

M.E.N.D. Newsletter

Remembrance Ideas for your Baby's Birthday or Anniversary

Volume 5, Issue 2. March/April 2000

From Rebekah

One of the biggest milestones of grief that bereaved families must face is the anniversary of their baby's birth/death. During the weeks leading up to this bittersweet day we reminisce over the pregnancy, the happy times and the dreams. The dreams suddenly become a nightmare all over again as we relive the moment when our baby's death was confirmed and our world came to a screeching halt.

I think most families would agree that the first anniversary is the hardest because we don't know what to expect. I always tell families at M.E.N.D., "the anticipation is far worse than the actual day." I think it's the fear of the unknown. Many moms, including myself, have expressed that we were greatly relieved when this day was over and we felt a sense of accomplishment that we had indeed survived.

Although the anniversary is very difficult, we as parents want to make the day meaningful and often times go to great lengths to do so. On a regular basis M.E.N.D. receives calls and e-mail from families wanting suggestions and ideas on how to memorialize this special day. While there are many ways to honor our babies, we must first remember that there is no right or wrong way. Everyone chooses to do it differently.

Several days before Jonathan's first birthday, I asked my sister to arrange for a sign to be made for our front yard. She went to Fast Signs and had a beautiful white and blue metal, real estate-type sign created with a little cherub on it that says:

In Loving Memory of Our Baby
Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
June 24, 1995
Until We Meet Again...

The first year we put this in our yard I was a little apprehensive as to what the neighbors would think. However, much to my surprise, several of them thanked us for "reminding" them of our special day and since then we have proudly displayed our sign each year. We also make a temporary "shrine" in our kitchen with his pictures, mementos and cards from caring people who still remember his birthday. Our family has also made a tradition of going to the cemetery, placing a birthday balloon and flowers on his grave and taking pictures. I then place the pictures and cards in the birthday sections of his baby book.

As your baby's birthday approaches, I know it is very difficult knowing that you should be planning a big birthday party with family and friends. But, you can still make it a beautiful day full of memory, honor and hope. For this issue several families from our support group submitted ways they have commemorated their baby's birthday in order to give you ideas for making your baby's special day a day to sweetly remember.

Rebekah Mitchell

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My Child Died Today

My child died today.
Is anyone aware?
My child died today.
Does anybody care?
My child died today.
Dear God, are you up there?
My child died today.
The pain is more than I can bear.
I cried out to the Lord in pain
"How could you do this to me?"
I could not comprehend at first
These precious gems of truth learned slowly.
But, I felt His presence s'round me
And His soft voice say,
"I feel your pain and I do care.
You're not the only one.
You see, two thousand years ago,
I also lost a Son.
I suffer with you, know your sorrow,
Understand your fears,
For back what seems only a day
A debt there was to pay:
To give you eternal life
I tried to find a way
So you could live. I chose to say
"My child died today."

By Wendy Gunn '88

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Remembrance Ideas For Your Baby's Birthday or Anniversary

Buy fresh flowers for your home to enjoy while remembering your baby.

Make a scrap book that contains any or all of the following items:

- pictures
- cards
- hospital bracelet(s)
- birth/death certificate
- poetry

Create or buy a special frame for your baby's picture(s) or birth certificate.

Create a photo album or collage.

Buy a Birthstone Babies necklace, Mother's Ring, Angel pin, or other appropriate jewelry.

Plan a special meal with family/friends to celebrate a special date (i.e. birthday, anniversary date, etc.).

Contribute to your local church, school, library, or favorite charity in your baby's name.

Donate a children's or pregnancy loss book to your local library.

Create a special place to keep or display your baby's things (i.e. blanket, outfit, hospital bracelets, other mementos, etc.) For example, a shadow box, small toy chest, a curio, etc.

Visit the cemetery and take some flowers or a plant with a small toy to leave there.

Write a message to your baby on a balloon and release it.

Reach out to others who have lost a baby to share your experiences.

Volunteer to help someone in need.

Buy a special reminder of your baby for your work space.

Light a candle.

Write poetry to or about your baby.

Write a letter to your baby.

For Kyle's first birthday last November, I had a beautiful flower wreath made at the florist. It had a little banner ribbon on it that said "In birthday memory." We took it to the cemetery. We also took three blue helium balloons (one for me, my husband and our daughter) which we released. Then we went to lunch. We spent a long time at the cemetery and let our daughter play around the grave. We tried to make it special for her, too. I also had a candle which remained lit all day next to Kyle's baby book and memorabilia. It was a nice day.

*Kristen Walton
Carrollton, Texas*

We made a donation to Children's Medical Center of Dallas the week of what would have been our son's first birthday. He had been treated there and although the outcome was not what we had prayed for, we were so impressed with all the members of the healthcare team - their competence and caring - that Children's will always be a very special place to us. This year, we are looking forward to "celebrating" Jackson's birthday in a new park just being built in the Park Cities where we live. It is being dedicated to all families who have lost a child. We gave a bench in memory of Jackson, so we plan to go there and probably have a picnic on "his" bench and release balloons. The other idea we had, but have not done yet, is to give a children's book to our library every year in his memory.

*Marie Crowe
Dallas, Texas*

We are going to get several balloons blown up and have all our family put notes in them for Chandler's first birthday and then "send them to Heaven."

Giving to M.E.N.D. in his honor helps us to feel like we are doing something productive.

Donating books in his name to libraries or toys that he would be using at one year of age to shelters or church nurseries is something else we want to do.

We also plan to plant flowers out at his grave. Donating flowers for the front of the church on the week of his birthday also helps others remember the special day.

*Amy Allred
Greenville, Texas*

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Birthday Tributes to Our Special Angels

Our precious Julia,

Happy Birthday, little one.
Up to Heaven we send our love.

A year's gone by, it's hard to believe.
We saw you yesterday, or so it seems.

Our love for you still grows and grows.
An unchanging love, a constant flow.

This day you burn within our hearts.
A little miracle from the start.

We'll light a candle in your name.
And sing that birthday song the same.

But we'll sing it to the sky.
For you're alive, you did not die.

Happy 1st Birthday, Julia.

We love you so much!

All our love to Heaven,

Mommy and Daddy,
Taylor and Carli

*In Loving Memory of
Julia Claire Bruner
March 9 - 31, 1999
Fetal Congenital Heart Block*

Kayce Dolores Bramlett
March 14, 1999 - March 15, 1999

Happy Birthday!!!

We love and need you always,

Mom and Dad

Deidre & Kyle Bramlett

To our precious little Chandler:

Happy 1st Birthday, Little Love Bug!
We miss you SO much
and love you dearly.
What fun it must be celebrating your
first birthday in Heaven with Jesus!
Until we see each other again,
catch our kisses to Heaven!!!

Love,

Mommy and Daddy

*In memory of Chandler Allred
March 3 - 4, 1999.
Amy & Mark Allred*

Happy Birthday, Blake!

We waited so long for you. Although our time was brief together, you will remain in our hearts and souls forever. You will always be our miracle baby. We wish we could be celebrating your 1st birthday with you but find comfort that you are in the arms of Jesus now. We love you more than words can say.

Love,

Mommy & Daddy

*In Loving Memory of
Blake Leland Allen
April 21, 1999
Jan & Sean Allen*

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Subsequent Births

Diane & Steve Galleger
and daughter, Sydney,
of Lewisville, Texas
lovingly remember
Amanda Morgan,
stillborn January 7, 1997,
due to Trisomy 18,
as they welcome
their new son,
John "Jack" William.
Jack was born December 23, 1999.
He weighed 8 lbs. 6 oz.
and was 21 1/2" long.

Dianna & Joel Hatfield
of Dallas, Texas
welcome with love,
Hannah Rose,
born January 23, 2000.
Hannah weighed 9 lbs. 4 oz.
and measured 20 1/2" long.
The Hatfields
lovingly remember
David Thane,
May 14-15, 1996
due to uterine abnormality
and placental abruption.

Jean & Christopher Stewart

remember their precious baby girl,
Rebecca "Becca" Christen,
October 16, 1998 - January 1, 1999
who died due to SIDS.
They joyfully welcome their son,
Christopher Ethan,
born January 18, 2000.
Christopher weighed 7 lbs. 15 oz.
and was 21 1/2" in length.

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In My Dreams

In my dreams
I touch your soft, silky hair.
I hold you and
Rock you in my rocking chair.
When I close my eyes,
I can see your sweet face.
I see an innocence
Time won't erase.
When I am asleep,
You lie in my arms
And I'm captivated
By your baby charms.
You coo and you smile
And your fingers twine
Softly and sweetly
Around one of mine.
I smell you.
I touch you.
I sing you a song.
I have you with me
My whole dream long.
But when I wake up,
My tears start to fall,
For you're no longer
Here with me at all.

by Gwen Flowers
In Loving Memory of
Her Lost Angel Babies,
Hannah, Skylar and Jordan
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I'm Missing You

Baby while I'm missing you,
God knows what's best.
I had plans to carry you
the whole nine months through.
Why did you leave me?
I don't know why...
Now you're gone home, little one
In the precious blue sky.

Baby while I'm missing you,
I wish your body was here with me.
I could hold you and play,
and rub your little feet.
If you didn't leave me,
you would have other family and friends to meet.
Everything happens for a reason,
and that everybody sees.
While you've gone home,
may you rest in peace.

I'm missing you, can't you see?

*Written by Yasheka Watts
In Loving Memory of
Little Miss Dejia Deon Watts
Valentine*

Mama and Daddy
love you always!

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Don't Want To Say Goodbye

Our little girl is born.
No air fills her tiny lungs.
Her eyes never open.
A broken heart that lies still.

What happened to this life?
Our precious, sweet little girl.
We held you in our arms,
But our warmth you never felt.
We told you of our dreams,
But our voice you never heard.

What happened to this life?
Our beautiful little girl.

Though your time with us was brief,

You changed our lives forever.
The lessons that you taught us
Contained the wisdom of a lifetime.

What happened to this life?
Our innocent little girl.

For an incredible moment,
We were together as a family.
And all three of us know
A family we remain until the end of time.

What happened to this life?
Our silent little angel.

Your mother now rests peacefully.
Her shattered heart still bleeding.
I see a smile on her face.
Of you, she must be dreaming.

What happened to this life?
Our one and only daughter.

Our dreams for the future
Have become memories of the past.
I will miss you, Bri.
I don't want to say Good-Bye.

by Ted Shields
In Loving Memory of
Brianna Marin Shields,
Stillborn October 15, 1996
due to Group B Strep

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In Loving Memory

M.E.N.D. gratefully acknowledges these gifts of love given in memory of a baby, relative, friend or given by someone just wanting to help. These donations help us to continue M.E.N.D.'s mission by providing this newsletter and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the [M.E.N.D. address](#) listed at the bottom of the newsletter. **Thank you so much!**

In Loving Memory of

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr. and big brother, Byron, Jr.

Given by his grandparents,
Sue & Dennis Brewer

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Given by parents,
Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr.
and big brother, Byron, Jr.

Michael Joseph Böer

Stillborn July 17, 1996

Trisomy 18

Given by parents, Lynne & Paul Böer
and siblings, Paul, Jr., and Maggie

Chandler Allred

Stillborn March 4, 1999

Fetal Acrania

Parents, Amy & Mark Allred
Given by grandparents, Doris & Billy Yancey

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Parents, Rebekah & Byron Mitchell, Sr. and big brother, Byron, Jr.
Given by his grandparents,
Marnie & Lyle Mitchell

Michael Garabedian, Jr.

Stillborn February 2, 1998

Cord Accident/Villamentous Cord Insertion

Given by parents,
Cindy & Michael Garabedian
and sisters, Victoria and Elizabeth

Carson Mitchell Shaw

Stillborn April 1, 1999

Unknown Cause

Parents, Aimee & Randy Shaw
and big brother, Blake
Given by grandparents, Susan & J.C. Shaw

Eleonore Rose Hutto

Stillborn January 15, 1999

Cord Accident

Parents, Christine & Steven Hutto, Sr.
Given by grandparents, Eleonore & Earl Hutto

Matthew Aaron Bengtson

Stillborn July 12, 1999

Parents, Nancy & Kyle Bengtson
Given by grandparents,
Martha & Harry Bengtson

Brianna Marin Shields

Stillborn October 15, 1996
Group B Strep
Given by parents, Marianne & Ted Shields

Andrew Bailey Carpenter

Stillborn July 14, 1999
Unknown Cause
Parents, Melissa & Todd Carpenter and
twin sister, Abigail
Given by grandparents,
Diane & David Aschenbach

Sarah Rose Goins-Silvas

Stillborn November 2, 1990
Down's Syndrome and Heart Defect
Also in memory of
Miscarriages in 1989 & 1991
and Ectopic pregnancy July 23, 1999
Parents, Jenn & Chris Cauffman
Given by Diane & Roger Cauffman

Chandler Allred

Stillborn March 4, 1999
Fetal Acrania
Parents, Amy & Mark Allred
Given by grandparents, Mary & Dene Allred

Thomas Dean Cole

Stillborn July 24, 1999
Given by parents, Midge & Bill Cole

Julie Ann Green

December 22, 1997 - January 7, 1998
Severe prematurity due to preeclampsia
Given by parents, Sherri & Bill Green
and little sister, Meagan

Chandler Allred

Stillborn March 4, 1999
Fetal Acrania
Given by parents, Amy & Mark Allred

Carson Mitchell Shaw

Stillborn April 1, 1999
Unknown Cause
Given by parents, Aimee & Randy Shaw

and big brother, Blake

Blake Leland Allen

April 21, 1999

Premature/Incompetent Cervix

Parents, Jan & Sean Allen

Given by grandmother, "Mimi" Melba Smith

Timothy "Schuyler" Morren

September 28 - December 23, 1997

SIDS

Given by parents, Pam & Tim Morren

and little sister, Ashton

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Online Resources

Resources published in the printed version of this newsletter can be accessed on the Internet directly from M.E.N.D.'s resource pages. To access the resource pages, navigate to the following URL:

URL: http://www.mend.org/resources_internet.asp

In the M.E.N.D. resource listing, you will find resources which include internet web sites, national organizations, and family bereavement pages.

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Contact Information

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