



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter

Supporting Family After a Child Dies

To all those newly bereaved, who are receiving this newsletter for the first time and to all our Compassionate Friends, we wish you were not eligible to belong to this group, but we want you to know that you and your family have many friends. We, who received love and compassion from others in our time of deep sorrow, now wish to offer the same support and understanding to you. Please know we understand, we care, and we want to help. You are not alone in your grief.

Meetings are held the 1st Monday and 3rd Wednesday of each month In Person at 7:00PM at the Aldersgate Methodist Church, 235 Park Street, North Reading at 7:00 P.M. We also hold an Online meeting via Zoom on the 4th Wednesday of each month at 7:00PM. We are a self-sustaining organization with no funds except what we receive through donations from members and newsletter recipients. Please join us at a meeting.

Grief support after the death of a child

The Compassionate Friends is a national nonprofit, self-help support organization that offers friendship, understanding, and hope to bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. There is no religious affiliation and there are no membership dues or fees.

The secret of TCF's success is simple: As seasoned grievers reach out to the newly bereaved, energy that has been directed inward begins to flow outward and both are helped to heal.

The vision of The Compassionate Friends is that everyone who needs us will find us and everyone who finds us will be helped.

National Office:
The Compassionate Friends, Inc.
48660 Pontiac Trail #930808
Wixom MI 48393
Toll-free: 877-969-0010

Upcoming Meetings

Monday, 8/4/25
7:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Open Sharing Session

Wednesday, 8/20/25

In-Person Meeting - 7:00 PM

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Anger / Guilt / Regrets

-and-

Sibling Group Online Video Meeting - 7:30 PM

Please contact Aimeeb15@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Feeling Overlooked / Forgotten in Your Grief

Wednesday, 8/27/25
7:00 PM

Online Video Meeting

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Open Sharing Session with Photos of Your Child

Tuesday, 9/2/25
7:00 PM

In-Person Meeting

Please contact tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com if you would like to attend

Topic: Facing Difficult Dates

Chapter Leader: David Paul

978-771-6345

tcfnoshoreconnect@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor: Eden Paul

eden.r.paul@gmail.com

Regional Coordinator: Dennis Gravelle

tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com

SHERYL LYNN BECKER

20 Years! 20 Years! since you passed!

I never thought

I would still be living

20 years without you!

This year is harder now
that your DAD has passed too!

I miss you more than ever,
how could that be true,
when I've been missing you
every day for 20 years!

I'm not the strong person
everyone says I am.

I think about all of the parts
of our lives that you have missed!

I know you and your dad
are together now, watching over us.

Till we meet again.

Love Mom

-and-

CARY & JAMIE THABET

My Dear Cary & Jamie

Another birthday and another year without you...

You are my greatest joy and happiness.

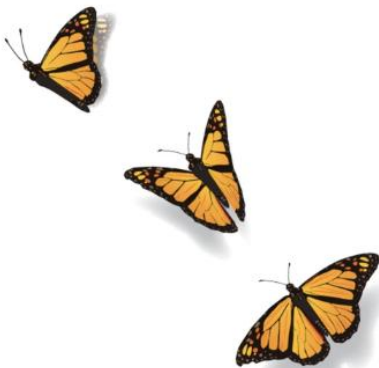
You made me the happiest I have ever been,
and in leaving, the saddest I will ever be.

Happy Birthday, my sweet boys...

I love you to the moon and back.

Love,

Mum





LET ME TELL YOU HOW HE LIVED

Posted on June 2nd, 2025

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.

Written by: [JOIE LAW](#)

The youngest of seven, Joie was born on the West Coast. Her 'mini-me', her Andrew, was poisoned with synthetic fentanyl. She says that the parents she has met in TCF meetings and online remind her that she is not alone, that we walk this path of grief together.

July Birthdays



Sheryl Lynn Becker daughter of Millie & Jerry Becker
 David Conant Siljeholm son of Anita Siljeholm
 Derek Frechette son of Janet Frechette
 Edward Michael Hedrington son of Jo Hedrington
 Tiffany Marie Hines daughter of Jeff and Debbie Hines
 Reid Robert Sacco son of Gene & Lorraine Sacco
 James Devlin Thabet son of Sheila & Khaire Thabet
 Cary Thabet son of Sheila & Khaire Thabet
 Wendy Kagan Snyder daughter of Billie and Sumner Kagan
 Andrew W. Taylor son of Constance Taylor
 Stephen Baglioni Son of Peter Baglioni
 Rosamond Leslie "Lindsey" Huntoon daughter of Louise Huntoon
 Michael Sawyer son of Diane Sawyer
 Darcie Forrestall daughter of Sally and Tim Morse
 Conor Bates son of Eileen Bates
 Griffin Nathan Lamar son of Nicole and Nathan Lamar
 Jax Gamal Lee Son of Aisha Lumumba
 Ziggy Prior Lowe son of Danielle Chiapella & Josh Lowe
 Michael O'Connell Nephew of Len and Louise Morrison
 Daniel Rogers son of Donna Rogers
 Marc Donovan son of Carol and Neil MacDonald
 Brooke Romswell niece of Susan Haggerty
 Seth Bottari son of Steve and Sarah Bottari
 Robert Troiano son of Karen Troiano
 Peter Thomas son of Jeanne Mace and brother of Lauren Steeves
 Robert Maloney Son of Donna and Paul Maloney
 Anthony Diaz son of Gail Scimone
 Andre Luis Ribeirinha-Braga son of Dianne & Sergio Braga
 Nancy Ellen Scotina Sibling of Jill Preshong
 Anne Good sister of Mary Good
 Daniel Edwards Brother of Rebecca Edwards
 Mark Eric Jepson brother of Shannon Kaiser
 Gabriel Feld son of Phyllis Feld
 Calvin Gil son of Julie Sheaves
 David Panzeri son of Larry and Louise Panzeri
 Tyler Fountain son of Kimberly Chandler




July Angel Dates

Lino J Brosco son of Leno and Emilia Brosco, sibling of Rose Ames
 Christian E. Frechette grandson of Janet Frechette
 Jared Linzey son of Sharyn & Tom Linzey
 Thomas Hart (Tom) Pope son of Carmen and Jeff Pope
 James Devlin Thabet son of Sheila & Khaire Thabet
 Jordan Zaff son of Driss Zaff
 Samantha Ruth Fargo daughter of William and Justine Fargo
 Jax Gamal Lee Son of Aisha Lumumba
 Tyler Weymouth Sibling of Andrew Weymouth
 Amber Zapatka Daughter of Lise and Ed Zapatka
 Brian Robert Pellegrino nephew of Alyse and Joe Bonfiglio
 Christopher Drelich son of Zib and Bonnie Drelich
 Brendan Tobin son of Marie and Tim Tobin
 Joseph Blasetti Jr Son of Donna and Joseph Blasetti
 Seraphina Harrell daughter of Rene Harrell
 Shea Thomas Patno son of Tim and Desiree Patno
 Ian Douglas Byrnes son of Julie and Geoff Moore
 Shaun Carnes son of Diane and Alan Pajak
 Jake Straw son of Michelle Straw



Joseph Saidah son of Mary Saidah
Justin Joseph Hartford son of Jen Smith
Patrick Lynch son of Susan Lynch

	Our telephone friends are here to help you if you feel the need to connect with someone outside of our usual meeting night. We are not professionals – we are all bereaved parents seeking to find a way through our grief. Please be considerate in the timing of your calls to these volunteers.	
Beverly	Carmen Pope, son, 3 days, anencephaly; son, 11, boating accident	978-998-4087
Reading	Sheila Thabet, son, 19, Pedestrian accident, Son 20, accidental overdose	781-670-0335
Gloucester	Melinda & David Paul, daughter, 20, sudden cardiac arrest	978-771-6345
Haverhill	Crystal Chambers, sibling, 28, cause unknown	508-523-2810
North Andover	Catherine Olson, daughter, 27, pedestrian accident	978-681-8341
Salem, NH	Regan Burke, son, 8, pneumonia/cardiac arrest	603-264-9391
Winchester	Reenie McCormack, son, 20, drowning	781-729-1878
Woburn	Nancy Whipple, son, 22 months, cancer	781-938-5840

TCF North Shore-Boston Chapter Website Sponsorship

In order to help cover our chapter website fees, we invite our members to sponsor our chapter website for 1 month in memory of their children, grandchildren or siblings. The monthly website sponsor donation is \$25 per member and the maximum number of sponsors per month is 2. Sponsors may post a message to their children, grandchildren or siblings; this message will be displayed in the Website Sponsor column on the Home page of our website and will also appear in our chapter newsletter.

If you would like to sponsor our chapter website, please contact our Website Manager via email:
tcfnorthshoreweb@gmail.com

Website sponsor sign up sheets are also available at our monthly in-person meetings.

WALK TO REMEMBER TEE SHIRTS

The TCF North Shore-Boston Chapter annual Walk To Remember will take place on **9/21/25**. More information regarding this event will be posted on our website in July. If you would like to order a tee shirt for this year's Walk To Remember, click on this link:

[Walk To Remember Tee Shirts](#)

This link will be active from **5/29/25** through **8/29/25**. The shirts that are ordered will be shipped to Tim Glendinning. Tim will then distribute the tee shirts at Ipswich River Park in North Reading before the Walk begins.

If you have any questions, feel free to contact Tim:

tglendinning@crowuniform.com

• **(908) 902-8631**



Love Notes



This section is reserved for personal messages in memory of our children, grandchildren, and siblings. Donations received help to cover the operating costs of the chapter; monthly meetings, refreshments, newsletter mailing, etc. While not expected, any donations are always appreciated.

Thank you to all who continue to leave donations in the box at every meeting

Love Notes are a way to share a message in memory of your child/grandchild/sibling. Donations received with Love notes help with the cost of publication of this newsletter.

Please send your Love Notes with donation by mail to

Bob Boulanger, 42 Chatham Rd. Billerica, MA 01821, or give them to the leader at the monthly meetings.

Please use the form below to assure notes are posted exactly as you want them. Love Notes for the next newsletter must be received by the **15th of the previous month**.

Love Gifts for future dates may be sent at any time; month to be published: _____

Love Gift from _____ In memory of

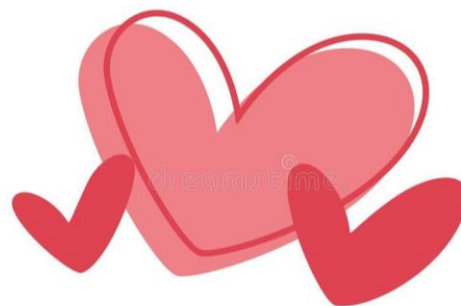
Message:

TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third, or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person or just the right words that will help you in your grief or comfort you. Remember we have all been there and even though circumstances may be different, we really do understand. You are not alone.

TO OUR SEASONED MEMBERS

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back.... remember hearing from others farther along than you...“your pain will not always be this bad it really does get better” Come to the meetings and share your wisdom. Show others that there is hope, from someone who has found it.



THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS

c/o Bob Boulanger
42 Chatham Road
Billerica, MA 01821

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIALS
PLEASE FORWARD



The Compassionate Friends

North Shore-Boston Chapter
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

NEWSLETTER – July 2025



National Website: www.compassionatefriends.org

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.

***** CHAPTER WEBSITE: www.TCFNoShore-Boston.org *****

Help us save money and paper.....

To receive these newsletters via email please send an email to the editor
tcfnoshorenews@gmail.com