



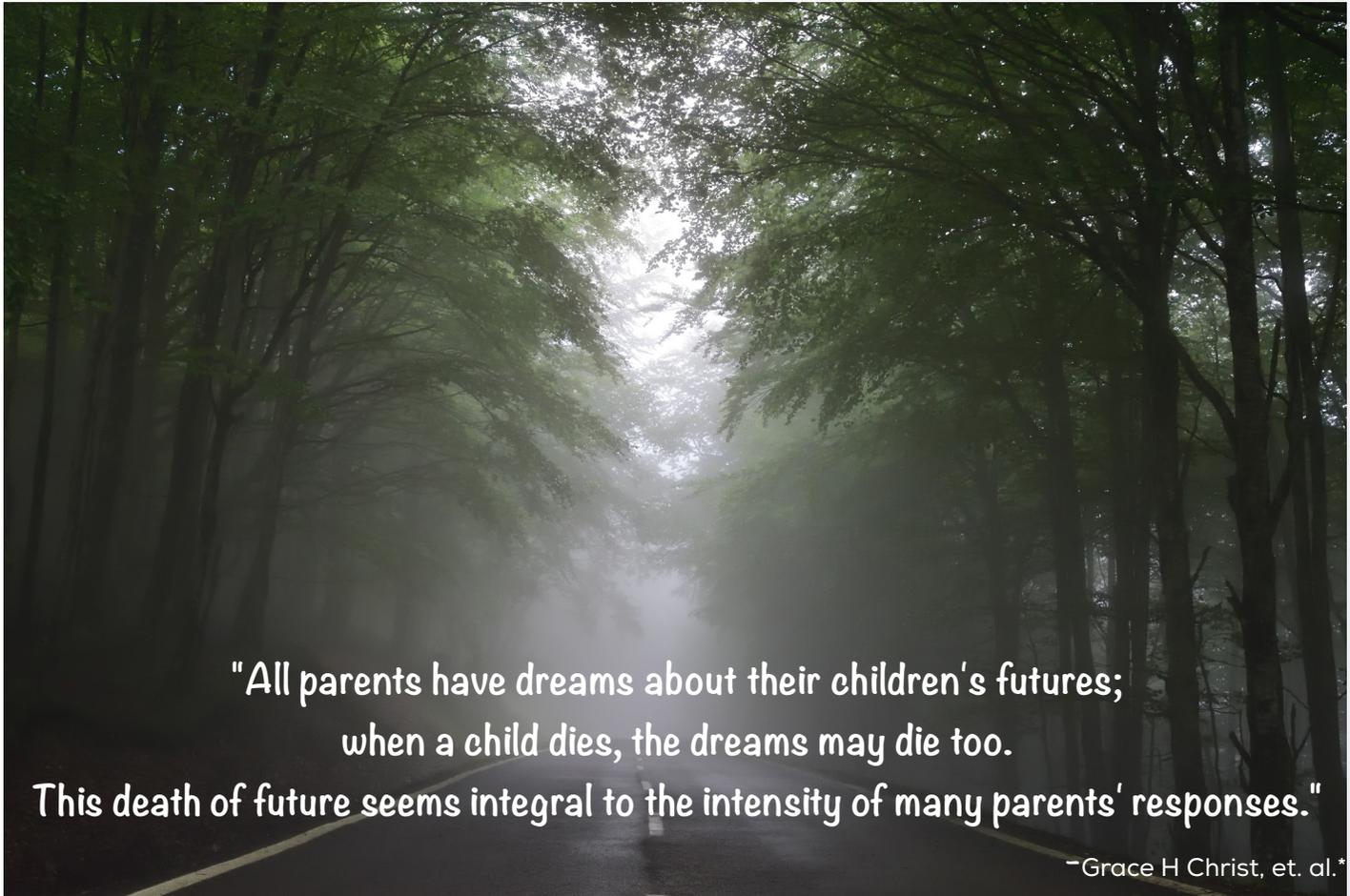
# Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

*Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support*

Volume 26, Issue 5

September/October 2021

©2021 Enduring Hope Press



"All parents have dreams about their children's futures;  
when a child dies, the dreams may die too.

This death of future seems integral to the intensity of many parents' responses."

-Grace H Christ, et. al.\*

## Secondary Fears

The future.... it seems so daunting after a loss. While one life stopped, the world kept going, and we eventually hit a point when we must continue with our lives as well. A once-seemingly clear road is now thick with fog, leaving us unsure how to navigate, and will sometimes alter our course of how we respond in life. Anxiety and fear may become a new response, igniting worry of losing a spouse, a living child, a future pregnancy, etc. In this issue we explore some of these fears and provide some guidance on how to work through them.

### In this issue...

#### Secondary Fears

Rebekah shares her experience with anxiety and even panic attacks for fear that her son and his wife would suffer a loss during a complicated delivery.

*page 3*

#### Why Anxiety is Common...

This article addresses anxiety after a miscarriage and shares some of the types of anxiety. Knowing this will help to determine what is part of the normal process and when to seek more help.

*page 8*

#### Managing Parenting Anxiety

When anxiety kicks in, it can be overwhelming, especially when it is regarding your living children. This article provides guidance on how to handle that anxiety.

*page 10*

**November/December Topic**

*Holidays*

*Deadline: September 30, 2021*

**January/February Topic**

*To Share or Not To Share*

*Deadline: November 30, 2021*

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcome. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the magazine. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please send any submissions to our Magazine Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at [jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org). Any submission printed in our magazine will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our magazines are posted online, please understand your name will be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

Letters to the Editor should be sent to [jennifer@mend.org](mailto: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 it not be published.

**Reprint Policy:** Articles printed in the M.E.N.D. Magazine are copyrighted by M.E.N.D. and/or by the individual authors of certain articles. Articles may not be reprinted without permission from the Magazine Editor or President. The magazine may be reproduced for the purpose of providing it to pregnancy loss support group members or other bereaved families so that they may also have access to the information. The material may not be reproduced in any way, shape or form for profit. Some authors of articles included in the magazine may carry their own copyright and their articles may only be reprinted with permission from the author.

**Birthday Tributes:** M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding magazine. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org).

<u>Heavenly Birthday</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January/February	November 30
March/April	January 31
May/June	March 31
July/August	May 31
September/October	July 31
November/December	September 30



# IN THIS ISSUE

## Articles

Feature Article .....	3
Book Launch: Unexpected .....	6
Why Anxiety is Common.....	8
Managing Parenting Anxiety .....	10
Spanish Translation .....	12
Anxiety .....	15

## Other Features

Birthday Tributes .....	4
Book Review .....	9
In Loving Memory .....	14
Chapter Updates .....	16
About M.E.N.D. ....	18
M.E.N.D. Chapters' Information .....	19

As a national organization, M.E.N.D. Leadership continues to monitor conditions in the United States relating to COVID-19. Since restrictions differ in each state, please follow your chapter on Facebook or connect with your Chapter Director for updates regarding support groups. For information on support groups, including the M.E.N.D. Nationwide Support Group that meets year-round, please see page 19.

\*Quote on cover by Grace H Christ, et. al., "When Children Die: Improving Palliative and End-of-Life Care for Children and Their Families," posted on National Center of Biotechnical Information



## Feature Article

*Feature from our M.E.N.D. President and Founder, Rebekah Mitchell, Mommy to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell*

Following the loss of a baby, it is not uncommon for parents to become very overly protective of their living children. It doesn't matter if the living children are born before or after the loss. Many moms and dads experience fears and anxieties that perhaps they wouldn't even think of if their naivety had not been stolen when their baby died. My living son was 3 ½ years old when our baby Jonathan was stillborn. When I started M.E.N.D. a year later, at our monthly support groups I heard lots of moms talk about their now-fearful parenting, but honestly, I couldn't relate. After our loss, I certainly cherished our little boy even more than I already did, but I didn't begin to fear his getting hit by a car, being kidnapped, or drowning in a swimming pool, any more than I would naturally worry as a mom. However, that all very unexpectedly changed when my son became a grown, married man.

I'm pretty sure the first time I ever had a true panic attack is when my son and daughter-in-law announced they were pregnant. Of course, I was excited beyond words, but I quickly had to slip away to our bathroom because out of nowhere, deeply rooted emotions erupted from the pit of my soul. I was unable to catch my breath, and my heart began racing like crazy. I successfully hid this from them and tried very hard not to ruin a wonderfully joyful night. I had no idea what was happening to me, and I found that I couldn't tell anyone our daughter-in-law, Anna, was pregnant without bursting into tears. In fact, I could hardly talk about it at all the first few weeks without crying. My husband, Byron,

**... I was so afraid what happened to us could happen to them, and I could not fathom watching my kids go through the immense sorrow we had walked through.**

finally asked me one night, "What is this? Why do you keep crying?" After much contemplation, I finally realized I was so afraid what happened to us could happen to them, and I could not fathom watching my

kids go through the immense sorrow we had walked through. I realized then that the trauma of having a stillborn baby must never really go away. I wasn't caught up in possibly not becoming a grandmother.

I was worried sick that I may have to watch my kids become members of this "club."

About the time I settled down and allowed myself to get excited, the 20-week anatomy scan suggested some possible concerns, so the panic started all over again until more detailed tests showed our sweet grandson was indeed a healthy baby.

For months leading up to the long-awaited delivery day, I imagined what emotions I might expect as we all waited for the news that the baby was born. I decided I would surely be nothing but extremely excited. After all, I've been at the hospital waiting for lots of family babies since my tragic loss so many years ago. But then the day came...as soon as her labor was induced, there were complications. The baby was crooked in the womb, and his heart rate decelerated after each contraction, rather than during the contraction. In an attempt to progress the labor, Anna's water was broken very early. I'm not a medical professional, but I've heard way too many horrors of infant death during delivery, not to mention my own personal stillbirth experience due to a cord accident, so when things weren't running textbook smooth that early in the process of labor, I felt anxiety rearing up.

Too many hours went by with no progression, and his little heart was not doing what it was supposed to do during a contraction. I felt myself starting to lose control, but I knew if I did, I'd rightfully get banned from the labor room, and possibly the waiting room. At one point I was asked by the nurse to step out of Anna's room because they needed to get her in a different position. As I was slipping out the door, I heard her doctor whisper, "I think it's a nuchal cord." I couldn't hold back...I said, "That's what I've been afraid of! Get this baby out!" Within seconds, I found myself standing in the middle of the L&D unit as alarms went off, and I witnessed EVERY SINGLE medical person run into my daughter-in-law's room.

# Secondary Fears Following a Loss

Continued on page 7

# Birthday Tributes



## Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Jude!

Happy 5<sup>th</sup> heavenly birthday, sweet boy! I know you are dancing with the angels and watching over your family. Your big brother still remembers you and mentions you often. You are a special part of our family, and we love you very much.

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Joey and June

*Jude William Henrich*

*August 19, 2016*

*Genetic disorder*

*Parents: Joe and Jane Henrich*

*Siblings: Joey and June*



## Happy 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Keiran!

Happy 8<sup>th</sup> birthday to the boy who made me a momma! I hope your heavenly birthday is filled with love and peace. While we miss you in this long wait of life, we know that the joy of seeing you again is another year closer. You are so loved, Keir Bear!

*Keiran David Cobler*

*October 25 - November 1, 2013*

*NEC*

*Also remembering*

*George and Fred Cobler*

*Miscarried March 9, 2017*

*Parents: Brian and Kristina Cobler*

*Sister: Karsyn Cobler*



## Happy 43<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Elizabeth!

Happy birthday, baby girl. It's been another year that you are not here. No party or cake; no pretty dress to buy. I think of you all the time. There will be balloons to heaven again. Happy 43<sup>rd</sup> heavenly birthday, Elizabeth Nicole Garcia. We love you bunches. Your sisters miss you, too. And Alexis, Issac, Samuel, Leah and Xavier. Arianna and Daddy are there with you now. I hope the clouds shake, rattle and roll on your special day, October 18.

Love,  
Mom



*Elizabeth Nicole Garcia*

*Miscarried October 18, 1978*

*Parents: Paul and Jeannie Garcia*

*Siblings: Monica, Sylvia, Christina and Stephanie*

## Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Benjamin!

Happy birthday to our sweet baby boy! Two years in heaven celebrating with Baby G. Our loves, our always and forever. Owners of our hearts! We miss you and love you both very much!

*Benjamin Isaias Garcia*

*September 9, 2019*

*Preterm labor*

*Also remembering*

*Baby G*

*Miscarried February 7, 2019*

*Parents: Norma and Juan Garcia*



## Happy 12<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Sereana!

Joyful 12<sup>th</sup> birthday, Sereana Joy!  
"...In Your presence is fullness of joy..."  
Psalm 16:11

Dear birthday girl, you are in the FULL joy - in the presence of GOD! I'm so happy about you. I so love you. I admire you, and I think so highly of you and the gifts and calling that are irrevocable in you because of just how God made you! (Romans 11:29) Have a wonderful birthday. Hold your new little brother. Sing, sway, dance and celebrate all goodness with him. You've got one proud Momma! Happy birthday, my fabulously sweet, first-born daughter. 12! Wow! I love you! Oh, how I love you, Sereana.

Love,  
Mom

*Sereana Joy Ratulele*

*Stillborn September 9, 2009, at full-term*

*Unknown cause*

*Also remembering*

*Samuel Goodness Ratulele*

*Stillborn April 29, 2021, at 21 weeks*

*Parents: Semi and Laura Ratulele*

*Siblings: Noela Esiteri and Talei Jewel*



## Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Daniel!

It's your 1<sup>st</sup> birthday! I know you are up in heaven having lots of fun, yet I will always wish you could be here with us. Love you, and you will forever be in our hearts, sweet son.

*Daniel Dru Rogers*

*October 29 - November 22, 2020*

*Sudden death/Unknown cause*

*Parents: David and Shombray Rogers*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Nova!

Our precious, Nova, our bright star of hope. We miss you every day, baby. You will never be forgotten. We know you are enjoying heaven and getting to know your extended family. How we wish you were here with us. Our arms ache to hold you, and our hearts long for you. There is a noticeable hole in our family, and quiet in our house. We promise to work to make you proud, and to help you make your mark on this world. We love you, our sweet baby.

Love,  
Mommy, Daddy, and big sister Sarah

*Nova Tikvah Brown  
Miscarried September 22, 2020  
Parents: Kevin and Annie Brown  
Big sister: Sarah*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Baby Bennett!

Sweet baby Bennett, happy 1<sup>st</sup> heavenly birthday! I cannot believe it has been one year since we held you in our arms and kissed you for the last time. We will forever cherish every moment we were able to spend with you earth-side. Your short life brought us so much joy and happiness, and we smile every time we think about you. We miss you so much, sweet boy! I can only imagine how wonderful birthdays in heaven are.

Love always,  
Mommy and Daddy

*Bennett Matthew Witt  
Stillborn September 28, 2020  
Factor V Leiden Blood Clotting disorder  
Also remembering  
Josiah David Witt  
Stillborn November 21, 2019  
Factor V Leiden Blood Clotting disorder  
Aubrianna Diane Witt  
Stillborn June 14, 2021  
Factor V Leiden Blood Clotting disorder  
Parents: Jacob and Kristina Witt  
Big brothers: Jayden and Kasen*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Jasper!

Mommy and Daddy lovingly remember our Little Dragon, our forever baby. You are always in our hearts, Jasper. XoXoXo

*Jasper Benjamin Roberts  
October 30 - November 5, 2020  
Placental abruption  
Parents: Angela and Richard Roberts*



### Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Wyatt James!

Happy 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, Bubba! This year is a milestone that would be big for us. You would be starting school. It's hard to believe it's been five years since we last held you. That is five years closer to holding you again. My arms still ache for you. We look forward to the day we are all reunited again. Your baby sister, Claire, loves you so much as we all do. She always talks about you and asks where you are. I tell her you are with Jesus, and that you and Jesus leave us the beautiful sunsets and rainbows to remind us you are with us. We love you so much!

*Wyatt James Goforth  
October 24, 2016  
Bladder Outlet Obstruction  
Also remembering*

*Baby Goforth  
Miscarried October 28, 2014  
Ellie Ryan Goforth  
April 5, 2017  
Missed miscarriage  
Parents: James and Nichol Goforth  
Sisters: Emersen Rianne and Evelyn Claire*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Franco Alexander!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday to our Franco Alexander. We think of you every day, and miss you so much. We know you are at peace in heaven, and we can't wait to see you again. For now, enjoy your special day with all the angels and the saints. We love you!

-Mama and Papa

*Franco Alexander V. Almanza  
August 3-18, 2020  
Premature and complications  
Parents: Rebecca and Alex Almanza*



### Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Graham!

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday to our loved little man. We miss you every day. We are celebrating you today and hope you feel our love in heaven. We are one day closer to having you in our arms again. We love you, Graham!

*Graham Joseph Wilhite  
July 2, 2019  
Bilateral Renal Agensis  
Parents: Rian and Cari Wilhite  
Siblings: Emmitt, Cate and Miles*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Aria!

Happy birthday, my angel. Mommy and Daddy love and miss you dearly! Not a day goes by we do not think of you and wish you were in our arms again.

*Aria Ava Arroyo  
October 14, 2020  
Premature*

*Parents: Celeste Gee and David Arroyo*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Layla!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> heavenly birthday, our Layla girl. We miss you every single day. We hope you are watching over us as we honor your precious life in any way we can. Mama, Daddy, Ryder, and all your extended family love you so very much.

*Layla Marie Loera  
Stillborn October 28, 2020  
Placental abruption*

*Parents: Sierra and Angel Loera  
Brother: Ryder*



### Happy 14<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Brandon!

Happy 14<sup>th</sup> heavenly birthday, Brandon Isaiah! As we celebrate you more today, we hope you're in heaven celebrating more with your Mom. Your little brother talks about you and your Mom all the time. We love and miss dearly. We think of y'all every second of every day!

Love always, forever in our hearts,  
Yaya, Papaw and Ethan

*Brandon Isaiah Alfaro  
October 19, 2007–February 7, 2008  
Spinal muscular atrophy (SMA)  
Also remembering  
Brandon's mother, Jennifer Alfaro  
June 13, 1983–February 14, 2020  
Grandparents: Tim and Diana Seynaeve  
Little brother: Ethan Alfaro*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Zy'ier!

I love you with all of my heart, and will never forget you. Your scent still lingers day by day. Knowing you're in heaven makes my day a little bit brighter!

*Zy'ier Jerome Richardson  
Stillborn October 3, 2020  
Mother: Taquria Richardson  
Sister: Tahlia*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Nugget!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> heavenly birthday, my sweet Greyson Reign. How I wish we could be celebrating you earth-side. I'd love to see you smile, hear you laugh and feel your warm skin upon my own. Our hearts ache to be with you. Your time with us was so much shorter than I ever would have wanted. The hopes and dreams I had for you have slowly been chipped away as every day passes. We miss you so insanely much. There aren't enough words I could put together to tell you how loved you are. I hope you have a wonderful birthday with Jesus, and I can't wait to hold you again.

*Greyson Reign Howell  
September 12-24, 2020  
Necrotizing enterocolitis  
Parents: Jacquelynn and Justin Howell  
Siblings: Camden and Rowan*



### Happy 7<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Baby Bunn!

We love and miss you so much.  
God needed you more.  
Watch over us always,  
Mom and Dad

*Baby Bunn  
Miscarried October 3, 2014  
Also remembering  
Braylen Brooklyn Bunn  
Stillborn August 3, 2021  
Parents: Olivia and Byron Bunn*



### Happy 7<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Andrew!

We know you're enjoying a wonderful celebration in heaven today. This past year we've spent a lot of time at home as a family, and every time we're together, we feel your absence. It's hard to believe it's been seven years since we held you in our arms. Until our heavenly reunion, we will hold you in our hearts.

We love you always,  
Mommy, Daddy, Leah, Hannah and Noah

*Andrew Robert Bateman  
Stillborn October 7, 2014  
Unknown cause  
Parents: Tim and Laura Bateman  
Siblings: Leah, Hannah and Noah*



### "Secondary Fears..." continued from page 3.

Not one living soul was around. Just me! That's when it happened. I bent over because I couldn't catch my breath, yet I was breathing so hard I was afraid I might faint. I walked aimlessly into an empty patient's room to find some oxygen. I crazily thought I needed to hook myself up to a tank of air. But then I was afraid security was watching me and would escort me off the property. I was having such irrational thoughts, but I was reliving a trauma and I truly could not control the intensity of my emotions. I wasn't sure if I should burst

**I was having such irrational thoughts, but I was reliving a trauma and I truly could not control the intensity of my emotions.**

into that room to find out what was happening or run to the waiting room to tell the rest of the family what

was going on. Finally, a sweet maintenance woman came around the corner and saw me. She gently escorted me to the waiting room. The family saw my state and immediately jumped to their feet. All I could breathlessly say was, "PRAY!" At that same moment, my son texted Anna's mom to say the same, "PRAY!" That sent me in a tailspin again. At that point I didn't care who was in that waiting room and what they heard and saw from me. I couldn't help it. Loudly I kept saying over and over, "Oh God, not again! We cannot go through this again!" Well-meaning family tried to comfort me, but I had passed the point of consoling. My husband and brother-in-law made their way back to the hospital from letting our kids' dog out, and Byron found himself not much better than me. He wasn't as demonstrative as I was, but he was panicked, too. We decided we should go down to the lobby for a while in order to not cause a scene in front of the other families who were excitedly waiting for the news of their new arrival.

Hours slowly passed, and by now our family back in Texas was on their knees as were many of our M.E.N.D. leaders who I was texting with. Finally, a c-section was ordered and just after midnight, our beyond precious Elias Jonathan Mitchell was born - perfectly healthy and whole. Words cannot describe the relief we felt. A couple of hours later, we were still waiting to see the baby when my son eventually came into the waiting room to tell us we could come back. My grown son, who was sadly introduced to infant death as a small child, made a beeline for me, fell in my arms, and sobbed. He said, "Mom, now



I kind of know what you and Dad went through." A few months later, he told us that twice they lost Elias' heartbeat. I'm really glad I didn't know that until much later.

Today Elias is a beautiful, healthy, and adorable 2-year-old, who is the delight of his Papa's and Glammie's life! I still can't talk about that day without getting choked up. We came so close to losing him!



I've often wondered if I would have reacted the way I did if I had not experienced the death of a baby myself, and especially if I weren't the Founder and Executive Director of one of the largest pregnancy and infant loss support organizations in the country. I don't think so. I suppose my blissful naivety would have prevented my

mind from even considering the worst. I think we all would have just waited in that big room for 17 hours eating, laughing, playing cards, and betting on the baby's weight and length. Just how it should be - how it should have been. Whenever they decide to have another baby, I think this Glammie may need to stay home with Elias. I'm not sure my heart can take another scare like that.

I know reading a "happily ever after" ending may be hard for many of you. But my purpose for sharing so many details is to explain that we as loss moms have truly experienced a trauma, and likely actually suffer from PTSD. I did not think I did, but apparently, I do. I was triggered, and erupted in a manner that I could not control, no matter how hard I tried. Therefore, be aware of what could cause those uncontrollable reactions and either avoid them if possible, or warn someone with you so they can help you and explain to others what is happening. Admittedly, it is embarrassing as I think back to that night, but I also know my reaction was very warranted. My unseen scars are who I am now, and my pain is forever part of my story - my story of deep sorrow that God has redeemed and restored. But I'm reminded that no matter how many years pass, we never forget - we always remember. God even created our bodies to involuntarily respond to such deeply rooted sadness and trauma. And really... that's pretty amazing!

**My unseen scars are who I am now, and my pain is forever part of my story - my story of deep sorrow that God has redeemed and restored.**

# Why Anxiety Is Common After Miscarriage and How to Cope

Written by Krissi Danielsson

Medically reviewed by Carly Snyder, MD

Posted on VeryWellFamily.com

After experiencing a miscarriage or a stillbirth, it is not uncommon for parents to develop symptoms of depression or anxiety. While many of us have a pretty good understanding of what depression is, anxiety is something that many people assume to mean "being on edge."

But it is actually more than that. Like depression, anxiety can severely interfere with a person's ability to function and often requires treatment and counseling to fully resolve the underlying trauma. In fact, most research suggests that anxiety disorders are a more common condition following pregnancy loss than even depression.

## Anxiety Disorders Commonly Seen After Pregnancy and Miscarriage

Anxiety disorders are serious mental illnesses that cause significant worry or fear that doesn't go away and can even worsen over time. Anxiety disorders come in different forms, each with distinct features and treatment goals.

The types more commonly seen after pregnancy are generalized anxiety disorder (GAD), obsessive-compulsive disorder (OCD), acute stress disorder (ASD), and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD).

Women tend to experience anxiety disorders more than men.

### Generalized Anxiety Disorder (GAD)

Generalized anxiety disorder, despite its name, is very specific in how and to what degree it can affect an individual. By definition, GAD is a persistent, excessive, and intrusive worry which occurs on most days and last for more than six months.

In women who have experienced a pregnancy loss, GAD may begin with fears about medical complications following a dilation and evacuation (D&E) procedure, worries about repeated miscarriage, or concerns as to whether an underlying medical or genetic condition may have contributed to the loss. Those fears are only compounded by the feelings of grief and loss that a woman may naturally feel.

GAD is difficult to control and may manifest with an array of symptoms, including:

- Persistent restlessness or edginess
- Fatigue

- Poor concentration, sometimes accompanied by memory problems
- Irritability
- Muscle tension and aches
- Sleeping problems

### Obsessive-Compulsive Disorder (OCD)

Interestingly enough, obsessive-compulsive disorder is commonly seen during pregnancy, a condition scientists believe may be related to hormones. On the flip side, women who have experienced a pregnancy loss are eight times more likely to be diagnosed with OCD than those who haven't.

OCD is characterized by excessive thoughts/ ruminations (obsessions), with or without compensatory compulsive behaviors (compulsions). Symptoms are best characterized as follows:

- Persistent thoughts of a disturbing nature
- Use of rituals to control or distract from the upsetting thoughts
- Rituals and/or the thoughts that are disruptive to the person's daily life

The disturbing thoughts may be violent or overtly sexual, both of which may further fuel the underlying anxiety.

While it is a common conception that OCD is comprised of repetitive behaviors, many women experience only intrusive, obsessive thoughts without the behavioral component.

### Acute Stress Disorder (ASD)

Acute stress disorder is believed to affect one of every 10 women who has experienced a pregnancy loss. ASD is directly associated with a traumatic event and can manifest within hours of the event.

Contrary to what some might assume, ASD is not directly related to the timing of the miscarriage or stillbirth. More often than not, it occurs in women who have experienced a loss before the 20<sup>th</sup> week of gestation, not after.

Symptoms of ASD may include:

- A sense of numbness or lack of emotional responsiveness
- Feeling dazed or outside of oneself
- Inability to recall aspects of the trauma

- Reliving the event through recurrent thoughts, dreams, or flashbacks
- Avoiding anything that are reminders of the miscarriage
- Persistent edginess and/or distress

ASD is similar to PTSD but lasts for at least two days but no longer than four weeks.

### Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD)

Research has long suggested that around one percent of women with ASD will progress to post-traumatic stress disorder following a miscarriage. The symptoms of PTSD are essentially the same as ASD but are defined as lasting longer than a month.

However, recent research paints a somewhat different picture, suggesting that rates of PTSD may be far higher. According to a study from the Imperial College in London, among 186 women who experienced an early pregnancy loss, 28 percent met the criteria for probable PTSD after three months of follow-up.

Moreover, the severity of the PTSD symptom had no association to the severity or type of miscarriage experienced. On the plus side, symptoms tended to wane after the second month.

Posted on November 8, 2019. Retrieved August 3, 2020, from VeryWellFamily <https://www.verywellfamily.com/anxiety-after-a-miscarriage-or-stillbirth-2371314>

## Book Review

Pitter-Pat: A Mother's Journey From Loss to New Life  
Written by Amy Erickson

As part of her healing process after losing her second-born son, Gabriel, Amy began to write this book in the days and weeks and months that followed. It is written journal-style, but she is writing to Gabriel - telling him about her pain, and her struggles, and everything that happened to her heart after he was gone. It is a raw\*, real look inside the heart and soul of a grieving mother, and it is hard to read at some points as a mother who knows that pain all too well.

"'Tough?' [her husband] questioned, not moving. 'That's just not the right word to use in our situation. Tough is something a person goes through when faced with a challenge that he can overcome, like a financial challenge, or something stupid like that. But this? This life we've been living for the past year? This isn't 'tough,' Amy. This is hell. Pure hell. And you and I?' he shook his head. 'We can't escape from it. You and I, Aim... we'll never be the same again.'" (page 116)

The words she writes and the experiences she has resonate with the reader. If you understand the pain, you feel like you're in a support group, hearing your heart echoed back to you, and feeling like you're not quite alone in this sea of darkness. And if you've never experienced that kind of heartbreak, then it is a truly real look into the life of someone who is struggling with a pain you can't quite comprehend. It is at the same time ugly and beautiful, as grief so often is.

\*Strong language was used to express her grief during her most raw periods of her grief.

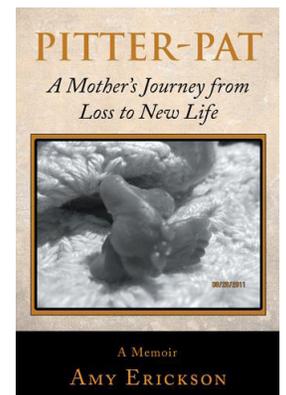
## What to Do If You Experience Persistent Anxiety After Miscarriage

If you feel a persistent anxiety following the loss of your pregnancy, you are not alone. Most research suggests that it's a more common experience than one might imagine.

A 2011 study involving 13,000 women who had experienced miscarriage showed that 15 percent had clinically significant anxiety and/or depression which persisted for as long as three years. What this should tell us that any such symptoms, however small, should never be ignored.

We are fortunate today to have effective treatments for these disorders. By working with a qualified mental health professional, you can begin to come to terms with your fears and regain some of the control you may have lost.

**Healing does not mean forgetting.** Communicate with others, find support groups, allow yourself to grieve, and don't be afraid to reach out for professional help.



# Managing Parenting Anxiety After Loss

Written by Erika Kain  
posted on Seleni Institute

After my second miscarriage, I became convinced that my 1-year-old daughter would die. I worried incessantly when she rode in someone else's car. When she briefly developed a limp, I was certain she had leukemia. I wielded disinfectant wipes obsessively and watched her like a hawk, never comfortable when she was out of my sight.

What I didn't know then, but understand now, is that anxiety after loss is typical. Many parents, whether they are grieving a miscarriage, stillbirth, or the loss of an older child, often become overly concerned with the safety of their surviving children.

It makes sense that these parents "feel that tragedy can strike at any time, without warning," as Deborah Davis, PhD, writes in her book *Empty Cradle, Broken Heart*. "You may feel that life is very tenuous, that you can't count on everything turning out alright." What may be more surprising is that, according to Davis, "many parents find that these overprotective feelings linger for years."

Years. That's a scary word. Having been there myself, I asked experts for their tips on how to get comfortable with the inevitable separations of life.

## It's ok to keep them close

The first thing I want other parents to know is how normal these feelings are. Experiencing these kinds of losses "pokes a hole in your protective sense of safety," says Heather Roselaren, LCSW, a Berkeley-based therapist who specializes in working with families surviving loss. Roselaren helps her clients "patch that hole slowly, carefully, and gently," and says that part of that process "may be letting your kid be next to you until you feel safer."

After the stillbirth of her son Oliver, Memphis-area mother Kimmer Saini, 44, spent 24 hours a day with her surviving 14-month-old son. "I rocked Chay to sleep every night and slept in the rocking chair in his room for months."

In the car, Saini would sit in the backseat so she could watch her son while her husband drove. "I'm pretty sure everyone thought I'd lost my mind," she says. "And in a way I did."

Suzanne Pullen, 44, lost her son Avery to stillbirth in 2005, and subsequently gave birth to her second son Quinn. She finds that some days she needs to "hold Quinn's hand, give him extra hugs, or just be close to him." As a bereaved parent advocate, Pullen says, "every one of us who has had a child die recognizes the impulse."

"Parenting is always a balancing act between encouraging our children to bravely seek out what the wide world has to offer with our desire to keep them safe from harm," Pullen says. "Those of us who have had a child die know how difficult that really is."

## Letting go of the illusion of control

Part of the reason grieving parents can have difficulty giving a measure of freedom to their surviving children is that we are caught up in a false sense that we can control the world our children live in. Sometimes we obsess – as I did after my first two miscarriages – over things we may have done to endanger our pregnancies or our children, when so much of life is simply out of our control.

"It's a modern day myth that we can keep anything bad from ever happening to our children," says Lenore Skenazy, author of the book *Free Range Kids*. And the truth is that "all the worry in the world doesn't prevent death; it prevents life," says Skenazy.

It also denies parents the joy of watching their children spread their wings. When parents "squeeze their eyes shut and let their kid take a risk, the kid is so happy and so proud that they got to do something on their own. That child's joy squeezes out a lot of the parent's fear," says Skenazy.

No one expects that kind of epiphany overnight, of course. It will take time and practice to give your children the space they need to grow up – whether that's on the playground, at daycare, or at a first sleepover. These things may not come naturally at first, but eventually doing them will begin to feel more comfortable for you.

## Practice letting go alongside other parents

Roselaren suggests that grieving families spend time with a family who has children the same age to help reestablish a "sense of what's ok, safe enough, and normal." When you see your friend's child take a spill off the slide, dust herself off, and keep playing, it may help you to take a break from your post at the end of the slide or under the monkey bars.

It may take several play dates before this begins to feel normal. But once you see other parents giving their children space and freedom, you may find it easier to begin letting go and experiment with longer separations, such as letting your child go on a play date without you.

## Do something for yourself when you are apart

It's more effective to have a comforting (and distracting) plan in place to care for yourself when you are away from your child rather than simply admonishing yourself to change your perspective. So,

when you are finally ready for a separation from your child, Roselaren advises parents "to do something else with their anxiety." She asks people to think of something that is comforting to them - getting a haircut, buying new shoes, cleaning out a closet with music playing, having lunch out with friends - and plan to do it during the time apart.

### When to consider professional help

If you're having ongoing feelings of denial about your loss, experiencing nightmares, or blaming yourself for your child's death, individual therapy or a support group with a professional who specializes in coping with grief can be very helpful.

It's also important to know that depression is a potential complication of grief. If you're struggling with feelings of hopelessness and worthlessness, or

Excerpt retrieved August 3, 2020. To read the article in it's entirety, please visit <https://www.seleni.org/advice-support/2018/3/20/managing-parenting-anxiety-after-loss>

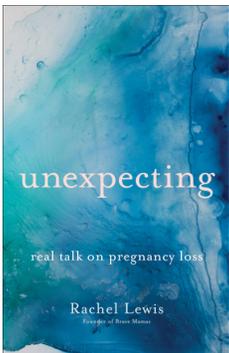
if you're having suicidal thoughts (including actively wishing you had died along with your child), seek professional help immediately.

### One day you will see how far you have come

It was very difficult for me to shake the feeling that something terrible would befall my healthy child after my miscarriages, but over time I have been able to let go in ways I would never have imagined.

This summer, as I took my daughter to the bus for Girl Scout Camp, I didn't once think about the safety concerns that used to paralyze me. I didn't even pack hand sanitizer or ask to see the bus driver's safety record. As the bus pulled away, whisking her off to a week of horses and archery, I simply cried and waved goodbye, just like all the other mothers.

## New Book Launch - *Unexpected: Real Talk on Pregnancy Loss*



M.E.N.D. was honored to sponsor and participate in the book launch party for author, Rachel Lewis, for her debut book, ***Unexpected: Real Talk on Pregnancy Loss***.

Through Rachel's experience with her own losses, connecting with other loss moms, involvement in M.E.N.D. and serving as M.E.N.D.-NW Washington Assistant Director, she became a voice to many moms and others who have struggled with pregnancy loss.

In her research, she interviewed Stacy McGhee, M.E.N.D.-NW Washington Chapter Director, Matt McGhee, Men of M.E.N.D. Chapter Director, and their son, Micah, for her book. We are pleased at the thoroughness of the information available to grieving families through Rachel's words. Through personal experience, many interviews, and extensive research in all facets of loss and grief surrounding the death of a baby, Rachel has created a comprehensive hand-guide for anyone who is navigating grief at any stage throughout their loss journey.

Eighty copies of the book were donated to M.E.N.D., and will be available at the lending libraries of M.E.N.D. chapters that have a physical support group location. We are grateful for the generous donations that allowed the purchase of books to be donated to M.E.N.D. across the country.

If you are interested in purchasing a copy, visit [www.unexpectingbook.com](http://www.unexpectingbook.com).





## Temores Secundarios Después de Una Pérdida

Artículo de Presidente y Fundadora,  
Rebekah Mitchell,  
Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y bebé Mitchell

No es raro que los padres se vuelvan demasiado protectores con sus hijos vivos después de la pérdida de un bebé. No importa si los hijos vivos nacieron antes o después de la pérdida. Muchas mamás y papás experimentan miedos y ansiedades en los que quizás ni siquiera pensarían si no les hubieran robado su ingenuidad cuando murieron sus bebés. Mi hijo vivo tenía 3 años y medio cuando nuestro bebé Jonathan nació sin vida. Cuando comencé a M.E.N.D. un año después, en nuestros grupos de apoyo mensuales, escuché a muchas mamás hablar sobre su paternidad ahora temerosa, pero honestamente, no podía relacionarme. Después de nuestra pérdida, ciertamente apreciaba a nuestro pequeño aún más de lo que ya lo hacía, pero no comencé a temer que fuera atropellado por un automóvil, secuestrado o ahogado en una piscina, más de lo que naturalmente preocupa a una mamá. Sin embargo, todo eso cambió inesperadamente cuando mi hijo se convirtió en un hombre adulto y casado.

Estoy bastante segura de que la primera vez que tuve un verdadero ataque de pánico fue cuando mi hijo y mi nuera anunciaron que estaban embarazadas. Por supuesto, estaba emocionada más allá de las palabras, pero rápidamente tuve que escabullirme al baño porque emociones profundamente arraigadas brotaron del pozo de mi alma. No pude recuperar el aliento y mi corazón comenzó a acelerarse como loco. Les oculté esto con éxito e intenté con todas mis fuerzas no arruinar una noche maravillosamente feliz. No tenía idea de lo que me estaba pasando, y descubrí que no podía decirle a nadie que nuestra nuera, Anna, estaba embarazada sin llorar. De hecho, apenas pude hablar de ello durante las primeras semanas sin llorar. Mi esposo, Byron, finalmente me preguntó una noche: "¿Qué es esto? ¿Por qué sigues llorando? Después de mucha contemplación, finalmente me di cuenta de que tenía tanto miedo de que lo que nos pasó a nosotros pudiera pasarles a ellos, y no podía imaginar ver a mis hijos pasar por el inmenso dolor que habíamos atravesado. Entonces me di cuenta de que el trauma de tener un bebé sin vida nunca desaparecerá. No estaba atrapada en la posibilidad de no convertirme en abuela. Me preocupaba muchísimo tener que ver a mis hijos convertirse en miembros de este "club".

Aproximadamente en el momento en que me tranquilicé y me permití emocionarme, el escaneo de anatomía de 20 semanas sugirió algunas posibles preocupaciones, por lo que el pánico comenzó de nuevo hasta que pruebas más detalladas mostraron que nuestro dulce nieto era de hecho un bebé sano.

Durante los meses previos al tan esperado día del parto, imaginé qué emociones podría esperar mientras todos esperábamos la noticia de que había nacido el bebé. Decidí que seguramente no estaría más que extremadamente emocionada. Después de todo, he estado en el hospital esperando a muchos bebés de mi familia desde mi trágica pérdida hace tantos años. Pero entonces llegó el día ... tan pronto como se indujo su trabajo de parto, hubo complicaciones. El bebé estaba torcido en el útero y su frecuencia cardíaca se desaceleró después de cada contracción, en lugar de durante la contracción. En un intento por hacer progresar el trabajo de parto, a Anna le rompieron aguas muy temprano. No soy un profesional médica, pero he escuchado demasiados horrores de la muerte infantil durante el parto, sin mencionar mi propia experiencia personal de muerte fetal debido a un accidente del cordón, así que cuando las cosas no iban bien, tan temprano durante el proceso del parto, sentí que la ansiedad aumentaba.

Pasaron demasiadas horas sin progresión, y su pequeño corazón no hacía lo que se suponía que debía hacer durante una contracción. Sentí que comenzaba a perder el control, pero sabía que si lo hacía, sería legítimamente expulsada de la sala de partos y posiblemente de la sala de espera. En un momento, la enfermera me pidió que saliera de la habitación de Anna porque necesitaban ponerla en una posición diferente. Mientras salía por la puerta, escuché a su médico susurrar: "Creo que es un cordón nual". No pude contenerme... dije, "¡eso es lo que temía! ¡Saca a este bebé!" En cuestión de segundos, me encontré de pie en medio de la unidad de L&D cuando se activaron las alarmas, y fui testigo de CADA SOLO médico entrar corriendo a la habitación de mi nuera. No había un alma viviente alrededor. ¡Sólo yo! Fue entonces cuando sucedió. Me incliné porque no podía recuperar el aliento, pero respiraba con tanta dificultad que temía desmayarme. Entré sin rumbo fijo en la habitación

de un paciente vacía para encontrar algo de oxígeno. Locamente pensé que necesitaba conectarme a un tanque de aire. Pero luego temí que los de seguridad me estuvieran vigilando y me escoltaran fuera de la propiedad. Tenía pensamientos tan irracionales, pero estaba reviviendo un trauma y realmente no podía controlar la intensidad de mis emociones. No estaba segura si debería irrumpir en esa habitación para averiguar qué estaba pasando o correr a la sala de espera para contarle al resto de la familia lo que estaba pasando. Finalmente, una dulce mujer de mantenimiento vino a la vuelta de la esquina y me vio. Gentilmente me acompañó a la sala de espera. La familia vio mi estado e inmediatamente se pusieron de pie. ¡Todo lo que pude decir sin aliento fue: "OREN"! En ese mismo momento, mi hijo le envió un mensaje de texto a la mamá de Anna para decirle lo mismo: "¡OREN"! Eso me envió en picada de nuevo. En ese momento no me importaba quién estaba en esa sala de espera y lo que escucharon y vieron de mí. No pude evitarlo. En voz alta repetía una y otra vez: "¡Oh Dios, no otra vez! ¡No podemos volver a pasar por esto!" Una familia bien intencionada trató de consolarme, pero yo había pasado del punto de consolarme. Mi esposo y mi cuñado regresaron al hospital después de dejar salir al perro de nuestros hijos, y Byron no se encontró mucho mejor que yo. No era tan demostrativo como yo, pero también le entró el pánico. Decidimos bajar un rato al vestíbulo para no provocar una escena frente a las otras familias que esperaban con entusiasmo la noticia de su nueva llegada.

Las horas pasaron lentamente, y ahora nuestra familia en Texas estaba de rodillas al igual que muchos de nuestros M.E.N.D. líderes con quienes yo estaba enviando mensajes de texto. Finalmente, se ordenó una cesárea y, justo después de la medianoche, nació nuestro precioso Elias Jonathan Mitchell, perfectamente sano y completo. Las palabras no pueden describir el alivio que sentimos. Un par de horas más tarde, todavía estábamos esperando ver al bebé cuando mi hijo finalmente entró en la sala de espera para decirnos que podíamos regresar. Mi hijo mayor, que fue presentado tristemente a la muerte infantil cuando era un niño pequeño, fue directo hacia mí, cayó en mis brazos y sollozó. Él dijo: "Mamá, ahora sé por lo que pasaron tú y papá". Unos meses después, nos dijo que dos veces perdieron los latidos del corazón de Elías. Estoy muy contenta de no haberlo sabido hasta mucho después.

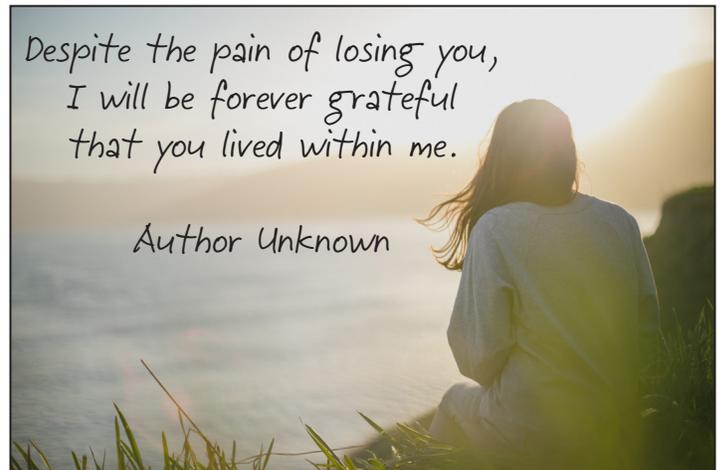
Hoy Elías es un niño de 2 años hermoso, saludable y adorable, ¡que es el deleite de la vida de su papá y de Glammie! Todavía no puedo hablar de ese día sin que me ahogue. ¡Estuvimos tan cerca de perderlo! A

menudo me he preguntado si habría reaccionado de la forma en que lo hice si no hubiera experimentado la muerte de un bebé, y especialmente si no hubiera sido la fundadora y directora ejecutiva de una de las organizaciones de apoyo a la pérdida de bebés y embarazos más grandes en el país. No lo creo. Supongo que mi dichosa ingenuidad habría impedido que mi mente siquiera considerara lo peor. Creo que todos hubiéramos esperado en esa gran habitación durante 17 horas comiendo, riendo, jugando a las cartas y apostando por el peso y la longitud del bebé. Exactamente cómo debería ser, cómo debería haber sido. Siempre que decidan tener otro bebé, creo que Glammie tendrá que quedarse en casa con Elias. No estoy segura de que mi corazón pueda soportar otro susto como ese.

Sé que leer un final de "felices para siempre" puede ser difícil para muchos de ustedes. Pero mi propósito al compartir tantos detalles es explicar que nosotras, como madres de perdidas, realmente hemos experimentado un trauma y probablemente sufrimos de PTSD. No pensé que lo hiciera, pero aparentemente, lo hago. Me activé y estallé de una manera que no pude controlar, sin importar cuánto lo intenté. Por lo tanto, esté atenta a lo que podría causar esas reacciones incontrolables y evítelas si es posible, o advierta a alguien que esté con usted para que pueda ayudarlo y explicarle a los demás lo que está sucediendo. Es cierto que es vergonzoso pensar en esa noche, pero también sé que mi reacción fue muy justificada. Mis cicatrices invisibles son lo que soy ahora, y mi dolor es para siempre parte de mi historia, mi historia de profundo dolor que Dios ha redimido y restaurado. Pero recuerdan que no importa cuántos años pasen, nunca olvidamos, siempre recordamos. Dios incluso creó nuestros cuerpos para responder involuntariamente a una tristeza y un trauma tan profundamente arraigados. Y realmente ... ¡eso es bastante maravilloso!

*Despite the pain of losing you,  
I will be forever grateful  
that you lived within me.*

*Author Unknown*



# In Loving Memory

## Thank YOU for your support

### **Andre Gabriel Broussard**

Stillborn May 29, 2016  
Trisomy 18  
Given by  
Parents Ana Maria and Ross Broussard

### **Abigail Brown**

Given by Kathleen Penny

### **Grady Clark**

Given by Taylor Frantz

### **Baby Brother Conti**

Stillborn June 5, 2020  
Given by parents Kendra and Chris Conti  
and big brother James

### **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  
Premature  
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis  
and siblings Annalise and Owen

### **Paislee Ann Frette**

April 4-5, 2012  
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome  
Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette  
Little sister: Colbie  
Given by  
Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin

### **Serenity Harrison**

Miscarried December 3, 2009  
Given by parents Curt and Jennifer Harrison  
and siblings Levi, Ziva and Evie

### **Robert Paul Hildt**

Given by Nicolette DeCaro

### **Holly Hughes**

August 12, 2020  
Given by Denise Hughes

### **Barron Lehr**

December 29, 2019  
Premature rupture of membranes  
Given by parents Morgan and Travis Lehr  
and brother Bennett

### **Kenney Elaine Lloyd**

April 19, 2017  
Given by mommy Katlin Lloyd

### **Oliver James Merrill**

June 14, 2011  
Potters Syndrome  
Given by parents Beatrice and Eric Merrill

### **Matthew Joel Mifflin**

Stillborn June 6, 2003  
Cord accident

### **Little One Mifflin**

Miscarried February 6, 2006

### **lil' rosebud Mifflin**

Miscarried March 10, 2007  
Parents: Dennis and Janet Mifflin  
Siblings: Thomas and Michelle  
Given by Fidelity Charitable Donor-Advised  
Fund

### **Chase Austin Miller**

April 21, 2011  
Incompetent cervix  
**Baby "Blueberry" Miller**  
Miscarried May 4, 2015  
Given by parents Greg and Stefanie Miller  
and sisters Cora, Hazel and Violet

### **Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995  
Cord accident  
**Baby Mitchell**  
Miscarried December 2001  
Gifts given by  
Parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell  
Grandmother Marnie Mitchell

### **Ellie Nason**

Given by Shelby Karamoko

### **Abigail Marie Papendick**

March 3 – 4, 2017  
**Baby "Darth" Papendick**  
September 6, 2018

### **Baby Nugget Papendick**

December 27, 2019  
Parents: Becky Johnston and Brian Papendick  
Given by Sandy and Jim Fogus

Thank you to those who recently held a Facebook fundraising campaign  
or donated to M.E.N.D. through one of these.

We are so thankful for our family and friends who show love and support  
during activities like these or other areas such as sharing about M.E.N.D.,  
assisting at events, or simply and most importantly, praying for us.

M.E.N.D. gratefully  
acknowledges these gifts of love  
given in memory of a baby, relative,  
friend or given by someone just  
wanting to help. These donations  
help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s  
mission by providing this magazine  
and other services to bereaved  
parents free of charge. For more  
information on how you can support  
M.E.N.D., please see the "About  
M.E.N.D." section  
in the back of this magazine.

### **Cruz Kenneth Ponce**

Given by Felicia Thomas

### **Adalie Grace Potts**

Given anonymously

### **Zemora Marie Rhodes**

Given by Kimberly Towler

### **Alice Annette Walsh**

January 12, 2021  
Parents: Clare and Patrick Walsh  
Given by Cathy and Paul Griner

### **Penelope Williams**

Given anonymously

### **Hudson Dale Zimmerman**

Given by Christina Willis

### **In Honor of Mylee Hampton**

Given by Megan Vernon

### **In Honor of the Hall Family**

Given anonymously

### **Gifts of Support:**

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO  
Tammie Ates  
David Davis  
Kila Hilton  
Costco Wholesale Corporation  
Dan Kost  
Boeing  
Molly Maier  
Nicole Litwin  
Kelly Karsner

# Anxiety

Written by Haley Gallwey  
 Mommy to Emma  
 M.E.N.D.—S<sup>W</sup>Missouri

Shifting perspectives takes a monumental effort after traumatic loss. Trying to describe the aspects and levels of physical, emotional and mental stress this tragedy has pushed you to is impossible. Grief is obvious, but the shock of it all has lasting effects on you, and I want you to know that is completely normal. After my daughter Emma passed away, I was, on all levels, at a loss. Three years later, I felt and still feel a deep urge to help those going through what I went through. Please understand I am not a medical professional. Unfortunately I have lived through this experience just like you. I have explored a lot about the best way to efficiently do this, and I hope some of the things I discuss will help soothe you.

## Calming Your Body

An area I have found helpful is being able to calm my central nervous system. This might sound insignificant after what you have been through, but having a few tools and exercises to help you right now will benefit your mood and stress levels and help you cope.

I have found the Vagus Nerve exercise, massage and reset videos by Sukie Baxter on YouTube to be helpful and efficient ways to relieve tension in my body. Do it whenever you want, and find what works for you. She has studied about anxiety, and her career focuses specifically on those who are not happy with the traditional western approach to healing. I tried many things, and calming my central nervous system with these videos has been so helpful to ease the grip of anxiety. Physically you need to feel better, so your mind can feel better, and you can do these exercises as much as needed. Foods to calm the central nervous system include dark chocolate, green tea, bananas, blueberries, grapes, chia seeds and avocados.

## Working Through Emotions

I understand that when you first have a loss like this, sometimes you don't even have the energy to get out of bed, and that is completely normal and okay. I have experienced this. Mother's Day this year I felt completely hopeless and didn't want to even spend time with my family. Recognizing and naming your

emotions while you are having them is also the best way to get through this time. Emotions are temporary, so asking yourself how you feel, recognizing it, and writing it down will be helpful to move through and navigate your emotions. Taking the information from everyday at home to a support group and discussing this can be helpful. Remember every thought and emotion you have is valid. Understand that processing this event means feeling, recognizing and discussing the emotion as long as it continues to come up for you, and everyone is different.

## Other Methods

I was fortunate to get pregnant naturally after Emma passed away. We have a son, Jack, and he is 16 months old. Although my body was ready for pregnancy again, and I was thrilled to be pregnant; I was also understandably terrified of what could happen. Unfortunately, fear is exacerbated by estrogen, so managing your fear is something you should discuss with your partner, family and doctor to make you feel as comfortable as possible if you happen to become pregnant again. Trusting your intuition is a great way to calm your fear, and remember to calm your body before you listen to your intuition. Try the vagus nerve exercises to calm your central nervous system. I also carry acupuncture rings with me to help relieve anxiety. I have one in my car and one in my purse so I have them readily available.

I had no idea of these simple things until very recently, so hopefully they can help a few of you. If your body is stuck in the emotions of fear and anxiety, you are not able to access the prefrontal cortex or rational thinking part of your brain, and you stay in an anxious, traumatized or panicked state. By calming your central nervous system, you are able to take your brain back, calm down and help yourself work through the emotions that come up and also take on the job of living after loss.

My heart goes out to everyone effected by this unimaginable loss. In the future I would like to create retreats for people who have experienced loss to come together in a therapeutic environment and feel safe to express emotions as well as learn real ways to help themselves efficiently in everyday life. Managing anxiety is my everyday work, and I hope to help others in any way possible.

# M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

## MidMichigan

M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan has enjoyed reconnecting in person with our members the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month. Be on the lookout for some local connection events this fall! Don't forget, October is Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness Month!



*Karen*

## NW Washington

M.E.N.D.–NW Washington will host our 1<sup>st</sup> Annual Wave of Light Ceremony, from 6:30-7:30 PM on October 15, at The Oak Table Cafe parking lot. We hope you'll join us. Please email me at [stacym@mend.org](mailto:stacym@mend.org) if you have any questions.



*Stacy*

## Denver, Colorado

M.E.N.D.–Denver will be meeting at Crossroads Community Church in Parker, CO, beginning with our support group meeting on September 14.

We are thankful to see our families in person and will continue to plan to meet that way if local guidelines allow. Join our Facebook group for updates in case of changes.



*Kimberly*

## Chicagoland

It has been a blessing for M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland to be back in person for support groups. We have a new updated place for us to gather that is much more cozy and comforting. We are so thankful for the space, and St. Peter allowing us to use it.



*Sara*

## East Valley, Arizona

M.E.N.D.–East Valley Arizona continues to meet in person and hopes to organize a few small fundraisers in the near future, so keep an eye on our Facebook group!



*Danielle*

## Men of M.E.N.D.

Men of M.E.N.D. continues to see many new dads join the Facebook group. It warms my heart to see them getting the help and guidance they need in this difficult journey. Men of M.E.N.D. holds a monthly Zoom support group every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of the month at 8:00 PM CST.



*Matt*

## Bryan/College Station, Texas

It is with great sadness that I inform you M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station is now closed. After 12 years serving as the M.E.N.D. Chapter Director, I resigned from M.E.N.D. leadership as of August 31, 2021.

I want to thank my wonderful team of assistant directors who walked by my side as we served the hurting families of Brazos County. LaRhesa Johnson, Markesha Lamar, and JaeCee Crawford, thank you for all your help, guidance, and for sharing your talents.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve the Brazos area for the last 12 years. I loved hearing all the stories about your sweet babies who died too soon. It breaks my heart this season of life is coming to an end. Thank you for supporting M.E.N.D. financially, emotionally, and physically. And thank you for walking with me and supporting me when I lost Stella and Liza during my time as chapter director. With great sadness,



*Jennie*

## San Antonio, Texas

M.E.N.D.–San Antonio is excited to bring an October remembrance event to the area! Please keep an eye on our Facebook group for more details soon to come. We are spreading the word about our chapter so we can bring support to more families. We are donating quilts and gowns for those sweet babies that leave this world far too early.



*Katie*

### Columbus, Ohio

"And the peace of God, which transcends all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus." Philippians 4:7 NIV



Our monthly support group continues to grow, as we meet virtually to share our journeys. We're praying for your comfort and strength. Please join our private Facebook group where you can share your story and be encouraged... You're NOT alone!

If you need M.E.N.D.-Columbus services, contact me at latrina@mend.org.

*LaTrina*

### Greater Houston Area

M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area is so looking forward to our 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Walk to Remember on October 9. Visit our website at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org) or our M.E.N.D. Greater Houston facebook group for more information and to register for this beautiful event. At this event, we have a speaker, a singer, and provide a place for every family to remember their babies. This event is free to anyone who would like to attend.

We have now re-opened all three of our Houston area Support Group locations in person! If you have any questions, please contact me at stormym@mend.org.

*Stormy*

### Palm Beach, Florida

It is with deep regret and a very heavy heart that I announce I am stepping down as Chapter Director of M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach. We are still seeking a Chapter Director to take my place, so if you or someone you know is interested, please contact Rebekah ([rebekah@mend.org](mailto:rebekah@mend.org)) or me ([jessica@mend.org](mailto:jessica@mend.org)) for further details. It has been a pleasure serving our community and we wish our families nothing but the best in their grief journey.

*Jessica*

### Lynchburg, Virginia

M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg continues to reach out to our community to provide our services to hurting families. We are providing our information to the hospitals, and we will be at the Railroad Festival in October. If you have a group or organization who would benefit from learning about M.E.N.D., please connect with me.

We are still hosting monthly support groups the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month at The Motherhood Collective in Lynchburg, and we would love to have you there.



*Melissa*

### Tulsa, Oklahoma

We are excited to announce M.E.N.D.–Tulsa has a new meeting location! We are now meeting at 117 S 7<sup>th</sup> St., Jenks, OK 74037. Our support group days and times have not changed. We will still gather the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 7:00 PM.



As summer is coming to a close, we are planning our October memorial event. Please save the date for October 19. More information will be posted on our Facebook group soon.

*Cat*

### Southwest Missouri

M.E.N.D.–Southwest Missouri invites you to attend our special remembrance ceremony on October 16. Invitations are in the mail, and you can register to attend at [Mend.org/events](http://Mend.org/events).

This is going to be a time of remembrance you won't want to miss! We are planning some very special surprises, and we are looking forward to remembering our babies in heaven together this year.

More information can be found in our Facebook group or feel free to email [Rachel@mend.org](mailto:Rachel@mend.org).



*Rachel*

### Nationwide Online Support

The Nationwide Online Support Group gathers on Zoom the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. We also welcome you to connect through our Facebook group to support each other between support groups. Your online M.E.N.D. family is always here for you. Please complete the Online Group Info Sheet found on the M.E.N.D. website to receive the meeting link if you are new.

## About M.E.N.D.

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 support groups, this magazine, and our website at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org). For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the magazine, 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](mailto:rebekah@mend.org)  
[jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org)  
[www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org)

Donations make the printing and distribution of this magazine 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).

M.E.N.D. is a member of  
First Candle/SIDS Alliance  
International Stillbirth Alliance  
Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance



## M.E.N.D. Leadership

### Board of Directors

Rebekah Mitchell  
Byron Mitchell, D.D.S.  
DaLana Barsanti  
Brittney Fish  
Brandee Dill  
Marilyn Brown  
Tina Rusert  
Laura Bateman  
Jenae Bowmer

### Advisory Board

Paula Schear  
D'Anna Sims  
Cindy Dedear  
Mallory Gallagher  
Marisa Perry  
Liz Walker  
Courtney Frette

### Magazine

Editor: Jennifer Harrison  
Co-Editors: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

### Magazine Volunteers

Rachel Dell, Sara Elliott  
and Becky Johnston

## New Support Group Location!

### M.E.N.D. Support Groups in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

Mommies AND Daddies are welcome at all M.E.N.D. support groups.

Unless otherwise noted, all support groups are held at:

**Irving Archives Museum, 801 W Irving Blvd, Irving, TX 75060.**

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

M.E.N.D. chapter support groups meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM

Daddies group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., at 7:30 PM

Moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups.

### Rowlett Satellite Chapter

A satellite chapter in Rowlett holds support groups to serve families in the eastern area of the Dallas/Fort Worth metroplex. Support groups are held the 1<sup>st</sup> Wednesday at 7:00 PM at the Veterans Resource & Outreach Center, 4210 Industrial St, Rowlett, TX 75088. Visit our Facebook group or email [terri@mend.org](mailto:terri@mend.org).



**Irving Archives Museum**  
801 W Irving Blvd  
Irving, TX 75060

### Subsequent pregnancy group

meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday

from 7:30 - 9:00 PM via Zoom.

Please visit [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org) to join.

Led by Marisa Perry: [marisa@mend.org](mailto:marisa@mend.org)

For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

# M.E.N.D. Chapter Information

Due to COVID gathering guidelines, please follow your chapter on Facebook or connect with your local Director for updates if your chapter will meet in person or virtually.

## M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 6:30 PM  
The Oak Table Cafe'  
3290 NW Mt. Vintage Way  
Silverdale, Washington 98383  
Director: Stacy McGhee  
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

## M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM  
Project H.O.P.E.  
1419 S. Enterprise Ave  
Springfield, Missouri 65804  
Director: Rachel Dell  
rachel@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

## M.E.N.D.–Tulsa, Oklahoma

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM  
117 S 7<sup>th</sup> St.  
Jenks, Oklahoma 74037  
Director: Cat Markham  
cat@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

## M.E.N.D.–Columbus, Ohio

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, at 6:30 PM  
Paul Mitchell-The School of Columbus  
3000 Morse Road  
(Upstairs Conference Room)  
Columbus, Ohio 43231  
Director: LaTrina Bray  
latrina@mend.org (614) 530-5128

## M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland, Illinois

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

## M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, at 7:00 PM  
Ashman Plaza  
713 Ashman Street  
Midland, Michigan 48640  
Director: Karen Kilbourn  
karen@mend.org, (989) 577-5755

## M.E.N.D.–Denver

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM  
Crossroads Community Church  
9900 S. Twenty Mile Rd.  
Parker, Colorado 80134  
Director: Kimberly Adams  
kimberly@mend.org, (720) 593-0166

## M.E.N.D.–San Antonio, Texas

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, at 7:00 PM  
8620 N New Braunfels Ave  
San Antonio, Texas 78217  
Director: Katie McClelland  
katie@mend.org

## M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg, Virginia

Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, at 7:00 PM  
Motherhood Collective  
at DeWitt Cottage #8, 150 Linden Ave  
Lynchburg, VA 24503  
Director: Melissa Scifres  
melissa@mend.org (434) 221-2357

## M.E.N.D.–East Valley, Arizona

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, at 6:30 PM  
Queen Creek Library  
Edward Abbey room  
21802 S Ellsworth Rd  
Queen Creek, Arizona 85142  
Director: Danielle Radler  
danielle@mend.org, (602) 699-6228

## M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area

Greater Houston Area Main Chapter:  
Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 PM  
Lone Star College,  
3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,  
The Woodlands, Texas 77384  
Greater Houston Area Director:  
Stormy Mitchell  
stormym@mend.org, (405) 529-6363

## Satellites in Greater Houston Chapter:

Katy, Texas:  
Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM  
Katy Community Fellowship  
24102 Kingsland Blvd  
Katy, Texas 77494  
Katy Director:

Kessi Wilhite, kessi@mend.org  
Kingwood Area, Texas:  
Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 6:30 PM  
6450 Kings Parkway  
Kingwood, Texas 77346  
At Rosemont Assisted Living,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Community Room  
Kingwood Director:  
Nikisha Perry, nikisha@mend.org

## Online Support

**M.E.N.D.–Online Support Group**  
Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 8:00 PM (CST)  
Please visit <https://www.mend.org/virtual-support-group-links>

## Men of M.E.N.D.

Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 8:00 PM (CST)  
to join, contact,  
Director: Matt McGee  
Matt@mend.org  
Facebook Group:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND](https://www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND)



The Garden of Hope is a place of peace and solace where families can come for a quiet time of reflection, prayer, or even to celebrate the life of their loved one.

The Garden of Hope was established by M.E.N.D. in 2016, and is located on property of Calvary Church in Irving, Texas.

You can remember your loved one by purchasing a brick in the Garden of Hope. Brick purchases can be made at <https://www.mend.org/garden-of-hope>. Bricks purchased by August 15, 2022, will be installed prior to the Walk to Remember in October 2022.



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

NONPROFIT ORG  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
DALLAS, TEXAS  
PERMIT NO. 57

Save the Date

## M.E.N.D. Walk to Remember



M.E.N.D. - Dallas/Fort Worth  
Walk to Remember

October 2



M.E.N.D. - Greater Houston Area  
Walk to Remember

October 9

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON THESE EVENTS  
OR A CHAPTER NEAR YOU, VISIT [WWW.MEND.ORG](http://WWW.MEND.ORG)  
AND FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK.