



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Chapter email: compassionate.friends.tucson@gmail.com

Tucson Chapter
P.O. Box 30733
Tucson, AZ 85751-0733
(520) 721-8042
www.tucsontcf.org

National Headquarters
The Compassionate Friends
P.O. Box 46
Wheaton, IL 60187
Toll free (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

WALKING THIS VALLEY- Tucson Chapter Vol. 47 No.4 July-August 2025

Welcome!

All bereaved parents, grandparents, and adult siblings are welcome at our support group meetings. Here you will find comfort, caring people, and most of all-HOPE. Coming to the first meeting is hard, but you have nothing to lose and much to gain. For many it is the first real step toward healing. Although it may seem overwhelming, we encourage you to come to several meetings to give yourself a chance to become comfortable. The hope of The Compassionate Friends is that those who need us would find us and that those that find us would be helped. TCF also provides information to help members be supportive to each other. We are not professional counselors. We are bereaved families who want to help each other.

We're sorry for the reason you're here, but we're glad you've found us-Tucson TCF

Tucson Chapter Meetings: Christ Church United Methodist 655 N. Craycroft

Second and Fourth Wednesdays, 7-9pm

July 9, 23

August 13, 27

September 10, 24

It's always something...



We've made it through Mother's Day and Father's Day and the major holidays are several months away. So, we might think we can take it easy and enjoy some tear-free, less challenging days. But then that song comes on the radio. Or the book you're reading has a section that brings those tears to the surface. For me I was reading a book about a dog. The line "And then something terrible happened." Set me off! I couldn't catch my breath. In the story the dog was just enjoying life, doing his thing and then the above line. Maybe you are in the season where you can catch your breath but then maybe the beginning of the school year is what hurts your heart. Whenever you need us, we are here. You need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends.

We've made it through Mother's Day and Father's Day and the major holidays are several months away. So, we might think we can take it easy and enjoy some tear-free, less challenging days. But then that song comes on the radio. Or the book you're reading has a section that brings those tears to the surface. For me I was reading a book about a dog. The line "And then something terrible happened." Set me off! I couldn't catch my breath. In the story the dog was just enjoying life, doing his thing and then the above line. Maybe you are in the season where you can catch your breath but then maybe the beginning of the school year is what hurts your heart. Whenever you need us, we are here. You need not walk alone. We are the Compassionate Friends.



Benchmarks

Goodbye would be too difficult,
Although I know you are gone.
Instead, I keep you in my heart
And your memory lives on.

I have redefined my purpose, son,
Since you are no longer here.
With your death I faced a choice
To die, exist or to live free.

My life has changed forever, child,
I'm redefined each week,
You would call these "benchmarks"
Of goals set and then achieved.

And so I set my benchmarks,
Achieving many, reshaping some...
But everything is different now
Except your mother's love.

-Annette Mennen Baldwin TCF Katy, TX
In Memory of my son, Todd Mennen



July's Child

Fireworks race toward heaven
Brilliant colors in the sky.
Their splendor ends in seconds
On this evening in July.
"Her birthday is this Saturday,"
I whisper with a sigh.
She was born this month,
She loved this month
And she chose this month to die.

Like the bright and beautiful fireworks
Glowing briefly in the dark
They are gone too soon, and so was she
Having been, and left her mark.
A glorious incandescent life,

A catalyst, a spark...
Her being gently lit my path
And softened all things stark.

The July birth, the July death of
my happy summer child
Marked a life too brief that ended
Without rancor, without guile.
Like the fireworks that leave images
On unprotected eyes...
Her lustrous life engraved my heart...
With love that never dies.

-Sally Migliaccio
TCF Babylon, Long Island, NY

July Birthdays

ANTHONY ABNEY
MARK BATES
DEANA CAPPUCCIO
CARM-IDRELLE CASSEUS
ELLILAH ROSE CHICO
COLETON DAVID DORMAN
ELISA GASTELLUM
RYAN GRIFFIN GAMBLE
ZACHARY TAYLOR JONES
RAUL "RULLY" JR LOPEZ
RYLIE MCREYNOLDS
JASON PHANCO
KATHERINE RILEY
CINDEE TURNER
SCOTT RUSSELL
ALBERT CORONA JR (AL)
BABY TSOSIE SIQUIERUS
JESSICA GRACE WING
SHAWN DOUGLAS RAMON II
ERIC ALEXANDER RUBOYIANES
EDWARD VINCENT ANDREW RAMOS
JOEL ARANDULES
TRISTAN BAKER

JAMIE ARNOLD
JENNIFER BUNNELL
JENNY CRIM
FRANK GARCIA
ANGELA DILLON
SEAN HOLDEN
JONATHAN KALOS
GABRIEL LOPEZ
CHRIS MAIER
TIMOTHY PARFREY
DALE MELLBERG
LANCE SENICK
JOSEPH SHIELDS
BRYSE VASQUEZ

JOSHUA GRABENBAUER
MARINA ESTRELLA PALOMO
NATHAN SPANGENBERG

DANIELLE BARNETT
JAMES THOMAS BUSEY
JOHN CROCI
DONALD GREENE
ANDREW GAINES
DAVID KETTUNEN
JASON KRAUSE
MORGAN LOR
DANIEL J. McCLAIN
BOBBY PARKINSON
LINDA STUBBINS
ALYSSA RILEY
TARA SWAIN
ASHLEY HOWARD



July Remembrance Days

ANTHONY ORANTEZ
SEBASTIAN ALDECOA
JENNIFER BAIN
PAUL BRUMBAUGH
SELENA BURNEY
SHANTI CARLISI
DREW DAVIS
MICHELLE HALEY
ROLAND JAMES
GABRIEL LOPEZ
SCOTT MILLER
BLIXA PARDEE
JOE ROMMEL
KATHERINE RILEY
AMANDA SUMAN
KATHLEEN TEMPONE
JAMES TURNER
RUDY URIAS JR.
JESSICA GRACE WING
ASHLEY ANGELIQUE HUBER CAMACHO
CHRISTOPHER THOMAS ARNOLD

TABATHA VEAZEY
JAMIE ARNOLD
MARTY BEDELL
BOB BRUMMETT
ASHLEY CALLAHAN
JORDAN CHRISTENSON
COLETON DAVID DORMAN
MARTHA HARRINGTON
DEVIN KAMBER
JOSEPH (JAY) KAPLINSKI
SANTINO MARTINEZ-PACHO
TODD PIERCE
REBEKAH MARIE RAY
MAURICIO B. SALAZAR
BABY TSOSIE SIQUIERUS
JAMES THELEN
MATHEW VYBORN
MARINA MAY WALDRIP

PALINA ALDECOA
JACK ATKINSON
CHRISTOPHER BREY
JENNIFER BUNNELL
WENDY CARBONEL
ALEAH CRUCE
KAREN FORD
TIMOTHY HESKIN
CLAYTON LEVIS
PAIGE LOVE
ROLANDO MONGE
CASSIE RAO
ALYSSA RILEY
JAMES SELBY
GEOFFREY STENSON
ROBERT ERIC TURNER
CODY HOOVER
CHERIL AGUILAR
ROBERT "BOBBY" GONZALES
HANNAH ELIZABETH PAIRRETT



LET ME TELL YOU HOW HE LIVED

Posted on June 2nd, 2025-[JOIE LAW](#)

I get so tired of crying when I talk about my son. I want to get to that point where I am more at peace...that I can describe him and just smile. I do have those moments at home from time to time.

But not around people. Waiting for tires on my car last week, the lady beside me starts up a conversation. She tells a cute story about her grandkids. I smile. She asks me if I have grandkids. I'm never going to have grandkids...I think it, but don't say it out loud. I say no and look down. I wasn't prepared...I don't want to cry right now; I just want to get stupid tires on my car, and I'll probably never see this nice woman again, so why do I have to share? She sees that I am uncomfortable. She asks if I have children.

Damnit.

I used to brighten up at that question. Now I pray they won't ask. I'm not ashamed...I just don't want to cry AGAIN.

I respond with what I hope will stop more questions:

"I had a boy and a girl; they grew up and moved out, and I changed the locks so they can't move back." (with a convincing sarcastic smile). That's true...except for the lock part. I say it like I did when I was a brand-new empty nester...14 years ago. It was funny then... now it's my go-to answer in hopes there won't be more questions.

I've noticed people really don't want to listen...they just want to be listened to, and I'm good with that. I'm tired of crying, even though I fine-tuned my answer over the last eight years...

My son passed. It was an accidental overdose. My son was amazing, but he was poisoned by synthetic fentanyl and passed away. I miss him every day. My son, Andrew, lived to be 26. He was my mini-me, my favorite person.

I still can't type the "D" word next to his name. It just destroys me, so I use 'passed away'. I can handle that one better.

Tonight, I connected with my very dear best friend from childhood. We lost touch as young adults, for no particular reason. We found each other on Facebook tonight. I was so excited to get to talk with her. I genuinely wanted to hear everything about her life, her hubby, and her adult daughters that clearly inherited their mother's beautiful smile. She shared and I kept asking questions.

I referred to 'my kids' in general. I didn't say male, female, names, or ages. She didn't ask. I know she will. If I don't get brave and say it first, she will eventually ask. By saying it first, I take control of the narrative...I still cry but I'm talking over the expected 'gasp', and then I continue talking over them as they are saying "Oh, my god, I'm so sorry," I still get choked up but it's not as bad if I say it first.

But tonight, I just felt relieved that she didn't ask, and I didn't get choked up. I know my Andrew understands. I don't feel guilt or shame...I just get tired of crying.

Some thoughtless people start asking more and more questions. When did he pass, where was I then, what drug was he addicted to; that makes me instantly angry. I feel like the car wreck that people slow down to see... it's not concern when they ask those specifics... it's so they can justify the event. Like trying to figure out what type of addict he was so they know whether to care or dismiss him! It's to help them decide if I was a bad parent simply based on his drug of choice!

I've had people ask me which drug he used, and my typical response is "It doesn't matter, he wasn't trying to die that night, he was poisoned." Yeh, but was it needles or alcohol or what? I finally decided that when I get one rude question like that then THEY are going to be subjected to what I WANT to share.

I get out my phone and go to the "Andrew" album where the first photo is my favorite, and show them his beautiful face and say, "Let me tell you how he lived."

"He was my person, we understood each other, same jokes, same movies and music. We even liked the same hair care stuff.

His face would light up when he saw a baby! He inherited that from me! He loved talking with the elderly. If I suddenly turned and he wasn't there, I would find him talking to a "grandma or grandpa" asking questions about their life and laughing. I would tell him "Meet you here in 20". And many times, he would still be talking and listening in that same spot. What teenager does that, lol?

At his memorial, so many friends said the same thing:

"If it weren't for Andrew, I wouldn't be in the band I'm in now."

"He introduced me to all my friends."

"I've never met a friend like him, he really listened whenever I was down."

"I'm a better person because Andrew was my friend."

I try to remember that even extremely judgmental people are still learning and growing...

I know I've said some really stupid stuff in my life and sometimes people put me in my place. Maybe they will think twice the next time they judge a grieving parent. I swear I feel Andrew smile at me when I'm brave like that. He was my biggest fan and supporter.

I will probably always get choked up talking about my beloved son.

Ok. He's worth every tear I shed for the rest of my life. He's still my son and I'm still his Mommy. That will never change!

My relationship with Andrew is just that...MY relationship with MY Andrew. I never needed anyone else to qualify that before, so I don't need anyone to qualify it now. I don't need family members to reach out on his birthday or the day he passed. It would be nice...but I quit hoping for it...and I feel more peaceful letting go of that expectation.

Thank you for listening.

I truly don't think I could have survived without the parents here. You are my tribe and I value you. If I've shared something that rang true for you, then hold it. If it doesn't ring true for you, then let it go.

I do not grieve alone. I know we walk this path of grief together.

OTHER TUCSON IN PERSON AND ONLINE INFORMATION AND SUPPORT

- *Information & Referral Services: <http://www.211arizona.org/>
- *Homicide Survivors, Inc.: 520-740-5729
- *FOOTPRINTS-Pregnancy and Infant loss: 520-873-6590
- *Tu Nidito/Children to Children: 520-322-9155
- *Alive Alone <http://www.alivealone.org/> -for parent(s) who have lost their only child
- *Survivors of Suicide..... 520-989-0467
- *www.empactsos.org (suicide loss support group)
- *Rachel's Gift (pregnancy and infant loss-national group) www.rachelsgift.org
- *Miss Foundation <http://www.missfoundation.org/>
- *babysteps.com
- *griefwatch.com (books and products)
- *Pomc.com (families of murder victims)
- *webhealing.com
- * thegrieftoolbox.com
- *whatsyourgrief.com
- *save.org (suicide awareness)
- *taps.org (military death)

CRISIS HOTLINE INFORMATION

National Suicide Prevention Lifeline	1-800-273-8255
Suicide Hotline	1-800-Suicide
Depression & Crisis Hotline	1-800-784-2433
The National Institute for Trauma & Loss in Children (TLC)	1-877-306-5256
Families Anonymous (Addiction/Recovery)	1-800-736-9805
Al-Anon Family Groups (Addiction/Recovery)	1-888-425-2666
Post Partum Depression	1-800-944-4773



The 2025 Jim Click Millions for Tucson Raffle 1st place Kia Carnival, 2nd place first class air tickets, 3rd place \$5000

Tickets available Now! The drawing will be in December. We sell through November but appreciate early purchases. Last year we met our goal of \$2000 (actually slightly over) by selling all 100 of our tickets. It would be great if I had to go in to pick up more tickets this year. We appreciate your support. Remember, all money stays with our organization.

August Birthdays

MADISON ANGUIANO
MORGAN COLE
DAVID LESSER
JAMIE MULLINS, III
MADISON RODRIGUES
JA-MUS WHITFIELD
BARRY BOYLE
BILL CARSON
JADEN ELIJAH BLUE
ALAN DOYLE
ROBERT HORSTMAN
LOGAN PALMER
OLANDO TRUJILLO
ISABEL VILLEGAS
RONALD GARDY
NANCY KONERTH
TRACY ANN POLLINS
ALEXANDER WHEATLEY
MAXFIELD LANE WILLIAMS
ALEXANDER FIGUEREDO
ELIZABETH SMALL

KELSEY ELIZABETH BEITEL
ASHLEY DENEEN
GABRIEL ADRIAN GASTELUM
NATHANIEL LEWIS HEDGES
SAVANNAH GRACE WATSON
GLENN HARRISON WILLIAMS
RUSSELL SCOTT NEWSOME
JOHN DALLIES
CALEB CANDLER
MARISA GALLEG0
ANGELINA KNOX
JAMISON PESSIN
PRESTON WERNER
NATHAN NOWECKI-HUBBLE
RICHARD HAYES
SHAUN MOORE
BENJAMIN ROHEN-TRAPP

CLYDE BURKEY
EBERT S.R. EISSENSTAT
MERCER JOHNSON III
CHRISTOPHER PALACIO
DANIEL TATTRIE
TAMARA DAWN BASS
ANDREW THOMAS REPP
CARRIE ANNE ATKINS
AIDON COPFER
JARED GIDDINGS
BRIDGET MCCABE
JEFFREY SEWELL
OHN WOOD
RACHAEL EDWARDS
MARKO JAKSIC
BLIXA PARDEE
LINDA VARGAS



August Remembrance Days

ARI BLATTSEIN
KATIE CLARK
PHILIP GANOTE
DANIEL HUGHES
TORRE LYNN CARLS
SAMANTHA FULCO
WILEY HERREN
JUSTIN MOHN
RAUL "RULLY" JR LOPEZ
TINA VALENZUELA
SCOTT NEVINS
JUSTIN WITT
ROBERT BREMOND
BRANDIE CAMPBELL
ISABEL VILLEGAS
JOE KEELING
DONN OWENS
OHN WOOD
BROOKE FUNSECA
NATHANIEL LEWIS HEDGES
CARTER GARRICK HERNE
CHRISTINA ESCHENBURG

TIMOTHY BYMP
ASHLEY DENEEN
RONALD GARDY
BARRY BOYLE
ZAC CLARK
LORRAINE GUPPY
MATTHEW KAUFMAN
CHADWICK THOMAS KENYON
MICHEAL PESQUEIRA
CARIE LEE SHAFFER
NEAL REINACHER
MICHAEL SCARDAVILLE
SEAN KELLY CATAUDELLA
ANTHONY JESUS DURON
TYLER GROVE
ERIC SETH KOVITZ
BRODIE SCHMICH
DEVIN JACKSON
KATE STANKO

DEANA CAPPuccio
LILY FAIRCHILD
SHANE HARVEY
ANNABELLE CAMP
SARAH ESPINOZA
JARED GIDDINGS
MELISSA LOPEZ
AMY LOGAN
NIKOLAUS SMITH
COLTON ROBERTS
ETHAN STRASSMAN
NATHAN ANDREW BRALY
ROBERT GLEN CREWS
CHRISTOPHER J.R. HESSE
KYLE HOLBROOK
BRIAN MOHN
WILLIAM TIDWELL
IAN LEE ROGERS
LIAM GULYAS

CARMEN MARTINEZ RUSSO
KATERI LAURA JOANN FRANCISCO

48th National Conference in Bellevue/Seattle, WA

July 11 @ 8:00 am - July 13 @ 12:00 pm



Our conference is a place for bereaved families to find community and hope, while learning and sharing with others. Lifelong friendships are often made at the conference through meeting others who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild. This eagerly anticipated event will take place in Bellevue/Seattle, Washington, during the weekend of July 11-13, 2025. Conference and Hotel registration are open. Adult registration is \$330 June 1-July 7 and \$360 July 8 in person.

Tucson Chapter Steering Committee:

Leader/Facebook: Kirsten Bice Co-Leader: Sharon Farrell

Treasurer: Nancy Richards New Attendee Coordinator: Cat Morrow

Editor: Diane Allison Contributing Editors: All members- contributions wanted!

Outreach/ Correspondence: Kirsten Bice, Nancy Richards, Kenny Allison

Website: Julie Shulick Library: Debbie Russell

Regional Coordinator: Denise (Dean) Amore

Remembrance Cards To receive remembrance cards for your loved ones birthday month and the death anniversary month, sign-up with your complete information, for the memorial book

(<https://www.compassionatefriends.org/find-support/to-the-newly-bereaved/>).

The Compassionate Friends National:

Online Support information is available on the National Compassionate Friends Website at www.compassionatefriends.org.

(NationalOffice@compassionatefriends.org)

The Compassionate Friends offers “virtual chapters” through an Online Support Community (live chats). This program was established to encourage connecting and sharing among parents, grandparents, and siblings (over the age of 18) grieving the death of a child. The rooms supply support, encouragement, and friendship. There are general bereavement sessions as well as more specific sessions.

Facebook Groups: The Compassionate Friends offers a variety of private Facebook Groups. These pages are moderated by bereaved parents, siblings, or grandparents, and may not be accessed unless a request to join is approved by a moderator. Please click on the link next to the group you wish to join and answer the screening questions so they can confirm your request.

Name Badges: If you would like a name badge to wear on a lanyard at meetings please send your name, your child’s, grandchild’s, or sibling’s name, and a photo of your loved one to our email at compassionate.friends.tucson@gmail.com

Candice

When I look at my feet
As I walk up the street
I wish Candice could walk with me.

When I meet a new face
Or go to a new place,
I wish Candice could be there then.

I remember how she'd cheat
When we played hide and go seek,
Or she'd wrinkle up her nose
And call me stupid.

How she'd sing her favorite song
But get some of the words wrong;
It was too cute to make right
So we didn't even try.

So remember the fun we had
And don't feel too sad
Because Candice doesn't feel bad
Right now in heaven.

Elizabeth Williams, Age 10 In Memory of my cousin, Candice Lingle

LESSONS FROM MY SON

After you were born
my life became a challenge
Seeing your poised big sister
who did everything right
you escaped out of your crib
knocked the houseplants over
decorated a closet wall
with a bright blue marker.
You didn't hesitate to scare me
at eight months pregnant
waddling like a beached whale
with a trip to get stitches
when you fell in the bathtub
telling jokes and laughing
as the doctor sewed your chin
naming the stitches 'my itches'.



I can still see those bright eyes
the excitement over a frog,
picking green tomatoes,
covered in birthday cake,
drinking pool water,
climbing a pecan tree,
kissing a neighbor's puppy
and running naked down the cul-de-sac.

From you I learned the art of patience,
the joy of mothering a son,
that there are never enough
hours for cuddling and reading.
You taught me well
although you were so young.
And within my heart,
I will always hold my gratitude for you.

-Alice J. Wisler TCF Wake County, NC In Memory of Daniel Wisler



A National self-help, non-profit organization for families who have experienced the death of a child

THE TUCSON CHAPTER
P.O. 30733
Tucson, AZ 85751-0733

Return Service Requested

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
Tucson, AZ
Permit No. 2296



July-August 2025