

# 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](http://www.sharingparents.org)

**Inside this issue:**

Save the Dates	2
Remembering our Babies	3
Finding Relief Through the Holidays	4
Love Gifts and Safe Arrivals Info and Form	5
Book Reviews to Help the Healing	6
Coping with Grief During the Holidays	7

**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](mailto: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](http://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

## **December**

Emerson Avila-DaRosa  
Baby Beck  
Baby Berger  
Lynn Blackmen III  
Baby Camarena

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 unwrapped 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](mailto: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](http://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.