



Bereaved Parents of the USA

Anne Arundel County Chapter

The Compassionate Friends of Maryland, Inc.

September, 2005

www.aacounty-md-bereavedparents.org

CARING FOR THE OTHER...

William L. Stidger, a noted pastor, brilliantly described the true meaning of sympathy by sharing this story:

"I remember once seeing a crowd of children on a playground, all of them weeping. I walked over to them. A boy was lying on the ground bent over almost double and crying with pain. I asked a little girl what the trouble was, and she replied, "We all got a pain in Jimmy's stomach!". What a wondrous definition of sympathy and caring from the mouths of babes! Simply stated...sympathy is another's pain in my heart.

The above was from a message posted by M. Thomas Harned, Colonel, USAF, NSA/CSS Staff Chaplain.

I am struck by the thought that as we sit through our monthly meetings, that same basic sympathy seems to be present in the hearts of most everyone in the room. Although we may not be attending these meetings to draw sympathy from others, we appreciate the thought that no one hesitates to offer their heartfelt feelings to help others through their grieving process.

For those of you that have yet to attend a meeting or if you haven't been to one for a while, please join us when you can...we welcome you.

Rick Tomaszewski

GOALS OF BEREAVED PARENTS OF THE USA

- to educate families about the grief process and all its complexities as it applies to the death of a child at any age and from any cause.
- to aid and support those who are suffering such a loss, regardless of race, creed or financial situation.
- to provide a library at each meeting place where members may borrow books with up-to-date information about the grief process.
- to supply the telephone numbers of other bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents who are able to offer support to other more newly bereaved families.
- to inform and educate members of the helping professions who interact with bereaved parents as to the nature and duration of parent/sibling/grandparent bereavement.
- to provide monthly meetings with sharing groups and occasional informative programs.



The printing and mailing of this newsletter has been donated
By Janice and Chris Kunkel in memory of their son
Jason T. Easter



The Compassionate Friends of Maryland, Inc.
P.O. Box 6280
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Hospitality: VACANT

*note - as you can see we have several vacancies... we hope someone will consider helping!

It is our sincere hope that you will find comfort somewhere in this newsletter. It is our intention to offer you hope in knowing that you are not alone. We encourage you to write about your feelings and to share your feelings with others who understand.

Material to be printed "in memory of" must be sent to the editor 6-8 weeks in advance of the newsletter in which you wish the item to be printed.

October submissions are due by Sep 12th.

Library:

Our lending library is available to help you understand and deal with your grief. Most of our materials have been donated in memory of a child. When you have finished with them, please return them at our monthly meeting or mail them to the post office box listed above. Thank you.



Refreshments at our monthly meetings:

A sign-up sheet is on the refreshment table at the meeting. Drinks, ice, and paper products are provided by the chapter. For information, contact Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634



MEETING INFORMATION

Next meeting: September 1, 2005

Doors open at 7:15 p.m.

Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

(Meetings usually held on first Thursday of month)

Calvary United Methodist Church

301 Rowe Blvd., Annapolis

Please park in the lot behind the church

TELEPHONE FRIENDS:

Sometimes we feel the need to talk to someone who understands the pain we feel and will listen to us. When you have questions to ask, a need to talk, or have a difficult day, these people welcome your call.

Marie Dyke, single parent, daughter, 17, only child, car accident.

Janet Tyler, daughter, 5 and brother, 33, car accident. 410-969-7597

Tia Stinnett, miscarriages and infant death. 410-360-1341

Sandy Platts, infant death. 410-721-6457

ZIP CODE CHANGES:

If you are one of the ones in the Annapolis and Arnold areas whose zip code is changing, please call Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 or send him an email at dralex@sdalex.com with your new zip code so we can update our mailing list.

OTHER RESOURCES:

- * **Bereaved Parents of the USA, (BPUSA)**
National contact number (708-748-7866)
- * **Stephanie Roper Committee, for victims of violent crime, Anne Arundel County chapter**
representative is James Donnelly
(410-544-1473).
- * **Survivors of Suicide Group (SOS)**
meets the 1st Tuesday of each month from 7:30 p.m. - 9:00 p.m., at Severna Park United Methodist Church, 731 Benfield Road, Severna Park (410-987-2129).

CHAPTER NEWS AND NOTES

PLEASE! PLEASE! PLEASE HELP US SAVE ON PRINTING AND POSTAGE

If you *move*, please let us know your new address. If you *don't want* to receive our newsletter any more, please let us know. If you would rather read the newsletter on our website, please let us know, and send us your email address, and we will send you a reminder each month when the newsletter is put on the website. (The newsletter is loaded on the website as soon as it has been produced — about 10 days before it is delivered in the mail.)

You can contact us by mail at our address at PO Box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401-0280 or by sending us an email at ChapterLeader@sdalex.org.

It costs us over 50¢ per copy to print and mail the newsletter. The Postal Service will not forward the newsletter since it is sent by Bulk Mail. However, for 37¢ a copy they will return any non-deliverable copies which are sent to an old address. That means we have spent 87¢ to find out someone has moved. Not much on a case by case basis, but it adds up. So please take a moment before you move or if you decide you no longer want to receive the newsletter, and let us know.

THANK YOU!

Chapter Website

To place your child's name on our website, email Dave Alexander (dralex@sdalex.com), or send him a note, (PO box 6280, Annapolis, MD 21401). Include your name, your child's name as you would like it to appear, and your child's date of birth and date of death.

To have a picture of your child on the website, email a digital file with the picture or send a printed picture to Dave. (Photos will be returned.) If you have any questions, please call Dave at 410-544-3634.

Many of you who receive our **newsletter** were referred by a friend, physician, or clergy. You may have never attended a meeting. In this case, it is likely that your child's name does not appear in our **monthly list of "Our Children Remembered"**. This is because we require your permission to do so. If you would like your child's name added, please send a note to our post office box. List your child's name, your name(s), and the dates of your child's birth and death. Please allow 6 weeks to be sure it arrives in time for the appropriate month.

MEETING TOPICS—ANNAPOLIS

September 1: Helping Our Surviving Children

The surviving children in our families often have issues of their own. These issues can be vastly different depending on the age of the surviving child, his/her location in the order of the family, etc. Alice Baij, a bereavement counselor with Heartland Hospice and a bereaved sibling, will talk about her experience in dealing with the issues faced by the siblings of deceased children, and offer ideas on how we might help them.

October 6: Forgiveness

There's a lot of talk about forgiveness – of our self, of others, of God, etc. But what is forgiveness and how do we do it? Ruth Dennison-Tedesco, a nationally certified counselor with a master of science in pastoral counseling, will discuss these issues based on her clinical experience with bereaved parents and others.

EASTERN SHORE BEREAVED PARENTS GROUP

The Queen Anne's County Bereaved Parents Group meets on the *First Wednesday of each month*. The next meeting will be on Wednesday, September 7th, at 7:00 pm. The Group meets at the *Calvary United Methodist Church in Queenstown*. The Church is located at the intersection of Maryland Avenue and Steamboat Lane in Queenstown.

All are welcome to come. Please pass the word to other bereaved parents. For more information, contact Joan Gray at 410-827-7471 or Dave Alexander at 410-544-3634 or send an email message to QueenstownGroup@sdalex.org

Sponsor Our Monthly Newsletter or Website

You can help underwrite the costs of our newsletter or our website by sponsoring a monthly issue of the newsletter or by sponsoring a month of the website. To sponsor either one, contact Dave Alexander (dralex@sdalex.com) Newsletter printing costs \$150 and mailing is \$50 each month. Website sponsorship costs \$25.00 each month.

Donations

Donations may be made to offset the cost of printing and mailing the newsletter, the chapter website, the annual Remembrance Service, the annual Conference of Hope and Healing, and books and other materials for the Chapter Library. We gratefully acknowledge the following donations made in the last month:

Dorothy and Norm Heincelman in memory of their granddaughters
Cortney Belt and Traci Heincelman
Ken Smith in memory of his niece Tracy Fotino
Karen Willey in memory of her son Nicholas Poe



Thank You!

Memory Walk

This year's Annual Memory Walk in memory of our children who have died too soon will be held on Saturday, October 1st at Quiet Waters Park in Annapolis. Would you like to help? There are lots opportunities. The following is a list of the many tasks, both large and small, that go into putting on this event. If you would like to help and take on or work with others on any of these tasks, please give Barbara Bessling a call at 410-608-3894.

Memory Walk Tasks:

- Advertising/PR
- Walk directions and signs
- Tree dedication
- Refreshments, including:
coffee, water/juice, bagels/donuts, fruit, tablecloths, napkins, coolers, ice
- Flyers/notices
- Decorations
- Opening & closing ceremonies
- Registration table
- Butterfly tags and markers



In Search Of: *Annual Conference Leader*

Pat Schultz, who has led the planning and running of our annual conference for many years, has asked that we recruit a new Conference Leader. Pat has offered to work closely with the new leader and to continue to handle many of the tasks that go into this effort. However, Pat strongly feels that for the conference to continue to grow and meet the needs of bereaved parents and families, we need to bring new leadership in with fresh perspectives and ideas.

The Conference Leader is supported by many other members who handle the myriad efforts that go into this event. The role of Conference Leader has also been performed successfully in the past by Co-Leaders.



If you are interested in exploring taking on this role, please give Pat a call on 410-255-7760 or Dave Alexander on 410-544-3634

Button Maker

Several people have asked about the great photo buttons/pins that many members wear at the meetings and functions. The tool that we use to make the pins will be available for use at the September 1 meeting. If you would like to have a button made with a photo to keep as a great memento, bring a photo that can be trimmed into a 2 1/8" diameter circle. A \$2.00 / button donation would be greatly appreciated. The donation will be used by the chapter to offset expenses.



SIBLING PAGE



I'm Missing You

I'm missing you -
All day, every day
On a bright summer morning,
or
When the moon is full,
In the golden days of fall,
As the storm clouds build and it's snowing
When the willows begin to turn green—
You are always with me,
In my mind and in my heart.
My Brother, My good friend,
I'm missing you.



*Kris Cunningham
TCF, Moro, IL*

*A Shoshone Indian Legend explains the
existence of all wildflowers:*

“Wild blooms are the footprints of little
children who have died and come back
to gladden us.”



I Know there is a Heaven

I know that there's a Heaven
For I've seen it many times
Deep within my heart somewhere
And etched into my mind.

It's a field all filled with flowers
A warm, bright summer day
Just like the one behind the house
Where we used to play.

The summer breeze caresses me
And dances softly in my hair
As I stand and look across the field
And see you standing there.

We laugh and run through the tall grass
The day turns into dusk
And Mom and Dad, they call us home
As the moon smiles upon us.

You look just like you did when you left
But you're young and strong again
And my life is so complete
Just as it was back then.

My eyes may get old and tired one day
I may have children of my own
Or it may be tomorrow
For one can never know.

But I know when my days come to an end
And I open my eyes to see
If there's a God in Heaven
You'll be waiting there for me

*Lisa O'Grady
TCF, Arlington, TX*



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED

Please remember the following families this month.

Jon Russell Aikin
Son of Susan Eisel
Grandson of Elizabeth and Barry Aikin
September 4, 1983 - November 19, 2001

Joseph Benjamin Antonelli
Son of Carole Antonelli
November 6, 1961 - September 9, 2003

Elizabeth Sinton Archard
Daughter of Barbara Hale
September 25, 1964 - August 27, 1978

Patrick John Bennett Jr.
Son of Patrick and Deborah Bennett
September 27, 1975 - April 15, 1999

Jamie Bessling
Son of Judy and Ed Bessling
October 23, 1974 - September 23, 2002

Alex Blake
Son of Bob and Veronica Blake
February 1, 1982 - September 25, 2004

Traci Lynn Boone
Daughter of Bonita Boone-Adamecz
September 17, 1964 - August 17, 1986

Preston Leon Bromley
Son of Sandy and Leon Bromley
March 30, 1982 - September 2, 2003

Mary Kathleen Carmody
Daughter of Mary Carmody
August 24, 1958 - September 17, 1998

O. Steven Cooper
Nephew of Thomas and Ethel Cleary
July 5, 1954 - September 26, 1998

Ryan Christopher Copeland
Son of Meg Holthaus
September 4, 1981 - June 27, 2004

David Michael Cutter
Son of Jim and Anne Marie Cutter
September 16, 2002 - January 2, 2003

Alexandra "Allie" Ann Denevan
Daughter of Gregory J. Denevan
September 18, 1985 - August 21, 2002

Alexandra DiLego
Daughter of Tom and Mary DiLego
September 20, 1999 - September 20, 1999

Andrew Thomas DiLego
Son of Thomas and Mary DiLego
September 20, 1999 - September 20, 1999

Jason T. Easter
Son of Janice and Chris Kunkel
January 30, 1973 - September 9, 1999

Ronald Wesley Farley
Son of Dorothy and Donald Farley
September 15, 1955 - June 28, 2000

David Jonathan Frame
Son of Carol Brothers
April 12, 1967 - September 11, 2001

Lauryn Beth Grapski
Daughter of Kathleen Grapski
September 17, 1980 - November 17, 2000

Sarah McSweeney Gray
Daughter of Kathy and Bob Gray
November 12, 1983 - September 21, 2003

Jeffrey Andrew Grimm
Son of John and Linda Grimm
November 25, 1973 - September 28, 1989

McKayla Hall
Granddaughter of Mike and Julie Hall
July 22, 2000 - September 20, 2003

Ronald Michael Hall III
Son of Mike and Julie Hall
May 17, 1980 - September 20, 2003

Daniel Embert Hinton Jr.
Son of Dan and Pam Hinton
September 23, 1970 - March 7, 2003

Matthew James Katz
Son of Bob and Sue Katz
March 13, 1982 - September 7, 2003

Mark Edward Keefe
Son of Debra and Mark Keefe
September 13, 1974 - January 8, 1991

Brice Charles Kelley
Son of Hannah and Chris Kelley
September 24, 2002 - May 31, 2004

Kevin Murray Kerr
Son of Debra and Richard Kerr
January 19, 1980 - September 4, 2001

Nicholas Paul Liberatore
Son of Larry and Pat Liberatore
September 27, 1980 - June 9, 1997

Joseph M. Liberto
Son of Colleen Harslip
May 20, 1956 - September 5, 2004



OUR CHILDREN REMEMBERED (continued)

William A. Miller
Son of Mary J. Miller
Brother of Marlene Miller
September 1, 1964 - January 18, 2004

Chad William Muehlhauser
Son of Bill and Paula Muehlhauser
October 3, 1983 - September 16, 1992

Amelia Evans Mufson
Daughter of Neil and Beth Mufson
April 6, 1995 - September 28, 2002

Kathleen "Katie" O'Connor
Daughter of Anne and Jim O'Connor
September 21, 1986 - July 11, 2003

Jack Osiecki III
Son of Linda and John McGuire
October 31, 1971 - September 26, 2001

Scott Thomas Palmer
Son of Frances Palmer
Grandson of Thomas and Ethel Cleary
August 3, 1983 - September 1, 1996

Cedric John Peoples
Son of John and Lucille Peoples
September 5, 1968 - December 14, 1987

John Christopher Poe
Son of Sharon and Ben Poe
October 12, 1967 - September 24, 2001

James Ryan Rohrbaugh
Son of Doug and Donna Rohrbaugh
August 30, 1983 - September 5, 1983

David John Rose
Son of Carol Rose McAuliffe
October 21, 1969 - September 1, 1988

Daniel Maurice Rothman
Son of Juliet and Leonard Rothman
January 20, 1971 - September 17, 1992

Anthony John Schaefer
Son of LuAnn Schaefer
July 13, 1979 - September 26, 2003

Thomas "Tommy" Richard Short
Son of Karen Short
September 25, 1997 - October 16, 1997

Deonte Joseph Simms
Grandson of Deborah Simms
October 1, 1981 - September 8, 2001



Jami Leigh Smith
Daughter of Deannie and Gerry Smith
October 19, 1977 - September 30, 1987

Roderick "Rod" William Stallings
Son of Robin Stallings
February 7, 1967 - September 14, 1996

Deon J. Summers
Son of John E. Summers
June 5, 1989 - September 2, 2003

Shonto Taylor
Grandson of Stephen and Carolyn Tew
September 7, 1979 - November 7, 1994

David W. Tomaszewski
Son of Richard and Carol Tomaszewski
September 4, 1974 - February 6, 2001

Timothy Allen Umbel
Son of Richard and Mary Ann Umbel
Brother of Dawn Umbel
February 16, 1982 - September 15, 2002

John Leroy Waters Jr.
Son of Stella and Roy Waters
September 19, 1970 - May 23, 2000

Faith Jordan Williams
Daughter of Nicole Hawkins
September 26, 1998 - January 11, 1999

Hope Marie Williams
Daughter of Nicole Hawkins
September 26, 1998 - October 6, 1998

Jeffrey Kevin Withers
Son of Jan Withers
July 30, 1975 - September 28, 1975

Miriam Luby Wolfe
Daughter of Larry and Rosemary Mild
September 26, 1968 - December 21, 1988

Note: If your child's name appears in the printed version of our newsletter but does not appear in this online version, it is because we have not received explicit permission from you to list it online. If you would like your child's name to also appear in future online editions of the newsletter, please send an email to drallex@sdalex.com



So You Think You're Losing Your Mind...

Because you need to go to the cemetery every day?

There may be members of your family, or some friends or neighbors, who will imply that going to the cemetery every day is morbid and perpetuates your grief. Don't you believe them. What they don't understand is that we cry and think of our dead child whether we go to the cemetery or not. It comforts some to go every day, some only feel a need to go now and then, and still others never return to the cemetery after the funeral. How often you go has nothing to do with the intensity of your grief, it is just another example of how differently we all react. You know how you feel, and that is what is really important. As you recover, you may find the need to visit your child's grave site is diminished. As this happens, don't be hesitant to make changes in your routine without guilt. Do what you need to do and don't worry how it may appear to someone else.

Because you can't look at your child's pictures yet?

This is one area where there doesn't seem to be a middle ground; either you take great comfort in having pictures surrounding you, or you don't want any on display at all. There is nothing wrong with either reaction. If pictures are a problem for you, time may be the answer. A few special pictures may then offer comfort. Trouble may arise when there are conflicting needs within a family. It is important that a parent who needs the pictures on display understands that those same pictures cause pain for another. It in no way connotes not caring or wanting to forget. It is, rather, just the opposite; the pain is there because there is so much love and caring. Try to be flexible in those areas of direct conflict.

Because you keep seeing someone who reminds you of your child?

Well, many of us do. You may even find yourself following along behind - just to make sure! The impulse may be to take them home with you. It may be all a part of denial process, but I suspect it is just because we miss them so much.

Because you find yourself thinking that it would be easier to join your child in death than to go through the pain of living without them?

We often hear this from lots of bereaved parents. They get so tired of the hurt. It frightens the parents that they are entertaining suicidal thoughts, but it must be a normal reaction for some to consider this as an alternative. Many parents, as they talk, are quick to agree that they are too responsible to really consider this as an answer. There are people who love and need them. They realize they could not purposefully put someone they love through the very hell they are seeking to escape. They are able to realize that it is not an answer.

Because you find yourself going over and over in your mind what you imagine your child felt or thought as they faced death?

This seems to be a particularly bad problem for those whose children died accidentally or as a result of suicide or murder. You may feel it is almost a compulsion at times to try and picture and imagine the thoughts and feelings your child may have had. It really is a universal problem and you may have more trouble putting this one aside. You will, as a rule, get better about it and later on it will not occupy your thoughts as much as in the beginning. It is normal. Some find it helpful to find out from anyone connected, or who may have witnessed the death, as much information as possible. Others have no desire to know the details. It is an old story, but we all do it differently and the way that fills your needs is right for you. Just know that it is normal to have it on your mind.

Because you find yourself reading the obituaries since your child died - searching for names and ages of others who have died too young?

Well, if this is a sign you are losing your mind, you have lots of company. Some are drawn to the obituaries. Is it because we seek to know that we are not alone in this seemingly endless maze? That there are others out there who know the horror of losing a child and we need to identify with them? Not everybody has this need, but many do. It may be bothersome to your spouse because they may feel it is a sign of abnormal grief and is morbid. It isn't for some. You may do it for a time but eventually most people stop having the need. Don't worry about it.

-by Mary Cleckley, Atlanta, Ga
from TCF Atlanta Online Sharing



HEARTPRINTS



Whatever our hands touch---
We leave fingerprints!
On walls, on furniture,
On doorknobs, dishes, books,
As we touch we leave our identity.
Oh please where ever I go today,
Help me leave heartprints!
Heartprints of compassion
Of understanding and love.
Heartprints of kindness
and genuine concern.
May my heart touch a lonely neighbor
Or a runaway daughter,
Or an anxious mother,
Or, perhaps, a dear friend!
I shall go out today
To leave heartprints,
And if someone should say
"I felt your touch,"
May that one sense be...
YOUR LOVE Touching through ME.

~Author Unknown

"It Is So Hard To Say Goodbye To Yesterday"

How do I say goodbye to what we had?
The good times that made us laugh
Outweigh the bad.
I thought we'd get to see forever
But forever's gone away
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.
I don't know where this road
Is going to lead
All I know is where we've been
And what we've been through.
If we get to see tomorrow
I hope it's worth all the wait
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.
And I'll take with me the memories
To be my sunshine after the rain
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.
And I'll take with me the memories
To be my sunshine after the rain
It's so hard to say goodbye to yesterday.

Lyrics- Boys II Men

WAIT

Desperately, helplessly, longingly, I cried.
Quietly, patiently, lovingly God replied.
I pled and I wept for a clue to my fate,
And the Master so gently said, "Child, you must wait!"
"Wait?', you say, wait!" my indignant reply.
"Lord, I need answers, I need to know why!
Is your hand shortened? Or have you not heard?
By FAITH I have asked, and am claiming your Word.
"My future and all to which I can relate
Hangs in the balance, and you tell me to WAIT?
I'm needing a 'yes,' a go-ahead sign,
Or even a 'no' to which I can resign.
"And Lord, you promised that if we believe
We need but to ask, and we shall receive.
And Lord, I've been asking, and this is my cry
I'm weary of asking! I need a reply!"
Then quietly, softly, I learned of my fate
As my Master replied once again, "You must wait."
So, I slumped in my chair, defeated and taut
And grumbled to God, "So, I'm waiting. . .for what?"
He seemed then to kneel and His eyes wept with mine,
And he tenderly said, "I could give you a sign.
I could shake the heavens, and darken the sun.
I could raise the dead, and cause mountains to run.
All you seek, I could give, and pleased you would be.
You would have what you want--but, you wouldn't know ME.
"You'd not know the depth of my love for each saint;
You'd not know the power that I give to the faint;
You'd not learn to see through the clouds of despair;
You'd not learn to trust just by knowing I'm there;
You'd not know the joy of resting in me
When darkness and silence were all you could see.
"You'd never experience that fullness of love
As the peace of my Spirit descends like a dove;
You'd know that I give and I save. . .(for a start),
But you'd not know the depth of the beat of my heart.
"The glow of my comfort late into the night.
The faith that I give when you walk without sight,
The depth that's beyond getting just what you asked
Of an infinite God, who makes what you have LAST.
"You'd never know, should your pain quickly flee,
What it means that 'My grace is sufficient for thee.'
Yes, your dreams for your loved ones overnight would come true,
But, oh, the loss! if I lost what I'm doing in you!
"So, be silent, my child, and in time you will see
THAT THE GREATEST OF GIFTS IS TO GET TO KNOW ME.
And though oft may my answers seem terribly late,
My wisest of answers is still but to WAIT."

-- Author Unknown

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

DATED MATERIAL



Bereaved Parents of the USA

CREDO

We are the parents whose children have died. We are the grandparents who have buried grandchildren. We are the siblings whose brothers and sisters no longer walk with us through life. We come together as Bereaved Parents of the USA to provide a haven where all bereaved families can meet and share our long and arduous grief journeys. We attend monthly gatherings whenever we can and for as long as we believe necessary. We share our fears, confusion, anger, guilt, frustrations, emptiness and feelings of hopelessness so that hope can be found anew. As we accept, support, comfort, and encourage each other, we demonstrate to each other that survival is possible. Together we celebrate the lives of our children, share the joys and triumphs as well as the love that will never fade. Together we learn how little it matters where we live, what our color or our affluence is or what faith we uphold as we confront the tragedies of our children's deaths. Together, strengthened by the bonds we forge at our gatherings, we offer what we have learned to each other and to every more recently bereaved family. We are the Bereaved Parents of the USA.

We welcome you.