



M. E. N. D.

Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

Parental Rights

We at M.E.N.D. strive to focus on the myriad of physical, mental and emotional issues following the death of a baby. However, we perhaps have not addressed the “business issues” following a loss. My Jonathan was stillborn 20 years ago, at a time when I was responsible for filing my own insurance claims. It was truly a part-time job for those of us who endured health issues, resulting in numerous and regular doctor appointments, which was accompanied with confusing stacks of paperwork to sort through and try to understand. Additionally, I found myself regularly needing to speak to insurance representatives asking for help and clarity. From their end, they could tell I had a baby, but nothing in their records indicated my baby died. Therefore, every time I had a conversation with a well-meaning insurance employee, he or she congratulated me for the birth of my baby, to which I always sought compassion and sympathy by correcting the congratulations.

It can still be a nightmare, but thankfully most doctor’s offices and hospitals are now required to file our medical claims for us, somewhat easing our burdens, especially when we are grieving. Yet there are still questions, such as, what does the insurance policy cover and what does it not cover? At what point is the baby covered by our plan if the baby was born alive and medical care is given? Does the policy cover funeral and burial arrangements? Does the IRS consider our baby as a dependent for tax purposes? What about time off from work? Shockingly, many companies and businesses do not allow moms to take the same amount of time off work she is allowed had the baby lived. Don’t they know a mom likely needs more time off to grieve?? And, what about the daddies? Do they qualify to take advantage of the Family Medical Leave Act or just the moms? These are just a handful of business aspects following a loss - it is incredibly overwhelming.

A couple of weeks after Jonathan’s stillbirth, the medical bills began trickling in. I remember casually

sorting through the mail one day when my heart sank as I noticed three bills were for my extended hospital stay and c-section. I angrily threw them across the room. It did not occur to me that although our baby died, and even with good insurance, we would still owe thousands of dollars for my extensive antepartum hospital stay, c-section, Jonathan’s funeral and burial, and his headstone.

Family and friends typically do not realize these are matters we must deal with on top of grieving our baby, drastically compounding our sorrow, frustration and stress. So, how can we take care of these responsibilities and understand our legal and tax rights, while we are attempting to care for ourselves physically and mentally?

First, I hope some information printed in this edition will answer some of your questions. Secondly, appoint a trusted family member or friend who can research answers for you, speak to representatives from your insurance company, hospital, HR department at work, and even a CPA if need be. This may require you to be in the same room as your appointed person in order to grant permission for this person to speak on the phone in your behalf. Don’t be afraid to explain to the representatives you need extra time and grace because your baby died. It may be difficult to reveal your loss to a stranger, but I think you’ll find the explanation advantageous.

Above all, understand you may have financial rights you are not aware of, but it will take patience and time to figure it all out. Work on it slowly, do your best to not allow this to add to your grief, and seek help. I pray the Lord gives you an understanding of fine print, compassionate representatives, and that He will send those your way who are experts in knowing your entitlements.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*
Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell
M.E.N.D. President/Founder

Nota Español: El artículo de Rebekah Mitchell aparece en cada emisión de nuestro boletín para la audiencia latina.

Para ver el artículo de este mes en español, por favor vea la pagina numero 15.

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M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly meetings, this newsletter, and our Web site at www.mend.org.

For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the newsletter, contact us at

M.E.N.D.

P.O. Box 631566

Irving, TX 75063

Phone and Fax: (972) 506-9000

(Please call before faxing)

E-Mail: rebekah@mend.org

jennifer@mend.org

www.mend.org

Donations make the printing and distribution of this newsletter possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

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International Stillbirth Alliance

How to Claim a Deceased Child on Taxes

It is a tragedy to need to claim a deceased child on your tax return. The death of a child is a hardship to parents, relatives and friends. It is, however, a comfort to know that the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) has made provisions in case of such a tragic time. As you gather up your forms, receipts and income for the year, you can have some peace of mind knowing that it is easy to claim a deceased child on taxes.

Instructions

1. Take the qualifying child test. The deceased child will need to have been under the age of 18 at the end of the current tax year, have lived a majority of the time at the residence of the taxpayer and have had a familial relationship with the taxpayer. This includes an adopted, foster or natural child or step child, a sibling or step sibling, or a descendant such as a grandchild.
 2. Meeting the above criteria for a qualifying child automatically determines whether you can claim a deceased child on taxes. Any child that qualifies as a dependent is a child that may be claimed whether alive or deceased.
 3. In order to claim a child whose birth and death occurred in the same tax year the taxpayer must have a birth certificate that proves live birth. Even if the child was only alive for a moment, the parents may claim the child for the entire tax year. A stillborn child may not be claimed.
- If a child was born and died in the same year and you do not have a Social Security number for that child, you may attach copies of the birth and death certificates to the return and write "died" in the area where the Social Security number normally goes in the Exemptions section of IRS Form 1040.
4. Determine how many dependents are now being claimed and move ahead to figuring the adjusted gross income and other possible deductions.
 5. Retain copies of the birth and death certificates with a copy of the tax return and other important tax documents. This does not need to be sent to the IRS unless requested at a later date.

Retrieved from ehow.com on June 6, 2015

Stay Connected!

In an effort to reach more families and spread awareness for M.E.N.D., we have expanded our social media presence by joining Twitter and adding a M.E.N.D. Facebook page.



Follow M.E.N.D. on Twitter @MENDinfantloss



Like the M.E.N.D. Facebook page



Find local chapter Facebook pages at www.mend.org

State law allows tax exemption for stillbirths

Missouri is joining at least one other state in offering a tax exemption for stillbirths, after Gov. Jay Nixon signed a law allowing it starting this year.

The measure will allow a one-time exemption of \$1,200 from a parent's income - the same amount taxpayers can claim for each dependent on tax returns. Arizona appears to be the only other state with a similar tax policy, although that's difficult to track.

Missouri state Sen. Ed Emery, who tacked the stillbirth tax exemption onto a broader tax bill, said women face expenses during pregnancy even when they don't give birth to a live baby. Under Missouri law, a parent can apply for a certificate of birth resulting in a stillbirth after 20 weeks of pregnancy or if the fetus reaches a certain weight. It's generally considered to be a miscarriage if the fetus dies before 20 weeks.

Emery, a Lamar Republican, said his wife had three miscarriages and the death of a child can be difficult for parents "even if it's one that you've never been able to hold in your arms." He said the legislation could help relieve some stress by offsetting medical expenses.

"Obviously when you go through that, you have the family struggles within just because of the loss," Emery said. "At least this would be a minor part of relief on the financial side."

There were an average of 414 fetal deaths in Missouri per year between 2009 and 2013, according a fiscal report by legislative researchers. They used that to estimate the provision will cost the state about \$30,000 in lost revenue. With other provisions included, the bill could cost the state more than \$200,000 in general revenue this fiscal year and more than \$300,000 in other funds.

The measure passed overwhelmingly in the House and unanimously in the Senate, although a few Democrats have raised concerns it could open the door to a broader definition of "personhood" in Missouri. Some abortion opponents hope to bestow personhood status on fertilized eggs and fetuses; supporters of abortion rights are concerned that would be used to restrict abortions.

Emery said that was not the intent of the legislation, although he said he would be pleased if the measure is used to promote personhood proposals.

Sen. Jill Schupp, a Democrat from the St. Louis suburb of Creve Coeur, said she's concerned about that but still voted for the bill. She and Democratic Rep. Deb Lavender of Kirkwood said despite their concerns, other aspects of the legislation swayed them.

For example, the measure gives incentives to the Missouri Department of Revenue to issue tax refunds more quickly by requiring the state to pay interest after 45 days instead of 90 days.

Other provisions include sales tax exemptions for graphing calculators worth less than \$150 during a certain period and aircrafts sold to out-of-state residents or companies.

The law takes effect Aug. 28.

Written by Summer Ballentine, The Associated Press, July 8, 2015. Retrieved from newstribute.com.

Thank you to Southern Blush Spa
for hosting a spa night as a
Mother's Day gift to the mothers of
M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station.



Kristen Rabe, Sarah Matthijetz, D'Lynne Warren,
Katie Teinert and Melody Pittman enjoying the spa night.

September/October Topic

Raising/Parenting Subsequents

Deadline: July 31, 2015

November/December Topic

Holidays

Deadline: September 30, 2015

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcomed. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the newsletter. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please see page two of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our website indefinitely unless we receive notice in writing that you are only granting permission for your submission to appear in the printed version of the newsletter. Because our newsletters are posted online, please understand that your name will likely be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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Letters to the Editor should be sent to jennifer@mend.org. All letters submitted to the editor are subject to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests that it not be published.

BirthDay Tributes: M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding newsletter. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at www.mend.org.

Heavenly Birthday

January/February
March/April
May/June
July/August
September/October
November/December

Deadline

November 30
January 31
March 31
May 31
July 31
September 30



Birthday Tributes

Happy 2nd Birthday, Nugget!

Happy 2nd birthday, baby girl. I don't know how another year passed without you here. The day we met you is forever etched in my memory. Your baby brother has brought us so much joy, but it's so very bittersweet wanting to have and hold you both here. I miss you more than words could ever describe. Sending kisses up to you from Mommy, Daddy and Poops.

P.S. Give kisses and hugs to Uncle T.J. and Ms. Maria

Happy 2nd Birthday, Angel!

To my Angel, I cannot believe two years have gone by without you. You have a baby brother. You are such a special girl. You changed our lives in so many ways. Life has not been the same since our eyes beheld your beautiful angelic face. Abuelita can't wait to see you in heaven one day! I know Grandma Charlotte is taking good care of you until we see you again. Your absence causes many valleys in your mommy's life, but I know that from heaven you send lots of love, hugs and kisses via your little brother. He showers your mommy with love and joy—it must be a double portion from heaven from you. We love you beyond words! We miss you beyond words! Happy heavenly birthday, my sweet Angel!

Abuelita Isabel and Uncle Ben

Angel Batrez

Stillborn July 9, 2013, at 37.5 weeks

UCA and Nuchal Cord

Parents: Stefanie and Tony Batrez

Brother: Andres



Happy 3rd Birthday, Catherine!

Sweet girl, how did we get to 3 already? It seems like yesterday I was rocking you in my arms, singing "You are my Sunshine" softly in your ear. They say memories we hold in our soul never fade. Perhaps that is why it seems like only yesterday. I often wonder about who you'd be, what foods, colors, music and words would be your favorites. You are a piece of me, baby girl, and I can't wait until the day I get to hold you again. I know God keeps you safe in His hands until then. Thank you for all the blessings, love and people your life has brought to me.

All my love,

Mommy

Catherine Grace Chapman

August 10-12, 2012

Extreme prematurity due to HELLP syndrome

Mommy: Kara Chapman



Happy 1st Birthday, Baby Bryson!

Happy birthday, baby boy! Mommy, Daddy and Big Bro love you. Not a day goes by you don't run through our mind. Forever in our hearts we carry you, until we meet again, our sweet angel. We love you!

Bryson = Mommy's ♥. Tia, Gma and The Girls love you, Baby Bryson! Happy 1st birthday! Never forgotten, always loved, we miss you. #1BRYSON

Someone special:

A special person

A special face

Someone we love and can never be replaced

"He heals the broken hearted and binds up their wounds"

Psalm 14 7:3

Bryson Gage Hawkins

Stillborn July 21, 2014

Parents: Patrick and Jennifer Hawkins

Big brother: Money



Happy 2nd Birthday, Precious and Angela!

Dear Precious and Angela, thank you for sharing a short hour of your life with us. Mama, Papa and Kuya Sean love both of you so much! We miss you, Precious and Gela! Please help Mama to mend my broken heart in losing you, my twins. Take good care of your Kuya, my sweet little angels in heaven.

Precious F. and Angela F. Dolor

August 15, 2013

Multiple abnormalities/prematurity

Mommy: May F. Dolor



Happy 1st Birthday, Trinity!

Happy 1st birthday, our little blue-eyed angel. Daddy and I miss you more and more with each passing day. Our hopes for today are much different than we thought they would be. We now hope you have a wonderful heavenly birthday. Daddy and I can't wait for the day we get to celebrate with you. Happy birthday, sweetheart! Play hard!

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, big sister Emma, little brother Brentley,
and your grandparents

Trinity Ann Faram

August 1, 2014

Placenta abruption

Parents: Brad and Elizabeth Faram

Siblings: Emma and Brentley



Happy 2nd Birthday, Avery!

Avery, I cannot believe you would be turning 2! Where did the time go? We miss you so much. Not a day goes by I don't think about you. You did give us a blessing; I gave birth to your little brother on October 25, 2014. We named him Ayden Neil Thomas. He will forever hold a piece of you. I love you, my sweet angel.

Avery Neil Thomas
Stillborn August 24, 2013
Parents: Nathan Thomas and Jennifer Jones
Siblings: Jada, Nataleigh and Ayden



Happy 1st Birthday, Devon!

Happy birthday, our sweet angel! You would be 1 year old today. Mommy and Daddy miss you more and more every day. We know you watch over us and protect our growing family. You are always loved and forever in our hearts.

Devon Emanuel Watson
July 28, 2014
Fetal demise
Parents: Donri and Jacqueline Watson



Happy 2nd Birthday, Myrin!

Not a day goes by I don't miss you.
 You will never be forgotten.

Love,
 Mommy

Myrin McNeil
June 19, 2013
Unknown cause
Mommy: Jolynn Tizeno



Happy 1st Birthday, Zech!

Happy 1st birthday, my sweet little angel. Not a day goes by I don't think of you or see your sweet little face. Daddy and I will love and miss you for eternity.

Zechariah Thomas Tine
July 14, 2014, at 22 weeks
Incompetent cervix/prematurity
Parents: Jerry and Brandi Tine



Happy 2nd Birthday, Emmalyn!

I'll love you forever, I'll like you for always.
 As long as I'm living, my baby you'll be.

Emmalyn Grace Peoples
June 22, 2013
CHD/Heterotaxy Syndrome
Parents: Robert and Megan Peoples
Siblings: Chloe, Karter and Annede



Happy 1st Birthday, Charlotte and Caleb!

Happy 1st angel birthday, my sweet babies! Mommy and Daddy miss you more than words can express, but we know you are in a place where each day is glorious! Until the day we are reunited with our precious twins, we will celebrate the short but remarkable lives you had.

We love you!
 Mommy and Daddy

Charlotte Brown
July 1-2, 2014
Caleb Brown
July 2, 2014

Incompetent cervix
Parents: Corey and Laura Brown



Happy 1st Birthday, Holland and Hayden!

Happy birthday in heaven, my sweet girls! I miss you every moment of every day. Grayson and Easton still talk about you a lot, too. They would have been the best big brothers to you. My heart breaks knowing I have to keep going on without you both, but I am trying to be a better person and a better mom because of you. You have taught me there are no guarantees in life, so we need to make the most of our time here. There are no footprints so small they cannot leave an imprint on this world.

Love forever and always,
 Mommy, Daddy, Grayson and Easton

Holland Rylee and Hayden Brynlee Abbott
August 9, 2014
TTS

Also remembering
Baby Abbott
Miscarried October 30, 2013
Parents: Tyler and Shawna Abbott
Siblings: Grayson and Easton



Happy 7th Birthday, Noah!

Remembering our beloved son and brother, Noah, on his angelversary date. We remember you each day. We speak your name each day. And we love you and miss you, each and every day.

"Perhaps they are not stars in the sky, but rather openings where our loved ones shine down to let us know they are happy."

And we hope wherever you are, among all things beautiful, you are very happy.

With much love,
 Mommy, Daddy, Julia and Sydney

Noah Powell
Stillborn July 22, 2008
Cord accident
Parents: Nate and Barb Powell
Sisters: Julia (twin sister) and Sydney



Happy 2nd Birthday, Ariel and Angel!

Happy 2nd birthday, babies! It's been two years since you went back to heaven and a lot of things have happened since then, but no matter what, you two are always in my mind and in my heart. Thank you for sending me your little brother; he already knows he has two lovely brothers in heaven watching over us. I love you and miss you so much, but I am happy to know you two are enjoying God's presence.

With all my love,
Mommy

*Ariel and Angel Wong-Eguiarte
June 26, 2013*

*Twin to twin transfusion syndrome
Mommy: Emyllin Wong
Brother: Andre Eduardo*

**Happy 11th Birthday, Jordyn!**

Jordyn, as each year passes, the thought of your loss never gets any easier. Daddy, Mommy, Jada and Bruce Jr. know through faith, God allows us to cope. You are truly missed, and you continue to live inside of us.

We love you,
Mommy, Daddy, Jada and JR

*Jordyn Lynae Johnson
July 13-16, 2004*

*Umbilical blood clot
Parents: Bruce and Debra Johnson
Siblings: Jada and Bruce Jr.*

**Happy 1st Birthday, Tirzah!**

Dear Tirzah, happy 1st birthday to the most beautiful redheaded princess ever to be born! We love you and miss you every day! You have forever blessed our lives. We'll be with you so soon, holding your hands and worshipping together at the feet of Jesus. You've taught us to long for that day when we'll meet our Savior and you.

Until then we know the softest touch of your face was a glimpse of glory, and we can only imagine what it will be like to see the full beauty of your face—to see your eyes and hear your voice. We wait for that day! For now, we send up 1,000 kisses!

Love,
Your Mommy

“My beloved speaks and says to me: ‘Arise, my love, my beautiful one, and come away...’” -Song of Solomon 2:10

“Life Verse” (chosen months before her death, now we believe was prophetic)

*Tirzah Catherine Knight
August 20, 2014, at 40 weeks*

*Unknown cause
Parents: Ryan and Catherine Knight
Sibling: Jeremiah*

**Happy 2nd Birthday, James!**

You are remembered daily!
Thank you for choosing me as your mommy! :)
I know you're doing great things up there.
Happy birthday, angel. I love you.

*James Curtis
July 5-17, 2013
Prematurity
Mommy: Nicole Myers*

**Happy 5th Birthday, Jason!**

Our sweet Jason, where has the time gone? You would be 5 this year. It's so hard to believe this year you would be off to school and doing other big kid stuff! Not a day goes by our family doesn't miss you and wish you were here. We know you are safe in God's loving care and are happy. We will see you again in heaven. Happy birthday, Jason! We love you so much!

*Jason Michael Murphy
July 29, 2010
Unknown cause
Parents: Michael and Diana Murphy
Brother: Trevor*

**Happy 1st Birthday, P!**

Happy birthday, P! We can't imagine what it is like to be having your 1st birthday in heaven with our Lord. As much as we wish it was here with us, we know it is just as special and exciting there! Thank you for watching over your little brother, Doltan, as he is growing inside Mommy. We pray the best for him just as we did and do you. We love you so much, our sweet girl! See you soon!

*Pieper Adelaide Martinez
August 25, 2014
Undetected IUGR
Parents: Anthony and Lauren Martinez
Brother: Doltan Garrid*

**Happy 11th Birthday, Baby August!**

Sweet August, 11 years have come and gone,
but our love for you is still going strong.

We love and miss you!

Love,
Daddy, Mommy and Maddie

*Baby August Fann
Miscarried August 13, 2004
Also remembering
Caleb Scott Fann
December 1, 2003
PPROM
Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann
Little sister: Madison Grace*



Happy 5th Birthday, Caelan!

We wish you were here today even for a little while
So we could say "Happy Birthday"
and tell you how happy we are you're our child.

The best gifts today
will be the memories you leave behind,
of those we can tell:
Your beautiful name,
your handsome face,
your sweet smell.

We'll sit quietly with you in our hearts
and think of you with love
With comfort in knowing

You are with the Lord in heaven above.
May the angels hold you close, our son,
and sing a birthday song,

And we'll share thoughts of you today and all year long.
We love you with all our hearts and miss you dearly.

Love,
Mom, Dad and Finlea

Caelan Matthew Wallace

July 30-August 3, 2010

Preterm labor

Parents: Andy and Dana Wallace

Sister: Finlea Rose

**Happy 1st Birthday, Luca!**

Our sweet baby boy, it is hard to believe it's been a whole year since we said goodbye. Oh how I wish you were here, so we could shower you with all the hugs and kisses you've missed this year. Though our arms are empty, our broken hearts are overflowing with love for you. Even in death, you are loved beyond measure.

Luca Hopkins

July 9, 2014

Unknown cause

Parents: Tony and Jessica Hopkins

Sisters: Julia and Eliana

**Happy 5th Birthday, Little Man!**

Benjamin, there's not a day goes by we don't think about you. We miss you so much. You would be going to kindergarten now, and your sister, Rebecca, will be starting high school this year. Happy heavenly 5th birthday, little man. You give Grandpa, Great-Grandma and Great-Grandpa McGraw a big hug for me and tell them I miss them so much, but Mommy and Daddy miss you more and so does Rebecca.

Benjamin Joseph Curtis

July 17, 2010

Unknown cause

Parents: Joseph and Jennifer Curtis

Big sister: Rebecca

**Happy 4th Birthday, Brand and Colt!**

To my favorite little boys, Brand and Colt, I can't believe in August it will be four years since I held you both in my arms, and in January you would have been turning 3 years old! I am thankful I am one more year closer to being with you both again, but in heaven, rejoicing with Jesus. I smile thinking how much fun it would have been watching you two grow, explore and learn together. You both would have kept me and your Daddy on our toes! I miss you both so much and love you even more. Happy birthday, sweet boys!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Clara and Chloe

Brand and Colt Whigham

August 4, 2011

Cords knotted together

Parent: Chris and Beverlyann Whigham

Sisters: Clara and Chloe

**Happy 5th Birthday, Henry and Sam!**

Our sweet babies, we can't believe it's been five years.

Very early you came here.

We begged God for you to stay,

We couldn't bear you already going away.

Through time and faith. Prayer and strength.

We've been heartbroken and sad,

but so very thankful God chose us
to be your Mom and Dad.

For eternal life we are grateful and glad.

A rainbow or beautiful sunset in the sky

We know it's you saying "Hi."

Safe you are in the Lord's arms

You'll never know hurt, pain or harm.

Our hearts and lives are forever touched.

We love you and miss you so very much!

Mommy, Daddy, Jack and Luke

Henry Franklin Forrest

July 24-25, 2010

Samuel Michael Forrest

July 24-August 8, 2010

Preterm labor/Unknown cause

Parents: Peter and Julie Forrest

Brothers: Jack and Luke

**Happy 14th Birthday, Mercedes!**

Happy birthday! I can't believe it has been 14 years! There is not a day goes by I don't think of you! You will always be my angel! Mommy loves you always!

Mercedes Kay Fisher

Stillborn July 4, 2001

Umbilical cord

Mommy: Jennifer Smith



Happy 1st Birthday, Anderson!

There's not a day we don't think about and miss you. We know you are in the best place celebrating your 1st year in heaven with your brother. Thank you for restoring our hope and loving us. Love knows no limits and our lives continue to be blessed by having you. Love you, xoxo

Anderson Fisher Waeger

August 30, 2014

Placental insufficiency

Also remembering

Baby Boy Waeger

June 18, 2013

Ruptured omphalocele

Parents: Andrew and Kimberly Waeger

Brother: Aiden



Happy 1st Birthday, Ava!

Happy birthday, our sweet baby Ava. Your very 1st birthday! I cannot believe it's been a year since we said "hello" and "good-bye" all in the same day. May you be celebrating your 1st birthday with lots of love and laughter. We cannot wait to celebrate your birthdays with you one sweet day. We will be celebrating your birthday here on earth while you are celebrating it with the ones we miss. Your daddy and I love you, oh, so much and miss you terribly. Just know we think about you constantly. We love you, our precious little baby. XOXOXOXO

Mommy and Daddy

Ava Elizabeth Barker

July 31, 2014

Turner Syndrome

Parents: Megan and John Barker



Happy 2nd Birthday, Margot!

Happy birthday, precious girl. It has been two years since we first held you in our arms, but we still think of you every day and wish you were here with us. Adeline and Bennett are starting to play together, and it makes us miss you even more. We know you are watching over your brother and sister. Adeline is such a great big sister. We long for the day when we'll all be together again for a complete family hug. We love you.

Love,

Mommy and Daddy

How softly you tiptoed into our world.

Silently, only a moment you stayed,

but what an imprint your footprints

have left upon our hearts.

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Cord accident

Parents: Brandon and Marisa Perry

Siblings: Adeline and Bennett



Happy 2nd Birthday, Justice Michael!

You have a little sister, Destiny Lee, and she is 9 months old. Daddy shows her your picture and talks about you all the time. We want her to know she has a big brother in heaven.

As your birthday approaches, we try to imagine what our life would be like with you here with us. It makes us sad. But Jesus wanted you more, and so we let you go. Your little life is forever intertwined with ours; you live in our hearts. Heaven gets sweeter all the time!

Love,

Mommy, Daddy and Desi

Justice Michael Burgett

Stillborn July 31, 2013

Parents: Carl and Daisi Burgett

Sibling: Destiny Lee



Happy 2nd Birthday, Delaney!

Baby girl, even though we didn't get to meet you, we still think about you. We love you no matter if you're here or there.

Love you, our little owl,

Mommy and Daddy

Delaney Marie Magner

August 28, 2013

Chemical pregnancy

Also remembering

Butterfly Dawn Magner

March 14, 2008

Early labor

Liam Curtis Magner

November 23, 2014

Chemical pregnancy

Parents: Jerrica and Terry Magner



Happy 2nd Birthday, Bryson!

It isn't that hard to imagine

You lying here within our bed

The steps you would have taken

Or the words you might have said

That smile you would have given

Or a giggle to fill this empty room

Being able to say the words

"I love you all the way to the moon"

It isn't that hard to imagine

The amount of joy you'd fill our hearts

Yet you still do, our baby boy

Cause we will never, ever be apart

Bryson Stogner

August 13, 2013

To be with the angels

Parents: Bryan and Kristin Stogner

Siblings: Kadence and Jayson



Happy 4th Birthday, Aubree!

My precious girl, this year you turn 4. I imagine you would be Miss Independent and would follow your big sister everywhere. I long to hear you giggling in the pool, splashing around with our puppies. I wish I could say it's getting easier without you, but it's just not. We miss you with every breath we take. We love you so much, sweet baby girl. Until we meet again.

Aubree Faith Carmichall

August 18, 2011

Uterine rupture

Parent: Jeremy and Kelly Carmichall

Siblings: Ryan and Breean



Happy 1st Birthday, Abigail!

We only knew you for a short time, but we loved you the same as if we'd known you forever. There are no regrets in choosing to have you, and we'll remember you forever. Until we see you again in heaven, we love you with all our hearts.

Abigail Dangerfield

August 6-13, 2014

Complications from congenital heart defect

Parents: Jesse and April Dangerfield

Siblings: Jessica and Joshua



Happy 2nd Birthday, Chandler!

Happy birthday to you, Chandler.
Momma and Daddy love you tremendously.
Miss you and blowing kisses to you.
Twinkle twinkle little star.
Forever in our hearts.

Chandler Lee Michael Groves

August 16, 2013

Prematurity

Parents: James and Krysa Groves

Sister: Alyssa



Happy 2nd Birthday, Matthew!

Two years without you has been two years of emptiness. We often think about who you'd be today. Your smile, laughter and sweet nature cross our minds often. We wake up wishing to hold you only to die all over again. We hope your heavenly birthday is full of celebration, cake and joy. We are one day closer to seeing you again. Until then we will continue to live in your memory. Mommy, Daddy and the rest of the family miss you like crazy, little Buddy. You will never know how much we love you.

Matthew Scott Bailey

December 1, 2012—July 25, 2013

CHD and premature birth complications

Parents: Timothy Bailey and Janet Willis

Siblings: Timothy Darnell and Liam Matthew



Happy 2nd Birthday, Abigail!

"You are my sunshine, my only sunshine. You make me happy when skies are grey. You never know, dear, how much I love you. Please don't take my sunshine away. The other night, dear, as I lay sleeping. I dreamt I held you in my arms. When I awoke, dear, I was mistaken. So I hung my head, and I cried."

This is the song I sang to you while I carried you for 8 months. I still occasionally sing this song, but now the lyrics hold a new meaning. Big brother continues to give you kisses on my tummy and wishes we could take a plane to see you in heaven. We all love and miss you, our little "First Lady."

Abigail O'Donnell

August 16, 2013

Placenta abruption

Parents: Matt and Diane O'Donnell

Brother: Gabriel



Happy 1st Birthday, Clayton!

Words cannot describe how much we love and miss you. You are always on our thoughts and minds. Happy birthday, Clayton Scott! Heaven gets sweeter and sweeter as the days go by!

Love,
Your Daddy and Mommy

Clayton Scott Metcalf

September 2-3, 2014

Car accident

Parents: Taran and Judy Metcalf

Sister: Guinevere



Happy 18th Birthday, Erika!

You came into our lives, you blessed us with your presence.

We held you close to us,
for your numbered days and hours.
You grew our hearts with love, each minute of your life.
Today you turn 18 in a place beyond comprehension
Barely within the human imagination,
Wholeheartedly though in our belief of its existence:

This place, called heaven
So as you celebrate today, we hold you even closer
In our hearts and in our memories
that never, ever fade away.

We love you so much,
Remembering you on your
18th Birthday, July 9-August 3, 1997

As you celebrate together with Emma and Nano

Erika Brianna Grau

July 9-August 3, 1997

Anoxic brain injury due to ruptured uterus (VBAC)

Parents: Ray and Yvette Grau

Siblings: Nik and Nataly



Happy 9th Birthday, Livi!

Our sweet Alivia, it has been nine years, and we miss you every day like it is day one. The world has changed so much in these nine years and so have we. Because of you we are able to love others in a different way, to see the good in a negative situation and rejoice that God works in mysterious ways that we will not understand until we get to heaven. Still to this day we carry the scripture, Jeremiah 29:11, in our hearts, and it gets us through each day we have to live without you.

Happy heavenly birthday, Livi Girl!
Love,
Mommy, Daddy, Jaxson and Lauryn

Alivia Elizabeth-Grace Walker

July 24, 2006

Incompetent cervix

Parents: Robert and Liz Walker

Siblings: Jaxson and Lauryn Walker

**Happy 1st Birthday, Xander!**

My angels, to my dear angel in heaven, I just want you to know you are always in my thoughts and how much I love you so. I know you are in God's care and that is how it should be, but when I get to heaven, He will give you back to me.

Xander Lee Morelli

June 25, 2014

Incompetent cervix

Also remembering

Zachary Lee Morelli

January 30, 2015

Incompetent cervix

Parents: Nick and Kim Morelli

**Happy 1st Birthday, Kirby!**

Happy 1st birthday, sweet baby girl. This has been the roughest year of our lives. Not a day passes we don't think of you and miss you so much. Your big brother asks about you and has had to learn more than a 4-year-old should. We are thankful for the friends and family who have prayed for you in the weeks before your death, and who mourned with us at your passing. Forever in our hearts, enjoy your peace in heaven and until we meet again.

With all our love,
Mommy, Daddy, Axel and Gunther

Kirby Lynn Dick

August 4, 2014

Severe IUGR

Also remembering

Baby Dick

Miscarried May 5, 2009

Parents: Bernie and Karri Dick

Siblings: Axel and Gunther

**Happy 3rd Birthday, Jowell!**

A birthday tribute for our Lil' One,
Jowell Ivan Castro

I thought of you today,
but that's nothing new
I thought about you yesterday,
and the days before that, too.

I think of you in silence,
I often speak your name
All I have are memories,
and a picture in a frame

Your memory's my keepsake,
with which I will never part
God has you in his safekeeping,
I have you in my heart



Jowell Ivan Castro

July 11-12, 2012

Unknown cause

Daddy: Ivan Castro

Happy 5th Birthday, Apple and Blueberry!

Hope "Apple" and Faith "Blueberry" fulfilled their purpose here on earth and are home in heaven. Their spirit lives on through their siblings, and their love continues on in the hearts of Mama and Daddy. We miss you and will see the both of you on the other side.

Happy birthday, little angels!

Hope and Faith Barrientos

July 7, 2010

Pre-term labor

Parents: David and Priscilla Barrientos

Siblings: Violet, Iris and David Abram

**Happy 3rd Birthday, William!**

Happy birthday again, William! You are loved and missed by grandparents, aunts and uncles, and of course your immediate family. While we're anxiously awaiting the arrival of your baby sister, we're learning new ways to honor your memory. We love you and can't wait to see you someday. Lots of love until we're all reunited.

William Christopher Thomas

July 7, 2012

Late miscarriage

Parents: Shaun and Amie Thomas

Siblings: Hope Bushway due September



Happy 8th Birthday, Jaylen!

Happy birthday to my angel! I miss you every single day, Jaylen. I wish I could hold you, hug you, love on you, play with you and teach you. I love you always!

Love,
Mommy!

Jaylen Matlock
Stillborn July 15, 2007
Mommy: Torie Myers



Silent Tear

Each night we shed a silent tear,
As we speak to you in prayer.
To let you know we love you,
And just how much we care.
Take our million teardrops,
Wrap them up in love,
Then ask the wind to carry them,
To you in heaven above.

~ Author Unknown
www.lastingpost.com
retrieved December 4, 2011

On June 11, 2015 M.E.N.D. mom, Geri Shannon, joined her precious baby Theo in heaven due to a sudden illness - just one week after submitting the birthday tribute below to be printed in this issue. Today, Geri celebrates Theo's 9th birthday with him in heaven. Our hearts remain heavy as we miss Geri so much. Geri faithfully attended M.E.N.D. support groups for months following Theo's death. We grew to love Geri and her family, especially her mom, Arlette Fleurima, who is from Haiti, and stayed with Geri and her husband Ted for months following Theo's death. Over time, Geri began volunteering with the Walk to Remember, organizing the registration and check-in. Geri developed a new and efficient way of quickly checking in our hundreds of families who attend. Most certainly, the DFW Walk to Remember will never be the same without our Geri.

Geri leaves behind her loving husband, Ted, and adorable 6-year-old, Ysabel, along with her beautiful sisters and her wonderful parents. Geri will forever be missed, and honestly, there is a part of us who are a little envious she's now reunited with her beloved son. We love you, Geri....until we meet again.

Happy 9th Birthday, Theo!

We love and miss you dearly, sweet boy.
Have a great birthday party in heaven!

Love,
Mom, Dad, Ysabel, and your whole family

Theo Fleurima Shannon
Stillborn August 10, 2006
Stroke
Parents: Ted and Geri Shannon
Sibling: Ysabel



Geri Shannon and Liz Walker

Painting with a Purpose

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri participated in and received donations from Painting with a Purpose hosted by The Social Easel. Beautiful dandelions blowing in the wind were painted by 36 participants, raising over \$540 for M.E.N.D.!



Pregnancy Loss and the Medical Profession: A Parent's Perspective

Written by Alana Rosenstein
As Published on www.huffingtonpost.com on April 30, 2015



There were many reminders when I went for my routine gynecological check-up that morning. The waiting room where I had looked up baby names on my cellphone, trying to find the perfect middle name to go with the first name we had selected. The fetal monitoring room where the medical assistant had searched for my baby's heartbeat, trying to look nonchalant as the minutes ticked by without success. The office where I had waited anxiously for my husband to arrive and learn the sad news that our son had died in utero at 31 weeks gestation.

I sat there that morning seven months later, my womb conspicuously empty, trying to avoid looking at the faces of mummies-to-be smiling up from the covers of pregnancy magazines, taking deep breaths to avoid becoming overwhelmed by the cascade of memories and emotions flooding back.

I decided to text with the other moms from my pregnancy loss support group, knowing that they would understand and help me through. I was still holding my cellphone when Dr. P., the physician who had delivered my stillborn son, walked into the room.

"Do you have pictures?" he asked, smiling warmly and gesturing at the cellphone in my hand. I looked at him quizzically, unsure if I had heard him correctly -- giving him an opportunity to take his foot out of his mouth, if I had. No luck. "Do you have pictures of the baby?" he repeated, his tone was avuncular; he was clearly oblivious to who I was or his mistake.

"He... was... stillborn," I said slowly, my mouth feeling like cotton. Recognition spread over Dr. P's face. An immediate apology was quickly followed by offer of a referral to another gynecologist. The appointment proceeded awkwardly from there. I'm not sure who felt worse or who was comforting whom.

When I have shared this story with friends and acquaintances, many have had harsh words for Dr. P -- some calling him a jerk or worse. While I am frustrated by his inept handling of my visit, I don't think it's fair to ascribe Dr. P's behavior that day to a character flaw.

I believe that most people who go into the medical field do so out of a compassionate desire to help, fix and make better -- and Dr. P is no different. But in medicine, as in life, the universe has a way of confronting us with our own helplessness and powerlessness, at times.

Few situations highlight our inability to fix and make better more starkly than the loss of a baby. Medical professionals treating a family affected by miscarriage or stillbirth are faced not only with the inability to fix or heal the baby who has died, but also uncertainty about how to respond to the grieving parents.

As a parent who has been through two miscarriages and a stillbirth, I have had the opportunity to experience medical professionals' responses to pregnancy loss first hand. Some were comforting and validating. Others -- like Dr. P's -- have been clumsy, hurtful, or off-putting. While I believe that each of the medical professionals described herein were good actors who wanted to provide comfort and care, some lacked the tools to do so, or were hindered by their own reactions to inexplicable loss. Below are some thoughts, grounded in my personal experiences, that I hope medical professionals will consider when treating families affected by pregnancy loss:

Remember: What could be a routine part of your work day may be one of the worst moments of our lives.

At the D&C after my first miscarriage, one of the last things I heard before falling asleep under the anesthesia was the sound of my doctor complaining gracelessly about the temperature in the procedure room. The first thing I heard upon waking up was the sound of two medical assistants arguing. While it is normal for day-to-day conversations and interactions to play out in the work place, it is also important to be respectful of the grieving parent and foster a supportive environment when providing medical care.

It means a lot to know that our loss matters.

I will never forget the reproductive endocrinologist who took the time to call me personally and offer condolences after our first miscarriage. It sent the comforting message that our baby and our loss mattered and were worthy of his time.

In each of our losses, subtle messages from the medical staff validated or invalidated the importance of our baby and our loss. There was the doctor who met us at the hospital for the sonogram that confirmed our son's death in utero at 31 weeks pregnancy (even though there was another doctor present) and sat with us as we cried. Her responsiveness was juxtaposed with the doctor and resident who seemed in no rush to come to my bedside when I was in active labor, leaving me scared, confused and in pain through the first two-thirds of the delivery and wondering if I mattered less because my baby was dead.

Be mindful that there is a fine line between normalizing the commonality of pregnancy loss and minimizing our experience.

While it can be helpful to communicate that pregnancy loss, particularly first trimester miscarriage, is more common than we may realize, it is important to convey that this does not take away from the trauma and pain of our own loss. Just as we wouldn't minimize the grief experienced by a middle-aged adult whose parent died by saying, "You know, it is very common for middle-aged adults to lose a parent," we should avoid minimizing the pain of someone who has experienced early pregnancy loss.

Realize that shock and adrenaline may protect us in the first days, with deeper emotions setting in as shock fades and hormones plummet.

I recall seeing my doctor five days after my first miscarriage, confident that I was coping well. A few days later, reality set in, hormones shifted, and I found myself highly anxious and depressed. Doctors should consider checking in with women several of weeks after a pregnancy loss and screen for postpartum depression, rather than basing their assessment of our mental and emotional wellbeing solely on the hours and days immediately after a loss.

Consider ways to ease the stress of follow up medical visits.

As the opening story illustrates, medical visits can raise many strong emotions for women who have experienced pregnancy loss. Medical practices should consider steps to make these appointments less emotionally taxing, for example not making us sit in the waiting room with pregnant women and flagging our charts so we are not asked inappropriate questions. While I would like to think that my experience with Dr. P was an anomaly, unfortunately I know other women who have faced similar questions after a loss.

If we become pregnant again, don't minimize or mock our fears of another loss in an attempt to alleviate our anxiety (or your own discomfort with our anxiety).

I'll never forget the doctor who -- after my first miscarriage -- mocked my fears in my next pregnancy, pointing to my engorged breasts and saying, "they don't stand up on their own like that if you're not pregnant." Just moments later, he had the unfortunate task of diagnosing my second miscarriage.

Inexplicably, that same doctor couldn't resist the urge to poke fun again when I saw him 12 weeks pregnant a year later. First, he mocked my husband for not wanting to look at the sonogram screen until a heartbeat was confirmed, whispering to me that we shouldn't tell him that we saw the heartbeat because he hadn't had the faith to look. Later, he responded to our nervous questions by saying he would "laugh my ass off" when this child was a rebellious teenager. Far from being comforting his response was off-putting and invalidating of our fears. Unfortunately, his cocky reassurance was also misplaced. Our son was stillborn.

Rather than try to talk parents out of how we are feeling, recognize that fear of loss is part of our reality and support us as we try to live with it.

Know that your care matters, even when there is a sad outcome.

While my story may not have a happy ending, it does have heroes: the physician's assistant who stayed late on a Sunday to make sure I got progesterone for a pregnancy in jeopardy; the receptionist who found a private office where we could wait for the sonogram that confirmed our son's loss; the nurse who coached and comforted me through the delivery while we waited for the doctor to arrive. Through their actions, these professionals conveyed the message: *you matter and your baby matters*. That, after all, is what every patient -- and every parent -- wants to hear.

♥ Alana Rosenstein,
Mommy to Matthew Nemo, Hannah and Emma

She Matters

I often feel haunted, most recently, by the questions that will never be answered. As we approach her 2nd birthday, I begin pondering those days surrounding her birth, those hours all over again. Some of the questions will likely never be answered. I don't always know that I really want to know. But I do. Because it is my daughter and I am her mother. I am her mother, and I don't know where she went when they took her away. I don't know what happened. They came to me and took my daughter six hours after she was born. Maybe seven. And they walked out of the hospital with her. Who carried her? Did they know who she was? That she mattered? Why don't I know the name of the person who carried her away from me? Who takes a baby away from the mother, seven hours after birth, and never meets the mother? Did they care about her or ask her name? Or did they place her in the back of a van and drive away?

Who thinks it makes sense to not come introduce themselves to me as they carry my most precious cargo away from me forever?

What haunts me significantly is not knowing if she was alone. Did I give my daughter over to someone who placed her in the back of a van? Can anyone else out there imagine handing over your newborn to travel in the dark, in the back of a van, alone? And you never even know who they are? Why, when my husband took her out of the room, away from me to the nurses, did they meet him in the hallway with toe tags and a black bag? Why did they do that? Why did he have to see that? Where was the dignity in that?

Where did she go? Were they sent just to pick up just my daughter or did they make multiple stops? Where did she go after they got to the funeral home? Who cared for her? Who carried her in? Did they just read her name off a page and sign over her body to another person to watch over her? Or was she alone, in the back of a building somewhere, while I slept in the hospital under medication induced hibernation? Where was she? Not only do I not know, but nobody even cared to tell me. I spent less time with her on this planet, outside of my body, than the average person does in one single day of work, and then other people took her away and had days of time that I did not have. The funeral home owner, director, the person who conducted the autopsy. These people likely had more interaction with her than I ever did and I don't know their names. They had DAYS with her. I had HOURS. My brain can't seem to comprehend this.

Do they know she mattered? Do they know why she was named and how much she was intensely wanted beyond reasonable human emotion?

I'm jealous of their time. On days like today when I think about her hair, I think about the fact that they had time to touch her and be with her and instead, she was somewhere in that morgue alone. Without her mother.

I think this is part of why people are so drawn to spending time at the cemetery soon after burial. It's a ceremonial return of the loved one and for us, it meant we finally "had her back." Imagine any other circumstance where you give over your 7-hour-old infant and then wait days to see her again. When you finally do, you at most can sit near her grave, six feet above where her body rests. So close yet so incredibly far away.

The current reality is that I grapple with handing over my 7-hour-old infant without demanding to speak to the person who took her. I didn't look them in the eye and explain who I was and why this child mattered and why they needed to send a second person to sit with her as they drove to the funeral home. That I wanted someone to accompany her. I would have requested someone ride with her. I know that it's unreasonable to request someone be with her at the funeral home at all times. I get it. But she was still my infant and I don't know any mom who is capable of tuning so far into their rational minds and logically telling themselves that it's "ok" for her to be alone because it really doesn't matter anymore.

Was she respected while there? Was she handled appropriately, with dignity? Did they handle her as they would a living newborn? Did they care for her the way they would for a precious living 7 pound, 13 ounce tiny little baby? Did they admire her hair? Her cheeks? Her tiny hands? Can anyone really be in the presence of a tiny newborn and not feel overcome with emotion? Or did they even care? Did they look at her itty bitty fingers and her eyelashes?

I often can't get the image of her alone in the back of some vehicle, driving away from the hospital, away from her parents, in the middle of the night, minutes after being taken out of her mother's arms. Minutes after I held her and apologized to her for what had happened and how I didn't protect her or fight for her when the midwives dismissed me all those weeks in pregnancy. I didn't fight to protect her more. I held her alone and apologized. I spent the majority of my time alone with her in those last moments crying and saying I was sorry. And then they took her and I don't know where she went. It's haunting and overwhelming and sad in ways that I don't know how to adequately put into words. They put her in a BAG. They put my child, the one I wanted for years and years, through every second of infertility and IVF and medications and doctor appointments, the child who was our amazing miracle, they put her in a BAG. And I don't know how long she was in there and how long she was there, alone, while her mother had no clue.

I feel guilty that I didn't spend even more time with her the day of the funeral. I knew we had a few hours. My final hours. I was tired and that is likely not even close to how exhausted we all truly were. We just planned a party we never wanted to have in the span of four days, mere hours after having a baby, and we were all attempting to come to terms with

Derechos de los Padres

Nosotros en M.E.N.D. tratamos de enfocar en la miríada de cuestiones físicas, mentales y emocionales después de la muerte de un bebé. Sin embargo, quizás no hemos tratado los “asuntos necesarios” después de una pérdida. Mi Jonathan nació muerto hace 20 años en un tiempo cuando yo era responsable de presentar mi propia reclamación al seguro. Realmente es un trabajo de medio tiempo para nosotras que sufrimos problemas de salud, resultando en numerosos citas médicas regulares, y acompañadas con montones de papeleo confusos para ordenar y tratar de entender. Además, me encontré regularmente con necesidad de hablar con representantes de seguros pidiendo ayuda y claridad. De la vista de ellos, podrían decir que tuve un bebé, pero nada en sus expedientes indicaba que mi bebé había muerto. Por lo tanto, cada vez que tuve una conversación con un empleado de seguro y con bien intenciones, él o ella me felicitaban por el nacimiento de mi bebé, a la que siempre busqué compasión y simpatía y corregía las felicitaciones.

Todavía puede ser una pesadilla, pero afortunadamente la mayoría de oficinas médicas y hospitales ahora son requeridos de presentar nuestros reclamos médicos para nosotros, algo que nos alivia nuestras cargas, especialmente mientras estamos lamentando. Sin embargo, hay todavía preguntas como, ¿Qué cubre la póliza de seguro y qué no cubre? ¿Hasta qué punto está el bebé cubierto por nuestro plan si el bebé nació vivo y se le da atención médica? ¿Cubre la póliza arreglos funerarios y entierros? ¿Considera el IRS a nuestro bebé como dependiente por efectos fiscales? ¿Y la cuestión de tiempo fuera del trabajo? Sorprendentemente, muchas compañías y empresas no permiten que las madres tomen el mismo tiempo fuera del trabajo que se hubiera permitido si el bebé vivió. ¿No saben que una mamá probablemente necesita más tiempo para lamentar? Y, ¿qué pasa con los papas? ¿Califican para aprovechar del acto médico de la familia o solo las mamás? Estos son sólo un puñado de aspectos de negocio después de una pérdida - es increíblemente abrumador.

Un par de semanas después del nacimiento sin vida de Jonathan, las facturas médicas comenzaron a llegar. Recuerdo que casualmente mientras ordenaba el correo un día cuando mi corazón se hundió cuando me di cuenta de que tres facturas eran de mi estancia prolongada del hospital y de la cesárea. Con rencor las avente atreves de la habitación. No se me ocurrió que aunque nuestro bebé murió, e incluso con un buen seguro, todavía les deberíamos miles de dólares para mi hospital por la extensa estancia, cesárea, funeral de Jonathan y entierro y su lápida. Familiares y amigos por lo general no se dan cuenta que estos son asuntos que tenemos que tratar en cima del dolor de nuestro bebé, agravando drásticamente nuestra tristeza, la frustración y el estrés. ¿Por lo tanto, cómo podemos dar atención y tratar estas responsabilidades y entender nuestros derechos legales y de impuestos, mientras estamos tratando de cuidar de nosotros mismos físicamente y mentalmente?

En primer lugar, espero que información imprimida en esta edición responderá algunas de sus preguntas. En segundo lugar, apunten un familiar de confianza familiar o amistad que puede investigar respuestas de su parte, hablar con representantes de su compañía de seguros, hospital, Departamento de recursos humanos en el trabajo e incluso un CPA, si es necesario. Esto puede requerir que usted esté en la misma habitación que la persona designada para otorgar el permiso de esta persona a hablar por teléfono de su parte. No tenga miedo de explicarles a los representantes que necesitan gracia y tiempo extra porque su bebé murió. Puede ser difícil revelar su pérdida a un extraño, pero creo que encontrarán la explicación favorable.

Sobre todo, entiendan que probablemente tienen derechos financieros que a la mejor no se dan cuenta, pero requiere tener paciencia y tiempo para entenderlo. Trabajen lentamente, hagan todo lo posible para no permitir esto añadir a su dolor y buscar ayuda. Ruego que el Señor les den comprensión sobrenatural de la letra, representantes compasivos, y que Él les envíe a su camino aquellos que son expertos en conocer sus derechos.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*
Presidente y Fundadora
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y Mitchell bebé Mitchell

the fact she was dead. And I was exhausted. And I don't think I woke up in time to get up to the funeral home as early as I wanted. How selfish does that sound? I was too tired to get myself up and out of the house to spend even more time with her before she was gone from me forever.

I wonder where she went in those days. Who was with her. Who they were. If they know she mattered. She mattered. She matters. She matters very much

♥ *Lauren Ashlock,*
Mommy to Rhiannan Faye,
M.E.N.D.—Dallas

M.E.N.D.

Chapter Corner**Chapter Meeting****Information****M.E.N.D.—Houston**

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
4500 Bissonnet, Ste 337B,
Bellaire, Texas 77401

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
Lone Star College,

3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,
The Woodlands, Texas 77384

Director: Stormy Mitchell
stormym@mend.org, (281) 374-8528

Subsequent pregnancy group meets
on odd numbered months

on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,
led by Chiara Ott (chiara@mend.org).

Daddy's group meets quarterly
on the 3rd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,
led by Greg Miller (stephaniem@mend.org)

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana

Meets the 3rd Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehab Hospital
2400 St. Michael Drive
Texarkana, Texas 75503

Director: Monica Davis
monica@mend.org, (903) 490-1210

M.E.N.D.—NW Washington

Meets the 2nd Monday at 6:30 p.m.
Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room
1800 Myhre Rd.

Silverdale, Washington 98383

Gig Harbor Meeting

Meets the 4th Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

St. Anthony Hospital/Greenpoint Dining Room

11567 Canterwood Blvd NW,

Gig Harbor, Washington 98332

Director: Stacy McGhee
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

Project H.O.P.E.

1419 S. Enterprise

Springfield, Missouri 65804

Director: Kathryn Gold
kathryn@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Caprock Home Health System

1619 S Kentuck, Ste F640

Amarillo, Texas 79102

Director: Becky Anderson
becky@mend.org, (806) 570-4344

M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates***Tulsa***

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa continues to welcome new families each month. We will be working on fundraising for our chapter so we can reach out to even more grieving families.

Lisa Daily

SW Missouri

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri had two successful fundraising events: our yard sale and the painting class with The Social Easel! These events raised over \$1,300 for M.E.N.D. Thank you to everyone who donated items or came to our fun evening of painting. We appreciate your support!

I want to personally thank all of you who have so kindly and patiently supported me as I transitioned into the directorship of M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri chapter.

Kathryn Gold

NW Washington

Thank you to all that participated in the Kitsap Great Give. We raised over \$200. A big thanks to the Suquamish Tribe for its generous grant of \$500 to our chapter. We will host a garage sale this summer, and also have a raffle for a pair of Seahawks game tickets for our summer fundraisers.

M.E.N.D.—NW Washington sponsored the Tears Rock and Walk in Tacoma, and hope we were able to reach out to grieving families in the area, that they may find our meeting in Gig Harbor a helpful place for support.

Stacy McGhee

Chicagoland

M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland is so thankful for the continued opportunities we have to support and walk alongside grieving moms and dads in our area. We have been blessed by Jenn Frighetto helping us spread the word about our new chapter by sharing with local newspapers and magazines all that M.E.N.D. offers to hurting moms and dads who have lost babies.

Sara Hintz

Wichita Falls

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls held our first Life to Remember ceremony on Mother's Day. It was a beautiful event with a guest speaker, special music and balloon release. We want to thank everyone who volunteered, contributed and attended the event. We hope to make this an annual event!

Sarah Fukasawa

Amarillo

Our Amarillo chapter is enjoying our new location! We want to thank CHHS for letting us use their facility. Bunco for Babies is coming up in September. More details to come.

Becky Anderson

Bryan/College Station

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station is growing, and God is opening many doors for us! We had a wonderful Spirit Night at South College Station Chick-Fil-A. Thank you to all our College Station families who came out to support us. We also want to thank Southern Blush, our local beauty studio, for providing our moms with a fabulous spa night as a Mother's Day gift for each of us! For more information about our meetings or upcoming events, please email me at jennie@mend.org or join our Facebook page.

Jennie Drude

Texarkana

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana continues to minister to families through our monthly meetings, phone calls, emails and through our Facebook page. God continues to introduce new families to us, and we are so thankful He is using this ministry to heal broken hearts.

Monica Davis

Houston

M.E.N.D.—Houston is already preparing for our Walk To Remember on October 3! We are excited to see how God will mend hearts through the Walk ceremony this year. We are gathering items for our silent auction. If you own a business or would like to make a donation of any item for the Walk auction, please email Stormy at stormym@mend.org for more information. We would also like to thank the Arie Witt Foundation for its donation to M.E.N.D. from the proceeds of their 2nd Annual Crawfish Boil. We also had a very successful online fundraiser in May! We raised a lot of money to help us to continue serving the grieving mommies and daddies in the Houston area. Thank you to everyone who gave!

Stormy Mitchell

**M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station**

Meets the 2nd Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.
Texas Avenue Baptist Church
3400 State Highway 6 S,
College Station, Texas 77845
Director: Jennie Drude
jennie@mend.org, (979) 220-7851

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
Canyon Crossing
1651 E Old North Rd.
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063
Director: Lisa Daily
lisa@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls, Texas

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
Christ Home Place Ministries
1420 Twin Oaks Street
Wichita Falls, Texas 76302
Director: Sarah Fukasawa
sarahf@mend.org, (940) 642-3284

M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1st Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.
St Peter Lutheran Church
202 E Schaumburg Road
Schaumburg, Illinois 60194
Director: Sara Hintz
saraann@mend.org, (630) 267-9134

M.E.N.D. *Support Group Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex*

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings

are held the 2nd Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Daddies group

meets the 2nd Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

A time for dads to meet together and discuss topics relevant to them as fathers. Our moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion.

Subsequent pregnancy group

meets the 4th Tuesday from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Led by Liz Walker: liz@mend.org
For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

Food and Fellowship

are held the 4th Thursday of every month at 8:00 p.m. at the Corner Bakery in Southlake Town Center

A time to relax and meet with other M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting.

Contact Brittney Fish:
brittney@mend.org

Infertility group

meets the 3rd Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Cheryl Davis for meeting location and information at Cheryl@mend.org
For families experiencing infertility after a loss.

Parenting After Loss Playgroup

Meets monthly at various locations in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex.

Contact Magen Kaye: Magen@mend.org or call (214) 435-3870

Mommies AND daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. meetings.

Unless otherwise noted, all support group meetings are held at:

Wells Fargo Bank

800 W. Airport Freeway

Irving, TX 75062

(Located in the Crystals Pizza parking lot, between MacArthur and O'Connor)
Meetings will be in the bank board room, located on the first floor.

For more information, call (972) 506-9000.

In Loving Memory**Angel Batrez**

July 9, 2013
Parents: Tony and Stefanie Batrez
Given by Abuelita Isabel Tristan and Uncle Ben

Levi Samuel Bowmer

April 19, 2013
Trisomy 13 and Tetralogy of Fallot
with absent pulmonary valve
Given by parents Sam and Jenae Bowmer

Jackson David Crowe

August 22—September 9, 1998
Congenital heart defect
Parents: David and Marie Crowe
Siblings: Hannah and Andrew
Given by Gail Bohdan and Richard Rudnicki

Abigail Grace Crump

July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Given by parents Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Riley and Parker Davis

November 14, 2006
Prematurity
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis
and little sister Annalise

Dharma Lucille Drude

March 31—April 1, 2008
Anencephaly

Stella Darling Drude

January 23, 2014
Anencephaly and exencephaly

Liza Belle Drude

February 23, 2015
Unknown cause
Parents: Jason and Jennie Drude
Siblings: Max and Mollie
Given by Kyle and Kristen Rabe

Caleb Scott Fann

December 1, 2003
PROM

Baby August Fann

Miscarried August 13, 2004
Parents: Jonathan and Heather Fann
Little sister: Madison
Gifts given by
Jeremy and Kathleen Moore
Jeremy and Kristi Morris

Paislee Ann Frette

April 4-5, 2012
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome
Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette
Gifts given by grandparents
James and LuAnn Junkin
John Joseph and Brenda Sanchez

Lauren Paige Grimes

Stillborn March 6, 1999
Unknown cause
Baby Grimes
Miscarried January 25, 2001
Given by parents John and Paula Grimes
and sister Raleigh

Samuel Mark Hintz

Stillborn October 29, 2008
Cord accident

Joel David Hintz

Stillborn July 3, 2009
Baby Hintz
Miscarried February 2010
Given by parents Greg and Sara Hintz
and siblings Louis, Caleb, Anna, Elijah,
Hope, Levi and Isaiah

Serenity Peace Hostetler

Stillborn June 24, 2013
Cord accident
Given by parents Jimmy and Shelly Hostetler

Karlene Jewel Hostetler

August 15, 2004
Multiple birth defects

Angel Rosebud Hostetler

Miscarried June 12, 2010
Precious Whisper Hostetler
Miscarried August 14, 2011

Miracle Sunshine Hostetler

Miscarried October 10, 2011

Serenity Hope Hostetler

Miscarried February 3, 2013

Roseleen Grace Hostetler

Miscarried March 20, 2014

Starleen Faith Hostetler

Miscarried July 4, 2014
Given by parents Lyndon and Luann Hostetler
and siblings Kaitlyn, Karen, and Kristen

Baby Jackel

Miscarried January 27, 2014
Parents: Julie and Richard Jackel
Brother: Aidan
Given by the Armendariz family

Myrin Lenay McNeil

Stillborn June 19, 2013
Unknown cause
Given by mommy Jolynn Tizeno

Chase Austin Miller

April 21, 2011
Incompetent cervix
Given by parents Greg and Stefanie Miller
and sister Cora

Gideon Zeller Mitchell

Stillborn May 17, 2011
Membranous cord insertion

Avery Mitchell

Miscarried May 2008
Unknown cause

Joy Mitchell

December 2014
Vanishing twin
Given by parents Todd and Stormy Mitchell
and little brothers Silas and Justus

Lilly Joy Moore

Miscarried March 2, 2011
Early pregnancy loss
Gifts given
Parents Kathleen and Jeremy Moore
and brothers Isaac and Judah
Grandmother Marsha Neely

Margot Lily Perry

Stillborn June 10, 2013
Cord accident
Parents: Brandon and Marisa Perry
Siblings: Adeline and Bennett
Given by grandparents Norman and Mary Lorentz

Andrew Michael Pittman

Stillborn March 23, 2010
Cord accident
Given by parents Kindale and Melody Pittman

Hannah Grace Sherman

Stillborn August 12, 2005
Cystic hygroma
Given by parents Randy and Toni Sherman
and sister Kaitlin

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997
TTTS and Polyhydramnios
Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith
and siblings Travis and Julia

Mercedes Ruth Spigener

Stillborn September 21, 1995
Intramembranous insertion of umbilical cord

Twin Blossoms Spigener

Miscarried July and August 1996

Baby Spigener

Miscarried February 2004
Parents: Jana and Grant Spigener
Siblings: Wyatt, Ford, Porter, Calvin and Sadie
Given by grandparents Barry and Sheryl Spigener

Twins Urda

Miscarried February 2014
Rosalie Urda
Stillborn October 31, 2014
Unknown cause
Given by parents Janelle and Peter Urda

Kaiya Dawn Walker

October 23, 2009
PPROM
Mommy: LaRhesa Johnson
Given by grandparents Larry and Marry Johnson

Jacob Martin Wilhite

April 25, 2012
Incompetent cervix
Isaac Odell Wilhite
April 1, 2015
Incompetent cervix
Parents: Kessi and David Wilhite
Big brother: Caleb
Gifts given by
Terri and John Brasher
Heidi Davis

Subsequent Births



James and Kristen Holland
of McKinney, Texas,
along with big brother Logan
and big sister Chloe,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Nolan James,
born January 23, 2015,
measuring 5 lb., 13oz.,
and 19.5 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Connor James,
stillborn April 27, 2011

Mark and Jenn Brown
of Dallas, Texas,
along with big brother Carson,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Ellison Aubrey,
born March 30, 2015.
The family lovingly remembers
Tucker Andrew Brown,
stillborn January 30, 2014,
cord accident

Nathan Thomas and Jennifer Jones
of Browns Summit, North Carolina,
along with siblings Jada and Nataleigh,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Ayden Neil Thomas,
born October 25, 2014,
measuring 7 lb., 5 oz.,
and 18.75 inches long.
The family lovingly remembers
Avery Neil Thomas,
stillborn August 24, 2013

Arie Witt

November 5, 2013
Unknown cause
Parents: Mike and Candice Witt
Gifts given by
Arie Witt Foundation
Timothy and Brenda Kenny

Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman

Stillborn March 30, 2007
Cord accident
Given by parents Al and Amber Zuckerman
and brothers Eli and Alexander

The Counselor's Corner

Written by Susan A. Adams, PhD, LPC-S, NCC

I have sat across from many "young" mothers and fathers as they look at me with tear-filled eyes full of questions. Young is in quotes because I am not referring to years of age, but to abbreviated moments with a child who will never experience much of life. For some of these special children, they will never experience life outside of the mother's womb, and for others, their time on this earth has been cut painfully short.

As I walk part of my clients' painful journey with them, I am struck by the depth of their love and the breadth of their pain. It doesn't matter whether this is the first child or the twenty-first ... the pain hurts just as deeply because this was a life that was extinguished before he or she had time to really experience life and living.

The most frequent question that parents ask is "why?" Why did this happen? Why me? Why my baby or babies? Certainly there are no answers to these why questions. Would it make any difference in the individual's or couple's sorrow if they knew the answer to those questions? Perhaps the greater question should focus on the life lost ... Lost to the family, lost to the world, lost to the love that my clients wanted to share with this precious person. However, in the middle of their painful journey, I help clients to understand they are not alone in their grief because the Lord will walk with them.

This child will also not "disappear" without making an impact on this world. This little life that was present for a short period of time often teaches us more about life and living than someone who perhaps lives to a ripe old age, but never fully experiences the fullness of life. This small child, whose time was so brief, teaches us of love and the tenuousness of life in general. Certainly none of us are promised a tomorrow, but we often forget to focus on the preciousness of the present.

We also learn about faith... that deep bedrock faith that comes from having known love and joy, however brief, and then experienced the depths of sorrowful pain that only a parent whose child had died can know. This child has accomplished a lot to have lived such a short time, and it is his or her legacy that will live on in our hearts.

So as we approach the fall, let's remember that just as the earth has seasons, our lives have them as well. Ecclesiastes 3:1-4 tells us of God's seasons. "To everything there is a season, and a time to every purpose under the heaven: A time to be born, and a time to die; a time to plant, and a time to pluck up that which is planted; A time to kill, and a time to heal; a time to break down, and a time to build up; A time to weep, and a time to laugh; a time to mourn, and a time to dance" (KJV). We may not understand God's seasons, and it may be difficult for us to deal with the pain of this particular season of life and living, but remember our hearts have been touched by tiny little footprints that have had a life-changing impact on us for the rest of our lives.

So this fall season when you see a brightly colored leaf fall from the tree, stop and remember you have a bright leaf of your own that will add color to your life and lodge in that hole in your heart forever. What season of life are you living through right now? What lesson will you allow your baby to teach you in this season?

Gifts of Support

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO
West Conroe Baptist Church, Conroe, TX
Tribal funds / Suquamish Indian Tribe
Kelli Walker

Nancy Hagan
Erin Prine
Katherine Sandoval
Mary Wilson
HEB Grocery Company LP

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
 P.O. Box 631566, Irving, TX 75063
 USA
 (972) 506-9000
Return Service Requested

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“... that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God” (2 Corinthians 1:4)

M.E.N.D. Fundraisers *As a non-profit organization, M.E.N.D. is funded solely by private donations and fundraisers. Any assistance you can give us by participating in any or all of these fundraisers is greatly appreciated.*

- **Kroger grocery stores** donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers in Texas and Louisiana who have their Kroger Plus Card linked to M.E.N.D. To link your card, go to www.krogercommunityrewards.com and set up an account if you do not already have one. Once you receive the email after setting up your account, click on “My Account,” then go to “Edit Kroger Community Rewards” and input your Kroger Plus card number. You’ll see a screen with your information in boxes, at the bottom right, there is a box that says Community Rewards. Click that, then enter the M.E.N.D. number, which is 80513. Once that’s entered, you’ll confirm that M.E.N.D. is your charity of choice. This link will be good until the 2013-2014 program expires. You must link your card each year to M.E.N.D.
- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please contact Rebekah (rebekah@mend.org) to obtain the Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.
- **GoodSearch.com** is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Powered by Yahoo!, it is used like any other search engine. To earn money for M.E.N.D. using Goodsearch.com, go to www.goodsearch.com and designate M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice.
- **Ebay** has a charitable giving program that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you sell items on Ebay and would like to designate a percentage of your revenue to M.E.N.D., visit www.missionfish.org to find out how.
- **Igive.com** will donate a penny a search and a portion of each purchase made through their website to M.E.N.D. Sign up today! M.E.N.D.’s cause number is 52025.



www.mend.org