

HOW TO HELP A GRIEVING PARENT

Grief is a natural and normal reaction to loss. Grief is a physical, emotional, spiritual and psychological response; it is neither a sign of weakness nor a lack of faith. Grief is painful, confusing and isolating, and lasts much longer than our society recognizes. Bereaved parents are more likely to cope with their grief in a healthy way when they receive continuing support from friends, relatives, co-workers and employers.

- There are no magic words to take away the pain. "I'M SO SORRY" is really all that can be said. Clichés, or trying to state something positive about the death, will minimize the situation and will not be helpful.
- **JUST BE THERE TO LISTEN.** Allow the bereaved parent to express the anger, pain, disbelief or guilt they may be feeling.
- Let your genuine concern and caring show.
- Be available to listen, run errands, help with other children, make a meal, or whatever else seems necessary at the time.
- Avoid judgements of any kind.
- Remember the child's birthday, or anniversary of death with a card, a phone call or a visit. Let the parent know that you remember too.

***"We need not
walk alone,
we are
The
Compassionate
Friends".***

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WHEN A CHILD DIES

**THE
COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS /
LES AMIS COMPATISSANTS**



***An international self-help,
non profit organization,
offering friendship,
understanding, grief
education and
hope for the
future to
all bereaved parents***

**OTTAWA VALLEY / OUTAOUAIS
CHAPTER
31 Maplehill Way
Ottawa, Ontario
K2C 3H1**

In our lives we must all learn to deal with the death of friends and family, as well as our own mortality. Few of us, however, know the particular devastation that comes with the death of a child. We expect our children to outlive us, to be a continuation of our own lives. The shattering of this expectation is unique and complex and cannot be likened to any other loss.

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

began in England in 1969 after two families whose sons died in the same hospital found they could support each other in a special way. These parents, with Rev. Simon Stephens, founded the society of the Compassionate Friends. In 1977, Joan and Bob Martin established the first Canadian chapter in Winnipeg.

MEMBERSHIP is open to any bereaved parent regardless of their child's age or cause of death. Bereaved siblings (sixteen years or older) and grandparents are also welcome. There are no membership dues. Donations are voluntary and tax receipts are issued. TCF has no religious affiliation.

“Grief becomes a tolerable and creative experience only when love enables it to be shared with someone who really understands.”

Rev. Simon Stephens, TCF Founder

OUR PURPOSE is to aid in the positive reconciliation of grief and foster the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and their surviving children.

Aims of TCF are:

- To offer support and friendship to any bereaved parent regardless of age, race, creed or financial status.
- To provide meetings where feelings and emotions can be shared in an atmosphere of trust, empathy, and confidentiality. If parents prefer, they can just listen.
- To provide information about the grieving process through our newsletter, programs and library.
- To listen with understanding and provide “telephone friends”.
- To provide contact with bereaved parents who have worked through their grief and found fresh hope and strength for living.
- To communicate with professionals involved with bereaved parents.

Personne ne comprend la douleur d'un parent qui a perdu un ou plusieurs enfants par la mort comme un autre parent dans la même situation. C'est une douleur incomparable à une autre.

Le but des Amis compatissants du Canada est d'apporter un soutien émotionnel à tous les parents endeuillés qui vivent ce cauchemar. Il entretient l'amitié, la compréhension, l'éducation sur le deuil et l'espoir pour le futur.

Cette organisation internationale de groupe d'entraide de toutes dénominations est sans but lucratif et il n'y a aucun frais.



“Nous ne sommes pas seuls, nous sommes les Amis compatissants”.