

## Sharing Circles:

### The Compassionate Friends (TCF)

3rd Tuesday of Every Month

7:00 pm to 9:00 pm

Olde Forge Community Resource Centre  
2730 Carling Avenue, Ottawa,

No one seems to understand what it means to lose a child like another parent who has gone through a similar loss. The monthly Sharing Circle offers an opportunity to share feelings, emotions and experiences in an atmosphere of trust, empathy, and safety.

The Compassionate Friends is an international, volunteer, self-help organization offering friendship, understanding, a place to grieve and a place to find hope and help from those who have walked this path before you.

The mission of TCF is to aid in the positive reconciliation of grief and foster the physical and emotional health of bereaved parents and their surviving children and to help others to be supportive. TCF has no religious affiliation.

Contact: [www.tcfottawa.net](http://www.tcfottawa.net)

For parents who have lost a child or youth under 18 years:

### Roger's House Bereavement Groups

<http://www.rogershouse.ca/en/forfamilies/bereavementinformation/>

For parents and families who have lost a child of any age:

### The Compassionate Friends of Ottawa

[www.tcfottawa.net](http://www.tcfottawa.net)

**Bereaved Families of Ontario (Ottawa chapter)** <http://www.bfo-ottawa.org/>

### Friends of Hospice resource links:

<http://www.friendsofhospiceottawa.ca/links.html>

(bereavement support at the bottom)

### Pregnancy and Infant Loss network

[www.pailnetwork.ca](http://www.pailnetwork.ca)

For books, articles and videos, visit the Kaitlin Atkinson Family Library at CHEO. These resources can be accessed through inter-library loans and picked up at a public library near you.

<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/griefbereavement>

# Grief is Another Word for Love



When your child dies,  
no matter their age,  
you are not alone.

Together we share the pain —  
honouring, remembering, reflecting



Developed by CHEO & The Compassionate Friends

Ottawa / Outaouais Chapter

For a PDF version of this document visit:

<http://www.cheo.on.ca/en/Bereavement>



**When a child dies.** . . . our feelings of devastation and pain are overwhelming. Nothing can prepare us, not the death of friends or family or even our own mortality. We expect our children to outlive us, and the shattering of this expectation is unique and complex; it is not like any other loss.

### **But we need not walk alone.**

With loss there is pain and sorrow. There are a thousand feelings that words alone cannot express.

The hurt in a grieved and wounded heart, a heart that misses a precious child, is unbearable . . . but yet there is love, and nothing can take away that love.

There is a love that is stronger than the loss, that is stronger than death and that transcends and brings back the reality of their presence in our lives.

Grief is another word for love. Love perhaps frozen in time, but a love that reflects, meditates and honors.

Grief is personal yet it can allow us ask for support and comfort from those around us. Support may come from family and friends, but the most profound support often comes from those who have sustained a similar loss, the loss of a child of any age.

Grieving is a normal reaction to this loss. It should not be shortened. It has to run its course in the short term and will likely continue in one form or another for the life of the parent. Some call this loss an emotional amputation.

Comfort can be found through the support, understanding and sharing of this loss with others with similar pain, similar grieving, similar loving.

*No matter the age of your child,  
or when your child died,  
you are always welcome.*

### ***Honouring***

## **The Balloon Release**

3rd Saturday afternoon in June

This event is for families who have lost a child regardless of age. A brief ceremony precedes each family releasing a balloon carrying a personalized note into the sky. The Balloon Release is held in The Butterfly Garden located on the hill behind the CHEO Emergency Department entrance.

The event is sponsored by CHEO and The Compassionate Friends.

#### **Contact:**

[butterflygarden@cheo.on.ca](mailto:butterflygarden@cheo.on.ca)

613-737-7600 ext. 3932



### ***Reflecting***

## **Memorial Service**

1st Sunday after Thanksgiving day

While all are welcomed, this service is a more traditional memorial service offered for the families of CHEO patients or Roger's House guests. Reflections and memories are shared by parents, grand-parents and others. Each year a different theme is chosen, such as nature, giving thanks, aboriginal traditions.

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613-737-7600 ext. 3932

### ***Remembering***

## **Candle Lighting**

2nd Sunday in December @ 7:00 pm

The *Candle Lighting* event is held at 7 pm by chapters of The Compassionate Friends around the world. Families each light a candle in honour of children of any age who have passed away. As candles burn down in one time zone, they are lighted in the next, creating a 24-hour wave of light that encircles the entire globe.

#### **Contact:**

The Compassionate Friends

Ottawa/Outaouais Chapter

[www.tcfottawa.net](http://www.tcfottawa.net)