

Sharing Parents



Volume 29, Issue 4 November 2009

- 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

Visit us on the web:

www.sharingparents.org

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General Meetings

November 8th 7 - 9pm Permission to Grieve/Father's Group Discussion

December 13th 7-9pm Handling the Holidays

Subsequent Pregnancy

November 23rd 7-9pm

December No Meeting

Check the website for January meeting schedule or call Sharing Parents at 916-424-5150

2009 Sharing Parents Volunteers

President

Heidi Lozano

Vice President

Kelly Joppa

Secretary/Treasurer

Daryl Lozano

Oct. Memorial Coordinator

Noel Lehman

Community Outreach

Ken Hisey

Fundraiser Coordinator

Heidi Lozano

Librarian

Kristie Avila

Webmaster

Ken Hisey

Short Term Grief Coordinator

Kelly Joppa

Listening Line Coordinator

Molly Lawrence

Newsletter Editor

Armando Omega

Database Manager

Mia Omega

Sharing Parents of Sacramento

Save The Dates

Sharing Parents Volunteer Recruitment Fair

Am I ready to help others through their loss?

Am I ready to support hurting parents?

Am I ready to be a Sharing Parents Volunteer?

These are questions that all of our volunteers
have asked themselves.

If you believe the answer is "YES" to the above questions, or if you are ready to explore these questions we would like to invite you to our next Volunteer Recruitment Fair

Sunday, November 8th 2009 2 – 4pm

Mercy Women's Center
650 Howe Avenue, Suite 500
Sacramento, CA 95825

There are many ways that you can volunteer:

Meeting Facilitator

Newsletter

October Memorial

Library

Fundraising

Community Outreach

If you have questions or are unable to attend but are interested in becoming a volunteer please contact us at 916-424-5150 or sharingparents@yahoo.com

*Please note that if you would like to volunteer you should be at least 1 year out from your loss. Allow yourself the necessary time work through your own grief and then we would love to have you join us.

1st Annual "Drive for Babies" Golf Tournament

May 1, 2010

At Lincoln Hills Golf Course in Lincoln, CA

Please visit www.sharingparents.org for registration and sponsorship information. You can sponsor a hole in memory of your baby for \$25.00

Remembering Our Babies With Love

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

November

Carmen Rose Acuna
Sally Adame
Isaac Alcaraz
Autumn Joy Davidson
Baby Davis
Baby Denny
Victoria Rose Domino
Justin Daniel Fleming
Abigail Furtado-Rinker
Keegan Turner Gilwee
Malachi Ezekiel Harvey
Faith Marie Jones
Zachary Mikalos Kristianous
Grace Kukas
Travis Adrian Maheras
Gabriel Moore March
Justin Pardi
Sapphire Robertson-Horner
Tara Marie Schmidt
Nathan Russell Scott
Jody Lee Shunk
Emily Steele
Samantha Rae Troutman
Zoey Louise Van Eenennaam
Isadora Vargas
Baby Wyzanowski

Karolina Yelzavetta Cooper

Molly Ann Cottman
Colin Devey
Samuel Isacc Dressen
Christopher Eells
Baby Fraser
Graham Lynn Graham
Ryle Lynn Graham
Swastt Gupta
Rebecca Grace Hadsell
Baby Heckley
Zachary Herkins
Blaine Kevin Heckly, Jr.
Jack Ryan Hildebrand
Olivia Lane Hirshberg
Santrika Shayann Holloway
Baby Keating-Frost
Gracie Ann Lackmann
Sarah Lampe
Michael McNeese
Alexandros Nichols
Baby Ocel
Gwenyth Majorie Page
Maya Lauren Penn
Angel Ramirez Aguilar
Sofia Senna
Owen Staley
James Terrence Waldron
Nicholas John Waldron

Christopher Thomas Webster

Baby Westrup

January

Brandis Behnken
Logan Henry Berry

Lynn Blackman III
Faith Ann Blakely
Andrew Bond dos Reis
Darian Brooks
Naomi Larissa Brown
Tea Elyse Cepeda
Michael James Cromeenes
Samuel Alan Demmin
Baby Dressen
Audrey Lynn Hargrove
Lannette Jasmine Adams
Elsabella Brophy Jett
Tanner Kelley
Timothy John Kilkelly
Eli Kuhlman
Gracie Ann Laackman
Christian Lewis
Selma Livadic
Cashew Martinez-Gardner
Meagan Monas
Hananiah James Oates
Angelica Robertson-Horner
Oliver Robertson-Horner
Brayden Rose-Siefker
Raleigh Rose-Siefker
Makenzie Lynn Scacco
Baby Schreck
Owen Staley
Matthew Van der Veer
Mallory Van der Veer
Elias Matthew Ponce Zepeda

Finding Relief Through the Holidays

Written by Clara Hinton

Losing a child changes everything about how a family thinks, sees, tastes, touches, and feels life. Experiences become strangely new and at times so different that it is sometimes frightening. Traditions and times of family fun that once seemed so routine, now feel oddly painful and lonely. Families often find themselves seeking ways to get through the holidays, instead of planning for holiday celebrations with past anticipation and joy.

Probably the first coping mechanism, and the most useful, is to accept the fact that losing a child does change things. Families often change best friends, seeking the support of those who can identify with individual as well as collective needs of the family. Sometimes families change churches. Often, worshipping at the same church is an emotional pain that is too hard to bear. Sometimes family members even change jobs, finding it easier to make the work more bearable with a new beginning. It is, therefore, reasonable and necessary to change some of how the family traditionally celebrated the holidays. Losing a child brings about many changes!

Don't place undue expectations on yourselves as a family. When your child died, a very real part of your identity as a family ended, too. Acknowledge that you are now in the very difficult position of holding fast to memories of someone you loved so very much in order to keep that precious child alive within your family. Not everyone will understand, and that often leaves hurt feelings, distances between friends, and even broken relationships within the extended family. Adjusting to the loss of a child is so very difficult for everyone.

Because you miss your child so much, yet you want to still have your holiday season be a time of celebration and joy, you are faced with a most difficult dilemma. Especially hard is facing the first holiday without your child. There will be a unique emptiness felt by each family member.

By including your child in the holiday, you will find that, even though it is painful, you will also feel some healing with your family take place. Many families have found it very healing to buy a gift for the child who has died. Place a holiday stocking on the mantle, and include small gifts in it such as a family journal, a picture frame, or a memorial candle. It is healing to include your child in the holiday in a special way.

Use the child's name when talking. Give family members permission to cry. Nobody expects you to be a super hero, so don't try to be one. It's healing to say, "I miss my baby so much, and I really wish she was with us!" Hold each other up as a family. When we try to deny our sorrow, often the pain only is intensified. Accept grief as a reality, and help each other through the pain.

Do things different, and don't be afraid to break old holiday traditions. Make this your year to begin a new holiday tradition. Maybe buy one really outlandish gift that can be wrapped and rewrapped year after year. Continue to include that particular gift in the annual family gift exchange. Think of something different that is unique to you as a family. It will help break the heavy grief, and aid you in finding some momentary relief from your pain of loss.

Remind yourselves as a family that there will be a time when things will feel okay again. There is light at the end of the tunnel. You will be able to choose remembering the joy your loved one brought into the family rather than only remembering the grief of the day your child died. When a family celebrates love, the pain becomes less intense, and you will begin to feel relief.

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

January 2, 2010

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:

In Loving Memory of:

Date of Birth:

Date of Death:

Donor Name:

Address:

Send to Sharing Parents, PO Box 19538
Sacramento, CA 95819-0538

Book Reviews

If you have read a book that you feel would be helpful for other parents who are navigating through their grief, please share your review of the book with us. You can email our newsletter editor at: sharingparents@yahoo.com

Parenthood Lost: Healing the Pain after Miscarriage, Stillbirth, and Infant Death **by Michael R. Berman (Editor), Sherwin B. Nuland**

It's something we almost never talk about, but the fact is that up to a third of all pregnancies end in miscarriage. In this week's Yikes I'm a Grown-up, Lisa Birnbach explained the changing ways in which women and the medical community are dealing with pregnancy loss.

Not that long ago women were typically told to "forget about it and move on" after the loss of a pregnancy, forcing them to bury whatever grief they felt deep inside. But, these days, doctors and hospitals are starting to treat miscarriage as a process that, for some patients, requires grieving for a very real loss.

Dr. Michael Berman, professor of obstetrics and gynecology at Yale Medical School, says the pain and disappointment of miscarriage is often compounded by society's tendency to minimize the loss, so he created a Web site for parents.

If you or someone you know is going through this grievous experience, you may visit www.hygeia.org or read his book, *Parenthood Lost: Healing The Pain After Miscarriage, Stillbirth, And Infant Death*. In it, Dr. Berman includes poetry that he's written for his patients, as well as reasons for perinatal losses and a glossary of terms.

Dr. Berman practices obstetrics and gynecology in New Haven and lives in Woodbridge, Conn., with his wife and two daughters.

Empty Cradle, Broken Heart : Surviving the Death of Your Baby **by Deborah L., Phd Davis**

The heartache of miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death affects roughly 50,000 U.S. families every year. This revised and expanded edition of *Empty Cradle, Broken Heart* offers reassurance to parents who struggle with anger, guilt and despair after such tragedy. Deborah Davis encourages grieving and makes suggestions for coping. Added to this edition is new information on issues such as the death of one or more babies from a multiple birth, pregnancy interruption and the questioning of aggressive medical intervention. There is also a special chapter for fathers as well as a chapter on "protective parenting" to help anxious parents enjoy their precious living children. Doctors, nurses, relatives, friends and parents facing infant loss will find support and reassurance in this gentle guide.

Miscarriage : A Shattered Dream **by Sherokee Ilse, Linda Hammer Burns**

This book is one of the first and best books on miscarriage written in easy to read terms.

Precious Lives Painful Choices **by Sherokee Ilse**

If you've learned that your unborn baby has problems, this book will help you cope with the news, decide how to move forward and then survive. It's a balanced, non-judgmental book that encourages you to look at all the issues and within yourself for answers.

Surviving Pregnancy Loss : A Complete Sourcebook for Women and Their Families

by Rochelle Friedman, Bonnie Gradstein

This updated book is for the one million women who annually suffer a pregnancy loss - whether by a miscarriage, stillbirth, or ectopic pregnancy - and their husbands, relatives, friends, and physicians. *Surviving Pregnancy Loss* includes: first-person accounts of women who have experienced pregnancy loss; a discussion by health care professionals of the physical and emotional consequences of pregnancy loss; an exploration of options for the future - trying again, choosing childlessness, or considering adopting (with all the latest information on agency, international, and private adoptions); sensitive advice on the partner's experience, the reactions of family and friends, dealing with multiple losses, and explaining loss to children; and more. Anyone who has suffered a pregnancy loss is searching for answers, searching for a friend. This book provides both.

The Grieving Child : A Parent's Guide
by Helen Fitzgerald

Explaining death to a child is one of the most difficult tasks a parent or other relative faces. *The Grieving Child* now provides much-needed guidance, covering such areas as visiting the seriously ill or dying, especially difficult situations, including suicide and murder, attending a funeral, and the role religion can play.

Courtesy of Robyn's Nest(tm)

Coping with Grief during the Holidays

Halloween barely passes before stores stock their shelves with holiday decorations. Christmas carols echo through shopping malls, and the first of the holiday commercials hits the airwaves. These can be stark reminders that the holidays won't be the same.

Whether your baby died recently or decades ago, the holidays bring forth powerful memories that may trigger your grief. If your baby died on or near a holiday, the two events are forever linked and may be particularly painful..

When trying to cope with grief, it's important to understand that grief is cumulative. We don't experience a loss, move through predetermined emotional stages, then emerge on the other side.

This holiday season, if the first Christmas card you open or the first "Happy Hanukkah!" you hear stirs painful emotions, remember you are not alone in your grief and try to talk to someone you trust about your feelings. Here are some suggestions to help you navigate this Holiday Season.

DO:

- Expect to have some pain. When the feelings come, let them.
- Accept a few invitations to be with close family or friends. Choose the ones that sound most appealing at the time and avoid the ones that feel more like obligation.
- Talk about your feelings. Let people know if you're having a tough day.
- Incorporate your baby into the holidays:
- Make a toast or light a candle in remembrance.
- Make a donation in his or her name.