



Sharing Parents

- Helping Bereaved Families for 27 Years

Sharing Parents is a Sacramento based non-profit organization devoted to supporting parents who have experienced the loss of a baby from the time of conception through early infancy. **Our Purpose** is to provide a safe environment where grieving parents with similar experiences can come together and share their feelings about the loss and the love of their babies. Our meetings are also a place where parents express the love they had for their baby in their compassion for others, where they can give and receive emotional support by sharing common experiences and learn about the natural grief process while working through and resolving their loss. **We Offer** a variety of meetings and support services that are designed to help parents throughout the different stages of their grief. There is never a fee to attend our meetings.

Our Meeting Place

Mercy Women's Center
650 Howe Ave, Ste #530
Sacramento, CA 95825

Our Mailing Address and Phone Number

Sharing Parents
P.O. Box 19538
Sacramento, CA 95819-
0538
(916) 424-5150

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Upcoming Meetings

February 10, 2008 Grieving as a Couple
March 9, 2008 Exploring Grief
April 13, 2008 "Footprints on Our Hearts"

Subsequent Pregnancy Meetings:

February 25, 2008
March 24, 2008
April 28, 2008

For more information, visit www.sharingparents.org

"Life is a series of experiences, each one of which makes us bigger, even though sometimes it is hard to realize this"
Henry Ford

2008 Sharing Parents

Volunteers

Co-Presidents

Heather Bazzocco
Deanna Lockhart-Ralston

Secretary

Rebecca Erickson

Treasurer & Subsequent Pregnancy Coordinator

Shana Kaplan-Samuels

October Memorial Coordinator

Noel Lehman

Fundraiser Coordinator

Heidi Lozano

Librarian

Kristie Avila

Short Term Grief Coordinator

Deanna Lockhart-Ralston

Pregnancy Interruption Coordinator

Amy Bourke

Webmaster

Chandra Schreck

Newsletter Editor

Armando Omega

Database Manager

Mia Omega

Sharing Parents Volunteers

Ken & Stacey Hisey

Kelly Joppa

Molly Lawrence

Daryle Lozano

Thank You for the Opportunity

On September 12, 2001 I walked into the Sharing Parents short term grief meeting for the first time. My eyes were swollen with pain, my heart shattered and my voice was soft and the world around me was falling apart. Over the years Sharing Parents has given me a place to grow and explore this new life laid before me. It is at those meetings I was able to share Terrence and Bella freely and with out judgment. Later I became the newsletter editor and the greatest joy of this position was being able to share other parents stories of strength and survival. I am leaving sharing parents with a wound that is healing. Through my experiences with this wonderful group I have been able to honor and preserve the memory of a handsome young prince and delicate little princess. Forever I will feel honored to be part of group whose hearts were open and tissues boxes were always filled.

In memory of Terrence and Bella who represent everything that is good in this world.

Michelle Jett

A Special Thanks to our Past Volunteers

We would like to recognize and thank our past Sharing Parents volunteers for their years of tireless support and service. Their heartfelt work has enabled Sharing Parents to continue to provide a safe, loving environment where parents can remember and honor their babies. Thank you all so very much

Mary and Ken Avila-DaRosa

Erin Greenough

Michelle Jett

Darlene Lopez

Dionne Martinez and Adrian Gardner

From Your New Newsletter Editor

As we went through the grieving process of losing our son, Leo, Sharing Parents was there for us. We knew that someday we would dedicate our time in honor of our son to this very important program. We could only wish that such a program never had to exist, but it is a program that relies heavily on the volunteers and we are proud to be a part of this team.

We will follow the tradition of past Sharing Parents Newsletters; deliver information about programs and upcoming events, offer articles that will help you and your family grieve and cope with your loss, and of course memorialize our babies that we miss so much.

We encourage and are very open to feedback and your new ideas. We thank Michelle Jett, your former editor, for her guidance and most of all her high standards. Thank you for trusting us with this element of Sharing Parents.

Armando Omega



Love Gifts

Rebecca Lee Hussey

October 14, 2006

We miss you our sweet angel

Steve Hussey & Ellen Little

Andrew Bond dos Reis

January 16, 2005– June 22, 2005

We think of you every moment of each day. Your smile still lightens our days. Nicholas still reminds his friends that you're his "baby brother."

Our love forever and always,

Mommy, Daddy, & Nicholas

Emily Diane Stiltz

February 7, 2007

Beautiful baby Emily

We miss you every single day, wishing we could have seen your smile and heard your laugh.

Ron and Linda Hanford (Grandparents)

Lannette Jasmine Adams Steptoe

January 30, 2007

Happy 1st Birthday my Angel Baby! I love and miss you and Maurice so so much! I hope I am making you proud to call me "mommy" because I will always be proud to call you my "baby girl!" You're both always in my heart.

Love Mommy Dezy

In loving memory of **Maurice Adams Steptoe** (July 30, 2006)

Zoey Van Eenennaam

November 27, 1996

In loving memory of Zoey Van Eenennaam

Ria de Grassi

Nicholas Lunardi

May 2007

Kristin, Scott, & Caroline Lunardi

Kyle Benjamin Avila

October 19, 2004 - March 24, 2005

The days have turned into months, the months into years, but not a moment goes by that we don't think about you, you are always in our thoughts and on our minds. We miss you and love you so much.

Love Mommie, Daddy, Bianca, Sydney & Peyton

~Kristie & Ben Avila

Hannah Joann Lawrence

April 27, 2005

Honoring the life of someone special. Happy Birthday Hannah - Thinking about you today and everyday

Love the Avila Family

Samuel James McCoy

April 25, 2005

Honoring the life of someone special. Happy Birthday Samuel - Thinking about you today and everyday

Love the Avila Family



To honor your child's memory, send a "Love Gift" to Sharing Parents. A love gift is a monetary donation given in honor of someone or as a memorial to a baby, relative or friend. Not only will you be memorializing your baby but you will be helping Sharing Parents which survives on donations and fundraisers. If you would like to donate a love gift to us please fill out the form on the back of the newsletter. The deadline for inclusion in the next newsletter is

April 1, 2008

Remembering Our Babies With Love

Anniversaries, birthdays, and holidays are difficult times for us.
We remember with love....

February

Meagan Rene Barstone
 William Evan Beebe
 Baby Berger
 Faith Ann Blakely
 Cameron Michael-Lee
 Burdick
 Joshua David Cardoza
 Weston Cruz
 Colin Devey
 Baby Dressen
 Baby Espinoza
 Baby Espinoza
 Baby Feuerstraeter
 Andrew Gallagher
 Claire Gibson
 Baby Herkins
 Zachary Herkins
 Saffi Hernandez-
 Christensen
 Jolie Hurtt
 Ericson Kelley
 Baby Legrand
 Kaylee Ann Lindberg
 Marissa Marina Lopez
 Pedro Jose Lopez
 Baby Lowell
 Sophia Mamola
 Zachary Orbus
 Chancellor Aris Patton
 Baby Pethel
 Isabella Lopez Rye
 Madison Nicole Souza
 Emily Diane Stiltz
 Sophia Tolin
 Joaquin Victor Torrence

March

Steven Kent Brown
 Gracie Cahill
 Amelia Aitchison-Cooksy
 Jordan William Davidson
 Lindsay Rose Denier
 Baby Feuerstraeter
 Baby Fraser
 Avery Graham
 Baby Hall
 Ayiah Cherie Ricelle Harris
 Madison Kristine Joppa
 Baby Kaplan
 Matthew Love
 Emily Loreen Meyer
 Megan Oliva
 Dylan Pena
 Elijah James Dominique Rankin
 Kaylee Rubitski
 Morgan Joan Shaw-Hoshovsky
 Baby Belle Simmons
 Baby Szillinsky
 Kylee Valle
 Tyler Vassion
 Arbor Warzecha
 Aria Wermund
 Baby Winings
 Rose Zeier

April

Midori Anne Briel
 Elizabeth Ann Collie
 Baby Davis
 Baby Denny
 Colin Frederick Foley
 Baby Fosco
 Kaitlyn Nicole Hart
 Christopher Imbriano
 Hannah Lawrence
 Tessa Elizabeth Lockhart Ralston
 Samuel James McCoy
 Baby Ocel
 Alejanda Sepulveda
 Parys Gavin S. Stokes
 Evan Vargas
 Richard Warzecha
 Reagan Ellis Westrup
 Grace Woodman
 Rose Zeier

*"The guardian angels of life fly so high as to be beyond our sight, but they are always looking down upon us."
 ~Jean Paul Richter*



Names are entered through the sign in sheets at all Sharing Parents Meetings.

Achieving Perspective In Loss



Madison Kristine Joppa

Involvement in Sharing Parent's, as a participant and now volunteer, is providing the perfect place to remember and honor my baby. We are a special and rarely spoken of family of mothers and fathers."

On March 2nd of 2006 I delivered our first child, Madison Kristine Joppa. She was absolutely beautiful. She had a full head of hair, soft pearl colored skin and the most perfect set of lips and mouth I had ever seen. At 2.1 lbs and 13 inches long she looked like a perfect porcelain doll. Madison was born still at 26½ weeks.

I had been on my way to work when I was rear-ended by a young girl eating a bagel. As we exchanged information an ambulance arrived. I felt fine and didn't see any need to go to the hospital, however my husband (on the other end of a cell phone) told me to go with them and that he would meet me at the hospital. When the doctors looked for Madison's heartbeat, and couldn't find anything I was confused and scared. Just a week ago we had a checkup and everything was fine. They took us down for an ultrasound and our fears were confirmed as they found that our baby had passed away. The next afternoon, when Madison was born we learned that she had been gone at least 4 days. I have come to believe that God blessed us with a car accident (which had nothing to do with her passing) so that we would have the chance to hold and be with our baby. We were with her for 2 short hours. Due to the narcotics from being induced I do not remember much, however I do know

that she was perfect as she slept peacefully in our arms. We have no answers as to why she left us or what happened. We are simply left knowing that our beautiful baby touched our lives – if just for a moment in time.

As time passed I found myself alone with my pain and unanswered questions. We were very fortunate to have loving family and friends that showed us support, but after a few weeks life had returned to normal for everyone else and I think that people felt that if they didn't mention Madison they were helping us "move on".

The week before I had to go back to work I continued to feel alone and as if I was the first person to ever feel the pain that a mother feels when she loses a child. I found myself outside working in the yard after we had been gone for a long weekend. I was mowing the front lawn when I saw a tiny dead little sparrow lying in the grass. It was tempting to just mow over it, but I just felt like this little creature deserved to at least be thrown in the trash can with the other grass clippings. I grabbed a shovel from the garage and laid the little sparrow on a bed of fresh clippings. I then returned to my yard work. About 20 minutes later I noticed that my dog wasn't around. I called for him and he poked his head around the side of the house and then turned to

disappear again. Wondering what he was up to I walked around the corner and saw my pup sitting at attention and lovingly staring up at a mother sparrow perched on the edge of our trash can looking down at her baby. At first I thought it was strange that my dog wasn't going after the mother bird. I also had thought that birds reject their young if they can't fly or are wounded. This scenario went against basic nature. I called my dog away and left the bird to sit on the trash can.

It took a few minutes for this blessing in disguise to make sense to me. If a tiny bird can mourn the loss of her baby, how much more justified am I to feel the pain of my own broken heart. In a very abstract way this insignificant bird gave me permission to cry, to hurt and to face my feelings of grief. The truth is what it is – losing a child breaks one's heart.

Involvement in Sharing Parent's, as a participant and now volunteer, is providing the perfect place to remember and honor my baby. We are a special and rarely spoken of family of mothers and fathers. The world barely knows we exist, but together we can love our babies and bring comfort to others who share our pain.

All our love,
Kelly & Eric Joppa
Madison's Mommy & Daddy

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

-Margaret Mead

New Laws on Obtaining Birth Certificates for your Child

During the spring, summer and fall of 2007 a group of committed citizens set a goal and began a journey to change the world. This group of women, from the MISS Foundation, had carried babies who died before they were born. They gave birth to them, were responsible for their burial expenses, and were left with a “Certificate of Fetal Death” and devastated hearts. Those of us with Sharing Parents are all too familiar with these stories. We share their agony, tragedy, and love. We can all understand the powerful love that they feel for their babies. These women used this love to empower us all. Their love inspired them to help thousands of families in our state obtain a certificate recognizing the *birth* of our much loved, stillborn babies.

Their commitment was arduous. There were hundreds of hours spent researching, writing and preparing Senate Bill 850. Days spent traveling to the state capital and personal money expended. Many of us joined them at the senate hearings; waiting all afternoon, for our bill to be heard and speak our babies names in front of the senators. We put off work, school and family to use our voices, and to hear our babies names through the microphone. Tearful, heart-rending, empowering, and proud, were those hearings. At each legislative level we pleaded for support. The public needed to know what this bill was about, and voice their support if they choose. We wrote letters, sent e-mails and called our representatives; not once, or twice, but tens of times. We asked family and friends to strengthen our movement and use their “democratic voice”.

There was much debate encircling the language of the bill. Gestational age, women’s rights, abortion & medical definitions were disputed.

Finally a compromise was reached and Senate Bill 850 moved through each stage of the legislative process. As it approached the governor’s desk many of us were in complete disbelief that it had come this far. Could it really be that on the first day of January we could request a “Certificate of Still Birth” for our babies? We all waited with baited breath. On October 13th, I checked the senate web site almost hourly, I called friends, I e-mailed those involved, I counted down the minutes until I would know.

I remember my breath. I remember how still the moment felt. The moment I read the affirming words on the computer screen, “SB850 signed into law”. I cried. I cried long, healthy, satisfying tears. My sobs were not of pain or sadness, but of joy and passion. So many people had worked so long and hard to make this happen. There was an immense sense of accomplishment and satisfaction to reach this goal. My emotional sobs were not for what this bill meant for me, but more for what it gave to the future families that there would inevitably be faced with life without their babies. Thanks to this small group of thoughtful mothers SB 850 went into effect on January 1st, 2008 and the world is, at least, a little bit changed.

Continued on the next page

Birth Certificates Continued

California is now the twenty first state to have a law of this type. What this means for you is that if you gave birth to a “still” baby at twenty weeks gestation or later you may choose to have a “Certificate of Still Birth” issued by the state. This bill is also retroactive. It does not matter when your stillborn baby was born.

Senator Maldonado once referred to this Certificate as a “hug to grieving families”. It is so much more. This certificate may not acknowledge that our babies were alive, but it does recognize our birthing them. This as a step towards awareness, records, statistics, research and hopefully for some, prevention.

Thank you to Senator Maldonado, Sunita Param, Kirsten Pert, Sari Edber & Joanne Cacciatore from the Miss Foundation, The March of Dimes and the hundreds, maybe thousands, of people that came to the senate hearings & spoke, sent e-mails and wrote letters. Without their support this bill may not have made it to the governor’s desk, or into law.

If you are interested in obtaining a “Certificate of Still Birth” for your baby, please visit the Sharing Parents Web site; <www.sharingparents.org>, where you can download & print the forms. There are directions on the form directing you where to mail it, who to make the check to and the amount. (Like all certificates and vital records there is a fee.) There is also a chart that directs you to the correct department based on the year your baby/babies were born. Or you can always call our Listening Line for further questions or assistance obtaining the form. Listening Line 916-424-5150

If your baby was born this year, 2008, you may also contact your county’s recorder’s office. A list of information by county can be found at;

<<http://www.cdph.ca.gov/certlic/birthdeathmar/Pages/CountyRecorderOffice.aspx>>

If you would like to read the full text of this law or the bill SB 850 please visit the California State Senate web site at;

<http://info.sen.ca.gov/cgi-bin/postquery?bill_number=sb_850&sess=CUR&house=B&site=sen>

For more information on the movement, support and process of SB 850 please visit the Missing Angels web site;

<www.missingangelsbill.org>

To find more stillbirth support and information about other legislation and other states visit the MISS Foundation web site;

<www.missfoundation.org>

Written by Helena’s Mommy

Thank you to Erin Greenough, Sharing Parents' 2007 President. Our own Erin worked persistently to coordinate the efforts of Sharing Parents volunteers. We will be forever grateful for her incredible contributions.

What Sharing Parents Has to Offer

General Meetings

General meetings are held on the second Sunday of each month from 7-9pm. These meetings are intended for parents who have suffered a loss of their baby(ies) from the time of conception through early infancy. Everyone is welcome to attend regardless of how long ago their loss occurred.

Subsequent Pregnancy Meetings

*Subsequent Pregnancy meetings are held on the fourth Monday of each month from 7-9pm. These meetings are for those who are exploring the possibility of a subsequent pregnancy, and those who are currently pregnant. Couples are encouraged to attend. *Infants may be in attendance during introductions in celebration of their safe arrival.*

Prenatal Decision Support-Pregnancy Interruption

Pregnancy interruption meetings are open to parents who have made the very difficult decision to interrupt their wanted pregnancy following poor prenatal diagnosis. This month long series of weekly meeting will be determined according to the number of individual who would like to attend. You can contact Sharing Parents through the listening line to sign up.

Short Term Grief Series

This is a month long series of weekly meetings for parents with recent losses (within one year) There will be specific topics to discuss each week. This is safe place to share your grief with people who have experienced similar losses. It is also a time when our small groups often bond and find that the support they gain is accompanied by newly found friendships. The dates and time for the next 4-week Short Term Grief Series will be determined according to the number of individuals who would like to attend.

Listening Line Support

For support between meetings, parents who would like to talk to a compassionate parent, can leave a message for one of our Listening Line Volunteers (916) 424-5150.

Some parents come to listen, some to share, and others to offer help and hope to newly bereaved parents

**A Special Thanks for the following people
who assisted in this edition:**

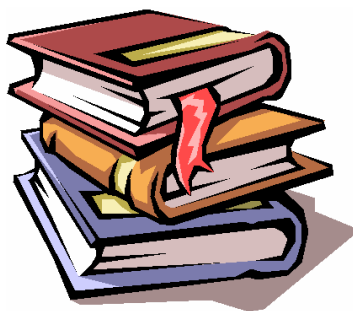
Michelle Jett (Terrence and Bella's Mom)

Kelly and Eric Joppa (Madison's Mommy and Daddy)

Noel (Helena's Mommy)

Heather Bazzocco (Payton's Mommy)

Steve Murphy (Leo's Uncle)



“Comfort the dark parts of yourself, and work to banish them with illumination and forgiveness. Your willingness to wrestle with your demons will cause your angels to sing. Use the pain as fuel, as a reminder of your strength”

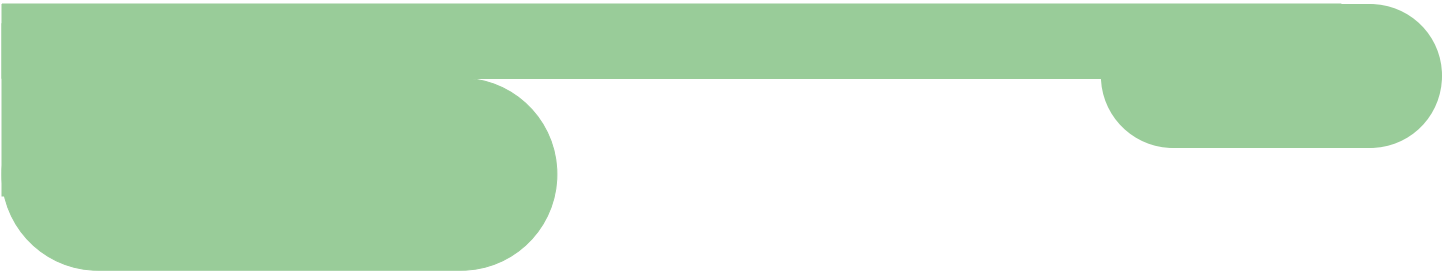
August Williams

Resources

WEBSITES

- sharingparents.org**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal death support, parent support via e-mail, links to websites
- aplacetoremember.com**- books, videos & links to a of variety support websites
- aheartbreakingchoice.com**- for parents who have chosen to interrupt their pregnancy after receiving a poor/fatal prenatal diagnosis
- hygeia.org**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal death support, message board and chat room
- benotafraid.net**- for parents who have chosen to continue a pregnancy after receiving a poor/fatal prenatal diagnosis
- ectopicpregnancy.com**- support for pregnancy loss due to an ectopic pregnancy
- borntoosoon.freesevers.com**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal death support
- stillfathers.org**- support for fathers who have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death
- briefencounters.org**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal death support
- silentgrief.com**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal support, articles, poems
- missfoundation.org**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal support, articles, poems, chat room, links to websites
- erichad.com**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal support, subsequent pregnancy support.
- spals.com**- support for subsequent pregnancy after a loss, message board
- inciid.org**- information on infertility, fact sheets, links, bulletin boards
- honoredbabies.org**- miscarriage, stillbirth & neonatal support, articles, poems, links, e-mail support
- storknet.com/cubbies/pailsofhope**- pregnancy/parenting after infertility and/or loss support
- memory-of.com**– A memorial website is sincere and meaningful to celebrate the life of your baby
- Bereavement-poems-articles.com**– Bereavement Poems and articles was created with understanding that everyone grieves differently
- Hopingskills.com** Meaningful and comforting gifts or those dealing with loss, grief, illness.
- October15th.com**– The official site of pregnancy and infant loss awareness remembrance day

The next Star Sighting deadline
April 1st 2008



0538
Sacramento, CA 95819-
PO Box 19538
Send to Sharing Parents,
Address:
Donor Name:
Date of Death:
Date of Birth:
In Loving Memory of:

We welcome your love gifts in support of Sharing Parents.
A love gift is a monetary donation made to honor your child's memory.
Please make checks payable to **Sharing Parents of Sacramento**.
(Donations to Sharing Parents are tax deductible)
Enclose your check, attach any special message to this form, and mail to:

Sharing Parents

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Sacramento, CA 95819-0538

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