-the-world days, but taking each day as it comes has been the most "doable" way for me to go on.

Her questions and manner did not make me feel obligated to cover up my grief and was the fifth gift. I felt valued for my honesty and my integrity remained intact.

The warmth of those five gifts has lingered on in my heart and has comforted me. As I reflect on the experience, I marvel at how just a few simple words had such an impact. I have come to the conclusion that most bereaved parents want nothing more than the opportunity to talk comfortably with others about their children. Just being able to share stories about our sons and daughters in a safe place, along with the permission to mourn in our own way and for as long as we need to, even for a lifetime, is what matters most to us.

The real treasure comes when others introduce our children's names and stories into an everyday conversation. Knowing our sons and daughters are remembered and live on in the hearts and lives of others is a measure of the meaningful legacy that our sons and daughters have left to us and to the world.

Reprinted with permission from We Need Not Walk Alone, the national magazine of The Compassionate Friends. For subscription information contact The Compassionate Friends, P. O. Box 3696, Oak Brook IL 60522-3696; toll-free: 877-969-0010.

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

Kristin Metsa (daughter of Bethany Metsa)	7/1	Grant Lardo (son of Jenny & Tim Cornell)	8/15
Madeline Wotachek (daughter of Brandon & Michelle Wotachek)	7/5	Luke Watzka (son of Rita & Marty Watzka)	8/17
Megan Short (daughter of Norb & Mary Short)	7/6	Kira Smith (daughter of Tara Smith)	8/18
Alex Olmstead (son of Lisa Olmstead)	7/8	Wendy Jacques (daughter of Sally Martin)	8/19
Riviera Konen (daughter of Jennifer Konen)	7/9	Nicolas Leon (son of Jesus & Catherine Leon)	8/21
Eric Schalow (son of Lorrie Shafer)	7/12	Lisa Becker-Fortuna (daughter of Denise Van Zeeland)	8/23
Austin Reeck (son of Ann Rieckmann)	7/13	Lily Froelich (daughter of Tony & Stephanie Froelich)	8/23
Joseph Stetson (son of Sherry Stetson)	7/15	Gabriela Jacques (granddaughter of Pat Wojcik)	8/23
Gary Glebke (son of Joyce Glebke)	7/19	Bruce T Blaser Jr (son of Bruce & Paige Blaser)	8/24
Bryan VanderKelen (son of Bob & Debi Lepak)	7/19	Robby Rohr (son of Carol Wautlet)	8/25
Evan DeWan (son of Matthew & Christine DeWan)	7/20	Taylor Budysz (daughter of Krysta Budysz)	8/26
Eloise "Ella" Kasprzak (daughter of Eddie & Kimberly Kasprzak)	7/22	Kymberly Koskiniem (daughter of Trudie Koskiniem)	8/26
Ella Smetana (daughter of Frank Smetana)	7/22	Andrew Steiner (son of Nicole Steiner)	8/28
Jason Ziemann (son of Diane Strick)	7/22	Jessica Hoffman (daughter of Jodi Hoffman)	8/29
Heather Sigl (daughter of Greg & Joyce Sigl)	7/25	Timothy Metoxen (son of Florence Petri)	8/30
Eric Rasmussen (son of Karen Rasmussen)	7/26	Nicholas Resch (son of Lynn & Steve Marcks)	8/30
Joseph Derge (son of Randy & Ann Derge)	7/27	Ross Ambrosius (son of Melissa & Rob Ambrosius)	9/5
Austin Robert Bush (son of Terry & Nan Bush)	7/30	Eric Barlament (son of Jim Barlament & Penny Maraccini)	9/5
Keaton Sirianni (son of Jason & Lindsey Sirianni)	8/2	Kory Kuran (son of Carol Pomrenke)	9/5
Nick Argall (son of Joyce Argall)	8/4	Adam Schultz (son of Stan & Deb Schultz)	9/5
Sarah Lesperance (daughter of Maria Smith)	8/4	Matthew Kiefer (son of Mary Jo Hempel)	9/8
Jeff Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	8/4	Wendy Johnson (daughter of Tom & Debbie Johnson)	9/12
Makayla Lego (niece of Christine Newtols)	8/5	Michael Schermerhorn (son of Jayne Schermerhorn)	9/12
Olivia DeMeuse (daughter of Cheryl DeMeuse)	8/8	Mike Vos (son of George & Jane Vos)	9/12
Todd Konop (son of Tom & Dorothy Konop)	8/8	Patton Prunty (son of Edward Prunty)	9/13
Ken Johnson (son of Kathy Johnson)	8/11	Megan Mae Vincent (daughter of Mark & Connie Rissling)	9/13
Tara Pfaller (daughter of Sally Winger)	8/12		

Melissa Schmeisser (daughter of Steve & Mickey Schmeisser)	9/14	Jessica VanStraten (daughter of Sue VanStraten & Randy Merryfield)	9/22
Christopher Grahm (son of Tim Grahm)	9/15	Christy Stackhouse (daughter of Frank Stackhouse)	9/23
Craig Jacobs (son of John & Cathy Jacobs)	9/16	Andy Bell (son of Patrick & Debbie Bell)	9/24
Susan Nickel (daughter of Mike & Judy Parins)	9/18	Troy Tousey (son of Tim & Vicki Tousey)	9/24
Troy Jacques (son of Sally Martin)	9/19	Amaris Soletski (daughter of Amy Soletski)	9/26
Greg Corbeill (son of Sylvia Corbeill)	9/22	Aaron Lison (son of Adele Coopmans)	9/28
Jack McDonough (son of Carrie Harrison)	9/22	Ben Wilfer (son of Paul Wilfer)	9/30

ANNIVERSARIES

Chase Lasecki (son of Steven & Linda Lasecki)	7/2	Greg Corbeill (son of Sylvia Corbeill)	7/29
Jacob Kowalski (grandson of Jessica Fehlberg)	7/3	Travis Stelzer (son of Don & Pam Stelzer)	7/29
Megan Short (daughter of Norb & Mary Short)	7/3	Amber Mastey (daughter of Brett & Amanda Mastey)	8/1
Jillian Faymonville (daughter of Louise Faymonville)	7/5	Justin Plate (son of Mark & Grace Plate)	8/2
Lily Froelich (daughter of Tony & Stephanie Froelich)	7/7	Brad Cox (son of Robert Cox)	8/3
Van Jarchow (son of Mike & Dixie Jarchow)	7/7	Eric Rasmussen (son of Karen Rasmussen)	8/5
Grant Lardo (son of Jenny & Tim Cornell)	7/7	Stephen Charneski (son of Roberta Charneski)	8/6
Sam Compton (son of Mark Compton, and Todd & Sandra Scheffen)	7/8	Anne Johanski (daughter of Judy & Bob Johanski)	8/7
Kevin Kazik (son of Charlie Kazik & Sally Kazik)	7/11	Austin Lindberg (son of Todd & Sandy Lindberg)	8/7
Tyffany Stevens (daughter of Lynn Pigeon)	7/11	Brian LaViolette (son of Doug & Renee LaViolette)	8/8
Christopher Grahm (son of Tim Grahm)	7/19	Luke Stempa (son of Gerri & Steve Stempa)	8/8
Debi Schultz (daughter of Barbara Fitzpatrick)	7/19	Matthew Shukoski (son of Darlene Vanhorn)	8/9
Roberta Glebke (daughter of Joyce Glebke)	7/20	Jeremy DeMille (son of Marysue Gerondale)	8/11
Lucas Shallow (son of Robert Shallow)	7/20	Samantha LaCount (daughter of Dale & Linda LaCount)	8/14
Susan Nickel (daughter of Mike & Judy Parins)	7/21	Mike Vos (son of George & Jane Vos)	8/14
Steven L Vosters (son of Patti & Marvin Vosters)	7/21	Maria Cambray (daughter of Jack & Gerry Cambray)	8/16
Megan Mae Vincent (daughter of Mark & Connie Rissling)	7/24	Nick Baugnet (son of DeeDee & Joan Baugnet)	8/17
Heather Sigl (daughter of Greg & Joyce Sigl)	7/25	Lane Harris (son of Susan Harris)	8/17
Eloise "Ella" Kasprzak (daughter of Eddie & Kimberly Kasprzak)	7/27	Ben Delain (son of Peter & Becky Delain)	8/18

Molly Klika Zarnoth (daughter of Bob & Barb Klika)	8/18	Kandy Kostka (daughter of William & Sally Kostka)	9/4
Jimmy Wanner Jr. (son of Pam & Keith Blondeim)	8/20	Kristin Metsa (daughter of Bethany Metsa)	9/7
Nicolas Leon (son of Jesus & Catherine Leon)	8/21	Josh Kimes (son of Susan Kimes)	9/8
Andrea Eve Wirth (daughter of Thomas & Angela Wirth)	8/21	Tara Pfaller (daughter of Sally Winger)	9/8
Greg Lindbloom (son of Ginger Lindbloom)	8/22	Jason Vogels (son of Pam Vogels)	9/10
Jessica VanStraten (daughter of Sue VanStraten & Randy Merryfield)	8/22	Corey Jonet (son of Lisa & Dan Jonet)	9/11
Leo Fulmer (son of Evonna Krause)	8/24	Eric Schalow (son of Lorrie Shafer)	9/11
Kali Pfaller (daughter of Sally Winger)	8/25	Jack Natzke (son of Jason & Renee Natzke)	9/15
Jessica Hoffman (daughter of Jodi Hoffman)	8/26	Austin Robert Bush (son of Terry & Nan Bush)	9/17
Kymberly Koskiniem (daughter of Trudie Koskiniem)	8/26	Matthew Skenadore (son of Jude Skenadore)	9/21
Sarah Lesperance (daughter of Maria Smith)	8/28	Cam Wendt (son of Lon Wendt)	9/22
Tammie Gustman (daughter of Victoria Fifield and Marvin Gustman)	8/31	Craig St. John (son of Debra St. John)	9/25
Jackson Rukamp (son of Bob & Missy Rukamp)	8/31	Stephanie Corbeill (daughter of Sylvia Corbeill)	9/27
Keaton Sirianni (son of Jason & Lindsey Sirianni)	8/31	Troy Milan (son of Pam Milan)	9/28
Evan DeWan (son of Matthew & Christine DeWan)	9/1	Nick Hietpas (son of Bruce & Diane Hietpas)	9/30
Colton Steinhorst (son of Tara Steinhorst)	9/3		



We quickly find there are no words to describe the experience of losing a child. For those who have not lost a child, no explanation will do. For those who have, no explanation is necessary. ~ Mary Lingle

ANNOUNCEMENTS, COMMENTS, & MISC.

Calendar of Events 2024:

July 15: Open Forum Discussion

August 19: Open Forum Discussion

September 16: Open Forum Discussion

September 27: October Fest, Appleton, WI

December 14: Worldwide Candle Lighting

Please Visit Our Website:

www.compassionatefriendsgreenbay.org

All sorts of goodies are included:

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

Sharing Our Children

Would you like to share your child? You can share anything you would like to about your child and if you wish, include a picture, so we can all meet them. If you would like to contribute, please send over a paragraph or two about your child and include a photo. You can send them to me, Kim Skar, at wkskar@gmail.com.

We only ask that you remember copyright when submitting.

A Name for My Pain

I have given a name to my pain—
it's called "Longing."

I long for what was,
and what might have been

I long for his touch and smell of sweat;

I long to hold him one more time.

I long to look on his beautiful face
and impress it upon my memories and heart.

I long to return to the day before
and protect him from his death.

I long to take his place,
so he may live and have sons too.
I long for time to pass much faster,
so my longing and pain will lessen.

Will they?

June Williams-Muecke
TCF Houston West, TX

A friend is one who knows you as you are . . .

Understands where you've been . . .

Accepts who you've become

And still gently invites you to grow. ~ author unknown



Love gifts were recently given by:

Ken and Mary Gehm, in memory of Jared Gehm
Mike and Dawn Nieft, in memory of Taylor Nieft
Todd and Sandy Scheffen, in memory of Sam Compton
Patricia Waterman, in Memory of Derek Waterman



THE
COMPASSIONATE
FRIENDS
of Northeast Wisconsin
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

PO Box 211
Green Bay, WI 54305



Our monthly
support group meets
next on:

Tuesday,
July 15, 2025
at 6:00 p.m.

**OneWay Christian
Church
2071 9th St.
Green Bay, WI 54304**

Call 920-370-3858 for
information.

Everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped..



The Compassionate Friends

**Supporting Family
After a Child Dies**

friendship, understanding, and hope