



Helping Children Deal with Loss

Twice I have had to tell our son that our baby died. Both of those days are forever imprinted on my mind. I will always remember searching for just the right words to say to him, and I'll never forget the panicked, confused, and sorrowful expressions on his little face.

The first time, Byron, Jr. was only 3 ½ years old when his little brother Jonathan was born still at seven months gestation due to a cord accident. Our wise pastor helped us make the decision the night Jonathan was delivered to allow Little B, as we call Byron, Jr., to see his baby brother. The plan was for him to be brought to the hospital the next day, have Jonathan in the room with us, and for my husband Byron to tell him. However, as our sweet toddler bounded into the room with his bright brown eyes as big as saucers and a smile from ear-to-ear, my husband and I fell apart. Neither of us could speak. Taking over for Byron, through deep sobs I told Little B that baby Jon-Jon had "popped out" the night before. I pointed to the isolet where Jonathan's lifeless body lay and hoped somehow he could comprehend what I was saying, but of course he couldn't. I tried to explain to him that Jonathan was too little to live so was now in heaven with Jesus. His shining eyes turned into a look of confusion, and his big smile faded. He began looking back and forth, searching his daddy's face, my face, and then he looked at the baby. Once we had calmed down and Byron and I regained our composure, we asked Little B if he wanted to hold Jonathan, but he said no. He touched him, kissed him, and stroked his tiny arm.

Six years passed before my doctors allowed me to attempt another pregnancy. By this time Little B was ten years old and had a much better understanding of the baby on the way – and what could go wrong. It was on a Monday in December when I had a routine doctor's appointment. Byron went to the doctor with me, but because my obstetrician was delayed, Byron had to leave before I was seen because he had patients of his own waiting for him. He was very hesitant to leave, but I assured him everything would be fine. However, an hour later I regretted telling Byron that it had been okay to go back to his office. A sonogram revealed our ten-week baby had died.

Before I could cry or let it sink in, I went into automatic mom mode and tried to figure out who could pick up Little B from school, take him to his piano lesson, and get him home. My cell phone was in the car, so my doctor gave me his to use. In my shocked state, I could not remember anyone's phone number. Finally I was able to dial my mother and twin sister, but neither answered the phone. I did not want to call Byron yet, because I knew he was seeing patients, and my first priority was our son. My doctor was reluctant for me to leave his office, but I felt I had no choice but to drive across Dallas to pick up Little B and take him to his music lesson. I didn't want him to see me crying when I got to his school, so I somehow was able to block out of my mind that the baby

had died. I convinced myself to appear normal when he got into the car and act as though nothing had happened. As I sat in the car waiting for the piano lesson to be over, I called two of my friends. That turned out to be a mistake, because I could no longer hold back my tears. When Little B got back into the car 30 minutes later, he knew I had been crying and asked me if I was okay. I shook my head no and told him I would talk to him when we got home. His response was, "Well okay, but just tell me, is it the baby?"

How did he know? All I could do was nod my head a truthful yes. Looking at him in the rearview mirror, that familiar confused and sorrowful expression came over his face as he said, "Did it die?" Again, all I could manage was a nod of my head.

During my first experience with grief, I was extremely concerned about how to grieve with Little B. I wasn't sure if he should see me cry, I didn't know how to explain a cord accident to him, and I had a hard time answering his questions about why he got to see Jonathan if he was dead, why God didn't let him be a big brother, why he couldn't go to Heaven too, and what I thought Jonathan was doing in Heaven.

Books that I read suggested including all members of the family in the grieving process, including small children. Grief experts warned the reader that if a child is not continuously told the death was not his or her fault, they would start blaming themselves. I thought that was ridiculous until one night as my mom helped Little B out of the bathtub he asked her if he killed his brother because he "blowed" on his mommy's tummy. I remember slumping against the wall as I watched my mom gather my little boy into her arms and convince him it was not his fault. I then began praying for wisdom on how to help our little boy grieve, yet not be scarred for life. I was afraid when he got older he would think back to his childhood and only remember his mommy crying and being short-tempered all the time. I feared he would have memories of feeling left out because everyone was sad about Jonathan dying and not seeming happy that at least he was alive.

As the weeks and months passed following Jonathan's still-birth, I became convicted that I was not telling my son the truth about the cause of the baby's death. Jonathan was big enough to live, so why did I keep telling Little B he was too small? I came up with an illustration using a water hose. I pointed to Little B's belly button and told him when he was in my tummy there used to be a long cord, kind of like a water hose, attached

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M.E.N.D. is a Christian nonprofit corporation whose purpose is to reach out to those who have lost a child to miscarriage, stillbirth or infant death and offer a way to share experiences and information through monthly meetings, this newsletter, and our Web site.

For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the newsletter, contact us at

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From the Editor

I don't remember how I found M.E.N.D. or even much that was said at the first meeting I attended. I just remember longing for a Christian group that would understand my grief after my son Joseph was stillborn on May 26, 1999. At the time I lived in Abilene, Texas, and I couldn't find the help there that I knew I needed. Finally, in a moment of desperation about eight months after Joseph died, I made childcare arrangements for my living children so that I could drive to a M.E.N.D. meeting three hours away. Later that evening, I found myself in a room filled with parents who understood my pain. I saw living proof that people could live through the loss of a baby and learn to smile again. In short, I found hope.

I began serving as M.E.N.D. newsletter editor with the September/October 2000 issue. I wanted so badly to help other M.E.N.D. families receive the same comfort and encouragement that the Lord offered me through M.E.N.D. The newsletter seemed like a good way to do that. It was something I could do from anywhere, even if I didn't live near a M.E.N.D. chapter. That was an important factor, considering my husband's full-time active duty military status.

Since beginning my time as newsletter editor, my family has moved five times and experienced the joy of a subsequent birth. My oldest son has moved from preschool all the way to middle school as I've formatted M.E.N.D. birthday tributes and edited your beautiful articles about the babies you love and miss. We've gone through many life changes in my immediate family as I kept up with my M.E.N.D. family.

Yes, M.E.N.D. has been like a family to me. So, it is with very mixed emotions that I step down as editor of the M.E.N.D. newsletter. I will miss the correspondence I've grown to love with my M.E.N.D. family, and I will miss the blessings that come from sharing with others the comfort that the Lord has given me. However, God has placed other ministry opportunities in my path lately, and I'm feeling called to hand over the newsletter to someone else who I am sure will appreciate the honor and responsibility as I have.

Your new editor is Heather Fann, mother to Caleb Scott, who died December 1, 2003. Heather attended M.E.N.D. meetings regularly while she lived in the Dallas area and now resides in Springfield, Missouri. She and her husband Jon have been blessed with a subsequent birth since becoming affiliated with M.E.N.D. Heather has a degree in mass media journalism and English technical writing from Missouri State University. She has served as a newspaper reporter and has worked as a writer and editor for a nonprofit organization. She currently works as a copy writer for her family's advertising agency. Heather and Jon both feel that Heather's assuming the editor position of the M.E.N.D. newsletter will give them both a way to repay the amazing support this ministry has provided to them and so many others.

It has been an absolute privilege for me to serve M.E.N.D. all these years by putting words of encouragement and hope in your hands. It is humbling to be able to put precious, priceless names in print for parents to see each issue. I know how important it is to see those names in purple ink, how it makes those beloved babies more real to others who don't always understand that these children are loved and count as much as anyone else. I have been continually amazed that such an honor has come to me, and I've been blessed beyond measure to get to know you and your children, if in no other form that through the written word, since I began my time as editor. I look forward to meeting the faces that go with all those little names I've typed one day when we're all united in Heaven.

Thank you for sharing your children with me. It has been a gift.

May you be blessed with the comfort that I myself have received from God.



Joseph's handprints

Sharlene

You Can

You can say your brother's name out loud
 Even if the people we're with have never heard it spoken,
 And you can tell your teacher that you have a brother in heaven.
 It's okay to tell the sales clerk that Joseph died
 And that you wish he didn't.

If you want to blow out candles on his birthday we will.
 We'll buy balloons and send them up to heaven
 No matter who is watching
 Or how many strangers at the park ask,
 "Who has a birthday today?"

We'll talk about how you wish he had a Spiderman lunchbox
 For lunch in heaven
 And how the backpacks up there must be better than the ones here,
 And we'll wonder together what he does for fun
 And what kind of toys he has to play with.

You can say how much you wish he could go to Disneyland
 And that you would have liked to ride with him on Space Mountain,
 Even though it made you a little scared at first,
 But that you would tell him there is nothing to be afraid of
 Because that's a big brother's job.

You can do everything that you need to do,
 Like your big brother did before you,
 As you realize that you do have another brother you've never met,
 A part of the family you long for,
 Because you miss him as much as the rest of us do.

*By Sharlene Libby, in memory of Joseph,
 stillborn May 26, 1999, due to a cord accident.
 For John, who learned to grieve the loss of a little brother
 by observing the grief of a big brother.*

Resources for Siblings

Journey of Hope

Grief support for children and teens who have lost a loved one
 3900 West 15th St, suite 306, Plano, TX 75075
 (972) 964-1600
www.johgriefsupport.org

Comfort Zone

Camp for children and teens who have lost a loved one
www.comfortzonecamp.org

May/June Topic

Mother's Day and Father's Day
 Deadline: April 15, 2008

July/August Topic

Ways to Keep
 Your Baby's Memory Alive
 Deadline: May 30, 2008

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcomed. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the newsletter. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please see page two of the newsletter for the appropriate address to send your submissions. Any submission printed in our newsletter will also be posted to our Web site indefinitely unless we receive notice in writing that you are only granting permission for your submission to appear in the printed version of the newsletter.

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Visit our Web site at:
www.mend.org



Birthday Tributes

Happy 3rd Birthday, My Precious Matthew!

My Dearest Matthew,

Happy third birthday my precious baby boy! Three years ago, you came into my life. Words cannot describe the feeling that I felt holding you for the first time. I miss you so very much, my first born! Though my heart continues to long for you, I know that you are in a better place.

Matthew, this past year we were blessed to welcome your little sister into our family. Her name is Katherine Marie and she looks a lot like you. I look at her and treasure each day while at the same time wishing I had that time with you. When Katherine is old enough, I will tell her all about her big brother Matthew. I know you would have been a wonderful big brother!

FOREVER LOVED, FOREVER MISSED,
AND NEVER FORGOTTEN

All of my love,
Mommy

Matthew William Neeley

April 5, 2005 - June 5, 2005

Congenital Diaphragmatic Hernia

Parents: Brenda Munguia and Lester William Neeley

Sister: Katherine Marie



For Rianne

A little glimpse of Heaven was given us today.
A tiny baby daughter for which we had prayed.
Rianne's time here was short, she didn't have long to stay.
Each day our hearts will long for her, but as an angel she will play.
She is welcomed by our loved ones who have gone on before,
And we will see her waiting for us just inside Heaven's door.
A little glimpse of Heaven was given us today.

Author: Harold Ray Ellis (Rianne's grandpa)

We love you Rianne Ellisa!! Happy 11th Birthday!!

Rianne Ellisa Scrivner

March 4 - 7, 1997

Severe Hydrocephaly More Consistent with Anencephaly

Parents: Bill and Rae Scrivner

Siblings: Chanie, Casidy, and Canlie



For Aidan

Happy first birthday, my beautiful little angel. We miss you so much! You are always in our hearts and minds. Your memory will live on forever. We love you!

Hugs and Kisses,
Mommy, Daddy, and big brother Elijah.

(Please visit www.aidan-lang.virtual-memorials.com
and sign Aiden's guestbook.)

Aidan Sadayoshi Lang

March 13 - September 2, 2007

Unknown Cause

Parents: David and Jennifer Lang

Big brother: Elijah



Happy First Birthday Gianna Marie!

Little Gianna,

We love you with all of our hearts. We wish we could hold and snuggle you every day...just like we did during the short time we were able to cuddle you. We miss you so much; yet, you will forever be in our hearts. We will always treasure you, our sweetheart, our gracious gift from God!

Hugs and kisses,
Mommy, Daddy, Jacob and John Paul

Gianna Marie Schmidt

March 5, 2007

Bilateral Renal Agenesis (aka Potter's Sequence)

Parents: Jennifer and John Schmidt

Siblings: Jacob and John Paul



For Kenneth

Our precious angel, "Little Fat," you are truly the love of my life and the best blessing ever! You are missed very much.

Love, Mom

Kenneth Bernard Weddington, Jr.

November 7, 2007

Unknown Cause

Parents: Louisa Garza & Kenneth Weddington, Sr.



Happy First Birthday Brad

Brad, we wish you a heavenly happy birthday. We love you and miss you so very much. Keep a eye out for the balloons that we send to you.

Brad Alexx Poppe

March 28, 2007

Parents: Matthew and Katherine Poppe

Siblings: Katherine and Matthew



Dearest Jacob,

It has been seven years since you blessed our lives. Yet, in our hearts it feels like only yesterday.

You are in our thoughts and prayers every day. We know you await us in Heaven, and we will rejoice when we are together again. Hold tight in the arms of the Lord, sweet boy.

We love you so very much, peanut.
All our love,
Daddy, Mommy,
little sister Emily
and little brother Eric

Jacob Theodore Oxendine

April 29, 2001

PROM

Parents: Chip and Christine

Siblings: Emily and Eric



Julian David Rodriguez

My little angel in Heaven, so perfect as can be,
I miss you so much I wish you were here with me.
Life hasn't been easy with you not in my life.
It's hard to imagine twelve long months have already gone by.

My little angel in Heaven, so perfect as can be,
I cherished every moment you spent inside me.
I sang to you every night and rubbed my tummy, too
Hoping that you heard me and felt my love was true.

My little angel in Heaven, so perfect as can be,
You fought for five long hours to stay with Daddy and me.
I am so sorry I had to let you go, but God wanted you more.
So I did what I thought was best, and let you go home to the Lord.

My little angel in Heaven, so perfect as can be,
Go be with your brothers and sisters and I will try not to cry any more.
I will always miss you and be proud to be your mom.
So be happy and play as children should be.
Just remember that you will always be part of me.

So perfect as can be, my little angel in Heaven.

Love, Mommy, Grandma, Grandpa, and all your aunts and cousins

Julian David Rodriguez
April 1, 2007
Prematurity
Parents: Javier Rodriguez and Rachel Prado



Happy 5th Birthday, Matthew!!

Matthew,

Can it really be five years since that day when we held you for the first and last time, when we cried so many tears? It seems so long ago, and yet feels like yesterday. It's been so hard for us to go on without you here in our lives, but God is good and every day is a step forward in His grace. We have come a long way since those days, but still we miss you every day. We often wonder what you would be like. Are you mischievous or shy, playful or thoughtful, athletic, musical or dramatic? These are all questions to be answered only when we are reunited again in Heaven. You are in the arms of our precious Savior and there's no better place to be!

So on your birthday, we celebrate you, our precious "widdle" baby. We miss you! We love you always! We look forward to seeing you and holding you again.

With our love forever,
Mommy and Daddy
Thomas and Michelle

Matthew Joel Mifflin
June 6, 2003
True knot in the umbilical cord
Also remembering
Little One,
Miscarried February 6, 2006,
and Lil' Rosebud,
Miscarried March 10, 2007
Parents: Dennis and Janet Mifflin
Siblings: Thomas and Michelle



Happy 1st Birthday AJ!!

Our sweet baby 'Mater'. What a blessing you are to our family. Your short life has taught us so many things and will continue to teach us throughout the years to come. We have watched the days pass over the last year - each day counting a milestone that you would have been reaching. We miss you so much. Daddy and I often stop and imagine an event or an outing with you there as you should be. We imagine all of the fun you and Eli would have playing. Eli is so proud to be your big brother - he can't wait to send you balloons every chance he gets. We feel your presence in the rainbows, birds singing, stars shining, wind blowing and, of course, the beautiful snow falling. Our love for you is endless.

We love you MORE!
Daddy, Mommy and Eli

Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman
Stillborn March 30, 2007
True Knot Cord Accident
Parents: Alfredo & Amber Zuckerman
Big Brother: Eli



Dear Baby Morgan,

It is hard to believe it has been two years since we said goodbye to you. We miss you so much but are thankful you are enjoying Jesus and Grandma Schear.

Every time your big brother sees a balloon he says we have to send it to Baby Morgan. He even got so mad at Mommy once that he said he was going to Heaven to see Baby Morgan and never see me again! Our whole family looks forward to seeing you someday! You and Isaac are our little miracles. I am amazed at how God continues to help us and is making us stronger because of you!

Love,
Mommy, Daddy and Isaac

Baby Morgan Schear
Miscarried March 28, 2006
Unknown Cause
Parents: Nobel and Paula Schear
Brother: Isaac



Happy Birthday, Connor!

Happy 2nd Birthday, baby boy!
We are sending hugs and kisses to heaven.
We will always love and miss you.

Love,
Mommy & Daddy

Connor Boston Reid
April 27, 2006
Trisomy 13
Also remembering
Celeste Kimberly Reid
December 7-8, 2004
Parents: Skip Reid & Andie Boston
Sibling: Allyson Kate



To our sweet baby boy Benjamin Kent

Happy first birthday. A day does not go by in which your name does not come up from either your sisters, your dad, or your mom. We often wonder what you would be doing now. As you know, your brother Josiah Kent was born the December after your death. Josiah has been the biggest blessing and we love him very much. For your mom, Josiah being born has helped soften the blow of losing you. However, make no mistake, our arms ache to hold you every day. Our family will never be the same because we lost you. Thank you for being a part of our family, even though it is not how we wished it to be.

We love and miss you.

Mommy, Daddy, Ashlyn, Grace, Anna, Gaby, and Josiah

Benjamin Kent Baack

January 10, 2007

Cord Accident

Parents: Kent and Karen Baack

Siblings: Ashlyn, Grace, Anna, Gaby, and Josiah



In memory of Rachel Stephanie Blaney

We all still miss you and love you greatly and wish you could be here with us but know that you are in a better place. Not a day goes by that we don't think of you and your precious face.

Until we meet again,

Daddy and Mommy and big brothers Jake and Shane

Rachel Stephanie Blaney

December 6, 2006

Stillborn due to injuries received in a motor vehicle accident

December 5, 2006

Parents: Sam and Lori Beth Blaney

Big Brothers: Jake and Shane



For Elizabeth Kaye

Happy first birthday Elizabeth Kaye! We love you and miss you.

Love,

Mom and Dad

Elizabeth Kaye Brown

Miscarried April 3, 2007

Parents: Tony and Ashley Brown



Shauna Elisabeth Winebrenner

Happy fifth birthday. We love and miss you and are so thankful for your life.

Love,

Mommy and Daddy, Saul and Ella

Shauna Elisabeth Winebrenner

Stillborn April 12, 2003

Trisomy 18

Parents: Tim and Sarah Winebrenner

Siblings: Saul and Ella



A Picture of Grace

By Amber Zuckerman

If I were not to know my son,
God would not have given him.
Though short amount of time I had,
it leads me now to grin.

A tiny life so given to me,
to help me through my days.
Days sometimes dark and sunless,
He helps to guide my ways.

Jesus holds him tight I'm sure,
as he now would roll the world.
Oh how I long to hold him,
instead into life I'm hurled.

Like learning how to breathe,
to walk again we're learning.
Each breath, each step, painful and yet,
to see Him is a yearning.

You can't get much closer to God,
than when He calls your child.
Come home and make a place, my son,
in the heavens you run wild.

I imagine him with many friends,
life of the cloud on which he sits.
With the sweetest smile of all,
and as loving as it gets.

Each day brings me closer,
to the promise of His land.
For when I stand before Jesus,
I know AJ's in His hand.

He will hand me back my baby,
who just might be a man.
For in his prime I will know my son,
I will hold his perfect hand.

The process is quite simple,
yet painful here on the earth.
Jesus is the purpose,
as we each await our birth.

Our new life in heaven,
where there is no pain or fears.
Reunited for eternity,
void of all sadness and tears.

A picture now I carry,
to remind me of his face.
The precious life God gave me,
to remind me of His grace.

In memory of Adrian Joseph "AJ" Zuckerman
Stillborn March 30, 2007
True Knot Cord Accident
Parents: Alfredo & Amber Zuckerman
Big Brother: Eli

Letter to Isaac

By Paula Shear

Dear Isaac,

I had a dream that I used to think was God's dream, too. It's about your sibling Morgan, in Heaven. Don't worry. Morgan does not need a daddy or a mommy or a brother or grandma or grandpa with him right now. Morgan has Jesus in Heaven. Jesus is all the family Morgan needs in Heaven, and more!

Still, we all had dreams for Morgan. An only child myself, I find myself dreaming of what it might have been like for you to have Morgan to grow up with. The way you exclaim, "Baby!" whenever you see a little one makes me think you would have loved our little one. I dream of what toys you would have shown Morgan, how you would have shown Morgan how much fun it is to climb up and down the stairs ten or maybe fifteen times. I am sure you would have learned so much about how to share and also how to forgive. I think of how you would have protected Morgan from bullies when you were older and how you might have helped Morgan with homework. I dream of Christmas, how you would have enjoyed opening presents together.

When you got older you would always know there would be someone to call besides Mom and Dad for help or advice. There are so many people who come and go in life, whom God puts into our lives for a season. These people have specific purpose, but only for a little while. Morgan, however, would have always been there for you. Morgan would have been one of those people about whom you'd never have to say, "I wonder what happened to _____?" Your kids would have played together and learned so much from each other about love, joy and forgiveness. And someday in the future you would have sat around the holiday table talking about sweet memories with Mom and Dad...laughing and crying together.

This was the dream I had for you and Morgan, but somehow, for reasons we can't comprehend, God has a different dream for you. Mom and Dad are so thankful that Jesus made it possible for us all to go see Morgan in Heaven someday, although we don't know what that reunion will be like. God's Word promises us that Jesus has a special place for us, so I believe it will be a joyous time. We are praying that there will be a living sibling for you and another child for Mommy and Daddy to raise to love Jesus, but God only knows if that little person is in His plan. Mom and Dad are so very thankful that at just the right time, He gave us you when all hope seemed to be gone of having a child at all.

Mommy is learning so much about trusting your care to Jesus right now. She is learning how to have joy and sorrow together. She is learning much about forgiveness when people say the wrong things. She is learning that, even though she is sad at times because you do not have siblings, God provided experiences that made her what she has become today. Mommy knows that God will provide you with everything you need, too, to become a child of His and to have a life of meaning for Him.

Here are a few phrases and verses from the Bible that are helping me through this sad time. Hopefully, someday you will know God's Word so well that you will be able to finish some of these verses of which I have written only part.

Love,
Mommy

"Trust in the Lord with all your heart and lean not on your own understanding;"....Proverbs 3:5

"For he has not despised or disdained the suffering of the afflicted one".....Psalm 22:24

"...he heard my voice; my cry came to his ears"....2 Samuel 22:7

"The Lord himself goes before you and will be with you"....Deuteronomy 31:8

"The Lord your God will be with you wherever you go"....Joshua 1:9

"Cast your cares upon the Lord and he will sustain you." Psalm 55:22

....."the father of compassion, and the God of all comfort, who comforts us in all our troubles"....2 Corinthians 1:3-4 ♥

In memory of Morgan Shear, miscarried March 28, 2006, unknown cause

Parents: Nobel and Paula Shear

Brother: Isaac

Resource Review

Author Kara Glad has written a sweet story based on the death of her premature son, Ryan. This is an easy-to-understand book for children who have lost a sibling due to prematurity.

In the book, Kate is very excited about being a big sister and practices caring for her little brother with her dolls. However, Ryan was born too soon and died a couple of days later. Daddy had to explain to Kate that Ryan was too little to live. Kate went to her bedroom for some time alone and drew a picture of their family, titling it "Heaven's Brightest Star." ♥

Review by Rebekah Mitchell

Heaven's Brightest Star

by Kara M. Glad

Tate Publishing

ISBN - 10: 1602470189, ISBN - 13: 978-1602470187

www.heavenbrighteststar.org

Also available at www.amazon.com

In Loving Memory



Jordan Alexander Booker
Stillborn January 11, 2007
True Knot in Cord
Given by mommy Norma Jordan

Wendy Arlene Burnett
September 19, 1963
Given by mommy Patricia Daidone

Martha Chambers
Aunt of Jaimie Crump,
M.E.N.D. Houston director
Given by Martha Byrd

Patricia Karla Cheshire
Miscarried May 10, 1999

Christian Joseph
Miscarried April 3, 2004

Olivia Joy
Miscarried July 31, 2004
Given by parents
Vincent and Leah Cheshire
and siblings Nathan and Karla

Jackson Dean Cochran
April 24 - May 19, 2004
Prematurity
Given by parents
Stacey and DeAnna Cochran
and sibling Christian

Abigail Grace Crump
July 1, 2003
Trisomy 18
Given by parents
Gerald and Jaimie Crump
and little sisters Cami and Karli

Riley and Parker Davis
November 14, 2006
Prematurity
Given by parents Robert and Cheryl Davis

Kyler Paul English
Stillborn January 20, 2006
Cord Accident
Given by parents Laurie and Bob English
and brothers Justin, Kinser, Kelson, and Kayden

Michael Garabedian, Jr.
Stillborn February 2, 1998
Cord Accident / Velamentous Cord Insertion
Adam Michael Garabedian
Stillborn July 25, 2001
Cord Accident

Parents: Mike and Cindy Garabedian
Sisters: Victoria, Elizabeth, and Catherine
Given by Garabedian Properties

Michael Garabedian, Jr.
Stillborn February 2, 1998
Cord Accident/ Velamentous Cord Insertion
Adam Michael Garabedian
Stillborn July 25, 2001
Cord Accident

Parents: Michael and Cindy Garabedian
Sisters: Victoria, Elizabeth, and Catherine
Given by Joel and Michelle Bittick

Elizabeth Gentry
Stillborn August 24, 1996
Cystic Hygroma and Anasarca

Baby Gentry
Miscarried May 10, 1997

Meghan "Meggie" Elizabeth
Kidney Abnormality
June 3, 2001
Given by parents Shary and John Gentry
and siblings Alison and Mark

Molly Catherine Harper
Stillborn May 18, 2007
Unknown Cause
Parents: Melanie and Scott Harper
Given by grandparents
Morris and Nancy Harper

Gift of Support
IBM Charities

Matthew Joel Mifflin
Stillborn June 6, 2003
True Knot in Cord

Little One
Miscarried February 6, 2006

Lil' Rosebud
Miscarried March 10, 2007
Given by parents Dennis and Janet Mifflin

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December 2001
Given by parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
and big brother Byron, Jr.

Jonathan Daniel Mitchell
Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord Accident

Baby Mitchell
Miscarried December 2001
Parents: Byron and Rebekah Mitchell
Big brother: Byron, Jr.
Given by grandparents Dennis and Sue Brewer

Ashley Nicole Muirhead
January 15, 2007
Infection
Given by parents Craig and Daphne Muirhead

Ethan Brian Read
July 3, 2005
Parents: Brian and Chantel Read
Given by Rebecca Cline

Samuel Rakestraw Roach
Stillborn November 18, 2001
Cord Accident
Given by parents Mark and Geniffer Roach
and siblings Cameron, Collin, Evan,
Caroline & Erin

Alexis Leigh and Nicole Leigh Rudeen
Stillborn March 11, 2002
Unknown Cause
Given by parents Sherri and Randy Rudeen
and sisters Julie, Sara, Jordyn Leigh
and Sydney Leigh

Gianna Marie Schmidt
March 5, 2007
Bilateral Renal Agenesis
Given by parents John and Jennifer Schmidt
and big brothers Jacob and John Paul

Christian Allen Scott
June 1, 2005
Bilateral Renal Agenesis
Savannah Scott
Miscarried January 7, 2003
Given by parents Leonard and Mary Scott
and siblings Lenny, Will, and Ariel

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. Please refer to page 2 of this newsletter for more information regarding where to send your donations and what information to include.

Thank you so much!

Thanks to the following M.E.N.D.—Tulsa sponsors:

Humanitarian Relief Foundation, Inc.
Michele and Doug Wilson
N. Steven and Mary Short
D. Wayne and Susan Fender
T.O. Bright
Angela and Robert Harmon

*In Loving Memory ... continued***Riley Marshall Sharpless**

September 3, 2001
Placental Abruption
Given by parents Ken and Lisa Sharpless,
big brothers Reid, Tyler, and Cameron,
and little sisters Suzanna and Caroline

Mindy and Maggie Smith

Stillborn November 4, 1997
Twin to Twin Transfusion Syndrome
and Polyhydramnios
Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith
and siblings Travis and Julia

Angel Baby Stovall

Miscarried January 4, 2007
Given by parents Bill and Tricia Stovall

William Robert Thurlow

Stillborn January 30, 2007
Unknown Cause
Parents: Micah and Rebecca Thurlow
Given by Brian and Barbara Dunlap

Gift of Support

West Conroe Baptist Church
in Conroe, Texas

Chloe Wilson

Stillborn January 8, 2001
Parents: Clay and Alicia Wilson
Given by Laura Clow

Baby Wilson I

Miscarried January 2007

Baby Wilson II

Miscarried June 2007
Given by parents Michele and Doug Wilson

A.J. Zuckerman

Stillborn March 30, 2007
Cord Accident
Parents: Amber and Al
Big brother: Eli
Given by Beth-Ann Rhoton

Thanks to our members who have been supporting
M.E.N.D. through eBay's MissionFish program.
Through MissionFish, sellers can donate a portion of
their proceeds to the nonprofit organization of their
choice. To find out more, visit www.missionfish.org.

M.E.N.D. is regularly contacted by grieving
moms, family members, and caring friends
from all over the world looking for an infant
loss support groups in their area. If you are
involved in an infant loss support group that
is not a M.E.N.D. support group, we would
love to add it to our database. Please send
the name of the group, the address of the
meeting place, when the group meets, the
director's name and contact information to
Rebekah@mend.org.

*Subsequent Births***Greg and Sherri Kring**

of Arlington, Texas,
announce the birth of
Lilian "Lily" Grace,
January 4, 2008.
She weighed 6 lb., 12oz.,
and measured 18 ¾ inches long.
The Krings lovingly remember
Chloe Madison,
stillborn September 29, 2006.

David and Heather Brewer

of Haslet, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Landon James,
born February 5, 2008,
measuring, 5lb., 12oz.,
and 19 ¼ inches long.
The Brewers lovingly remember
Logan James,
December 18 - 22, 2006,
prematurity.

Rob and Cheryl Davis

of Arlington, Texas,
joyfully announce the safe arrival of
Annalise Elizabeth,
born February 19, 2008.
She weighed 6 lb., 2 oz.
The Davis family lovingly remembers
their twins
Riley and Parker,
November 14, 2006,
prematurity.

**Meredith and Paul Aldrich
along with big brother Peter,**

of Irving, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Matthew Ryan,
born March 3, 2008.
He weighed 8 lb., 14 oz.
The Aldrich family lovingly remembers
Jackson,
stillborn November 10, 2005,
due to an unknown cause.

**Mary and Shawn Parker,
along with siblings Mayla and Shawn,**

of Euless, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Dejah Denae,
born March 10, 2008,
and weighing 8 lb., 3 oz.
The Parkers lovingly remember
Avaya Grace,
miscarried December 27, 2005,
due to an unknown cause.

**Aaron and Melissa Cunningham,
along with big sisters Sophie and Libby**

of Red Oak, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Max Ryan,
born March 2, 2008,
measuring 8 lb., 4 oz.,
and 20 ¾ inches long.
The Cunninghams sweetly remember
Chloe Marie,
January 10, 2004,
anencephaly,
and Baby Cunningham,
miscarried December 2005.

Brian and Kristin Flott

of Emporia, Kansas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Ava Katheryn,
born March 6, 2008.
The Flotts lovingly remember
Hannah Rose,
stillborn January 28, 2004,
due to placental insufficiency.

**Dusty and McKenzie Stanfield,
along with big brother Deacon,**

of Katy, Texas,
joyfully and with sadness
announce the birth of their son,
Maddox Donald.
He was born January 23, 2007, at 4:25 p.m.
and went to be with the Lord
15 minutes later
due to Trisomy 18 and Spina bifida.
He measured 3 lb. and was 15 inches long.

**Emily and Joe Sibley,
along with siblings Aryana, Adelaide
and Joey,**

of Spring, Texas,
sadly announce the passing of
Baby Sibley,
miscarried on February 25, 2008.
The Sibleys also remember
HazelAnne Noell,
stillborn August 16, 2006,
and Twin Sibleys,
miscarried June 11, 2002.

**Nathan and Cara Buddin,
along with big brother Anthony,**

of Mesquite, Texas,
joyfully announce the arrival of
Alexander Scott,
born October 17, 2007.
He measured 8 lb., 3 oz., and 21 ¾ inches.
The Buddin family lovingly remembers
Abigail,
April 13—June 17, 2006,
SIDS.



M.E.N.D. Chapter Corner

Chapter Meeting Information

M.E.N.D. - NW Arkansas

Meets the 1st Tuesday from 7:00—8:30 p.m.
Jones Center for Families, Room 206,
922 East Emma Avenue,
Springdale, AR 72765

Director: April Moreton

April@mend.org, (479) 524-3500

Subsequent pregnancy group meets in the same place the 4th Tuesday, 7:00—8:30 p.m., led by Pam Morren (pam@mend.org).

M.E.N.D. - Kansas

Meets the 2nd Thursday, 7:00 p.m.
at Cora Miller Hall/Newman
Division of Nursing, Room 107
1127 Chestnut, Emporia, KS 66801

Director: Stephanie Metzger

Stephanie@mend.org., (620) 343-6357

M.E.N.D. - Houston

Meets the 3rd Thursday, 7:30 p.m.
HEALTHSOUTH Houston
Rehabilitation Institute
17506 Red Oak Drive, Houston, TX 77090

Director: Jaimie Crump

Jaimie@mend.org, (281) 374-8528

Subsequent pregnancy group meets in the same place the 1st Thursday, 7:30 p.m., led by Sarah Winebrenner (swinebrenner2004@yahoo.com).

M.E.N.D. - Georgia

Offers peer support via phone and e-mail contact.

Director: Marie Stockdale

Marie@mend.org, (770) 954-1115

M.E.N.D. - Texarkana

Meets 3rd Thursday 7:00 p.m.
CHRISTUS St. Michael Rehab Hospital
2400 St. Michael Drive
Texarkana, TX 75503

Director: Monica Davis

Monica@mend.org, (903) 490-1210

M.E.N.D. - Nacogdoches

Meets the 2nd Thursday at 7:30 p.m.
The Badders Law Firm
4002 North St., Nacogdoches, TX 75961

Director: Lori De La Torre

Lori@mend.org, (936) 569-1739

M.E.N.D. - Hill Country

Meets the 1st Thursday at 7:00 p.m.
Banquet of Books

603 FM 2093 (Tivydale Rd)

Fredericksburg, TX 78624

Director: Larissa Hallford

Larissa@mend.org, (830) 456-4178

M.E.N.D. - Tulsa

Meets the 3rd Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

Canyon Crossing

1651 E Old North Rd.

Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063

Michele Wilson

michele@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates

NW Arkansas

M.E.N.D. - NW Arkansas continues to grow with several new families joining our chapter after the first of the year. We are thankful for several opportunities to get the word out about M.E.N.D. over the past few months. In February, the Arkansas Democrat Gazette featured M.E.N.D. in their "Spotlight" section, a front-page article describing the ministry and how it supports families in the local community. At the end of April, Arkansas 40/29 News will feature pregnancy and infant loss on their 10 PM news broadcast, also featuring M.E.N.D. We are hopeful that these media opportunities will reach families who need M.E.N.D.'s services. As always, I'm thankful to be a part of M.E.N.D.'s ministry in the lives of NW Arkansas families.

April Moreton

Kansas

We will be having the third annual Lawson Dody Walk on Thursday, April 24. This year all of the proceeds will go toward the Cystic Fibrosis Foundation in honor of his big brother Landon Dody (one-year-old son of Aron and Blythe Dody). Landon was diagnosed with CF last year. Rebekah will be joining us this year for the walk.

Stephanie Metzger

Houston

2008 has already been such a busy year for our chapter. We started a new Daddy's group that will meet once a quarter. This group is led by Tim Winebrenner, daddy to Shauna Elizabeth, April 12, 2003. If you have any questions about this group, please email him at swinebrenner2004@yahoo.com. We are in the process of preparing for our 3rd Texas Hold'em fundraiser on May 10. If you are interested in participating or wondering how you can help to make it successful, please email Jaimie at jaimie@mend.org.

Jaimie Crump

Texarkana

We have experienced evidence of God's mercy and grace in our meetings as we see hearts begin to heal. The Lord is blessing our Texarkana group by strengthening relationships and leading us to bereaved families in the area who need support. We look forward to learning and growing with other chapters as our leaders attend the M.E.N.D. leadership conference.

Monica Davis

Nacogdoches

It is humbling to know that God is using our own grief in such positive ways in Nacogdoches. Families are receiving comfort and encouragement in beautiful ways as members reach out to each other with the comfort they themselves have received from God.

Lori De La Torre

Hill Country

New Chapter

M.E.N.D.—Hill Country opened on April 3 in Fredericksburg, Texas. The group is off to a good start and is receiving great community support. M.E.N.D.—Hill Country will be led by Larissa Hallford. Meetings will be held the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Banquet of Books, 603 FM 2093 (Tivydale Rd), in Fredericksburg, Texas. For more information, contact Larissa at larissa@mend.org or call (830) 456-4178.

Tulsa

New Chapter

A new M.E.N.D. chapter opened very recently in Tulsa, Oklahoma. M.E.N.D.—Tulsa held their first meeting on April 15. The group will be led by Michele Wilson and will meet the third Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings will be held at Canyon Crossing, 1651 E Old North Rd, Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063. For more information, contact Michele at michele@mend.org or call (918) 694-4325 (HEAL).

To find other organizations that offer support groups in your area, visit www.mend.org or call Rebekah at (972) 506-9000.

Medical Moment



According to a report issued by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work at Utah State University by Judith Rollins, Ph.D., there are several ways that parents can help their living children grieve the death of a sibling.

First, parents must realize that it can be healthy to openly grieve around their living children. Though the natural inclination may be to protect children from discussing the death, this type of behavior can be detrimental to a child's well-being. Children are very observant and often perceive that something is wrong, even if parents try to conceal grief from them. Talking honestly with children about the loss of a sibling will help children see their own value as they observe how much parents care about them and their siblings, living or dead. Children will feel comforted when parents talk to them openly and assure them that such a death is unlikely for them.

Second, children should be encouraged to express their own emotions as they grieve the loss of a sibling. Like parents, children may experience guilt, anger, fear, or loneliness. These emotions may exhibit themselves as a decreased interest in school, lower grades, rebelliousness, moodiness, and regression into thumb sucking or bed wetting, according to the age of the child. Any such abnormal behavior should be addressed by parents with open discussion and further assurance to the child that his parents love him and are there to help him.

Finally, if parents are in such acute grief that they feel unequipped to support another person, it is advisable to have another relative or friend spend time with grieving children to offer encouragement and answer questions. ♥

to him. One end was connected to his tummy and the other end was connected to me, and that was how he was able to eat, drink, and breathe while growing inside me. I then reminded him about what happens outside when he is playing with the water hose when it bends or gets a knot – the water doesn't come out. I continued with my story of how one day when Jonathan was in my tummy he must have decided to play jump rope with his "water hose" but got all tangled in it. When that happened, Jonathan didn't get air so he couldn't breathe, and that's why he went to Heaven. That illustration made sense to my son and from then on had a better idea of how and why his baby brother died.

On another day we were at the cemetery. Once again Little B questioned why he got to see his brother if he died before he "popped out." I reached down and picked up two leaves that had fallen onto Jonathan's grave and held them up. I raised one a little higher and told him to pretend this one was a body and the other one was a spirit. I then put them on top of each other and explained that when we are alive on earth, the two stay together but when we die, they separate. I dropped the first leaf onto the grave, and held the other higher to simulate it going to heaven. Again, this made sense to him and helped him better understand the concept of dying.

Our second time around with grieving was much different from the first. We were all very sad, but Little B appeared more disappointed than confused. Because he was older and more mature, it was easier to have more detailed conversations rather than trying to come up with analogies to help him understand.

Now our son is 16 years old. He's taller than I am, his voice is deep, he drives a bright red Mustang, and he doesn't remember any traumatic details about his siblings' deaths. He has no recollection of skipping into my hospital room that June morning in 1995, he doesn't remember sitting under the big white tent at the funeral, and he has no memories of his mom crying all the time when he was little. But what he does have is a strong sense of compassion, love, and sensitivity. He loves the Lord with all his heart and feels as though he may go into the ministry when he's older. Byron and I are regularly complimented on our son for his maturity, manners, and joyful nature. They may think it is our "fine parenting skills," but I know it stems from what he went through as a small boy. He has experienced loss, sorrow, and disappointment but each time has witnessed the faithfulness and love of our Heavenly Father. He has learned that even if things do not go our way, God turns tragedies into something beautiful for His glory. Certainly I would not have chosen for my son to have endured losses of this magnitude at such an early age, but I am eternally grateful for what it has taught him, the character it has given him, and the true understanding of what it means to always trust in the Lord. ♥

Rebekah Mitchell

M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings
are held the 2nd Thursday of every month
from 7:30 – 9:00 p.m.

Daddies group

meets the 2nd Thursday of

March, June, Sept. and Dec., 7:30—9:00 p.m.
A time for dads to meet together and discuss topics relevant to them as fathers. Our moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups for discussion.

Food and Fellowship

A time to relax and meet with other M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting
Contact Brittney Fish: Brittney@mend.org

Subsequent pregnancy group
meets the 4th Tuesday from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.
Led by Melissa Stephens:
Melissa@mend.org

For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.

Playgroup

For families with children born prior to or subsequent to a loss. Meeting at various locations.
Contact Mary Steen or Brandee Dill for more info: Mary_Steen@hotmail.com
or dillsforchrist@yahoo.com

Mommies AND daddies are both welcome at all M.E.N.D. meetings.

All main chapter support group meetings are held at:

Suggs Law Firm
1522 W. Airport Freeway, Suite 200
Irving, TX 75062

(Located on the south side of the highway,
Between MacArthur Boulevard
and Story Road)

For more information, call (972) 506-9000.

Infertility group

Meets the 3rd Monday from 7:30—9:00 p.m.

Led by Melissa Stephens:

Melissa@mend.org

For families experiencing infertility after a loss.

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death
 P.O. Box 1007, Coppell, TX 75019
 USA
 (972) 506-9000
Return Service Requested

Nonprofit Organization U.S. Postage Paid Coppell, TX 75019 Permit No. 139
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"... that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves have received from God" (2 Corinthians 1:4)

M.E.N.D. Fundraisers

As a non-profit organization, M.E.N.D. is funded solely by private donations and fundraisers. Any assistance you can give us by participating in any or all of these fundraisers is greatly appreciated.

- **Kroger grocery stores** donate a percentage of all purchases of those shoppers who have and use a Kroger Share Card in Texas and Louisiana back to M.E.N.D. To obtain your Share Card, contact Rebekah (Rebekah@mend.org) and let her know how many you need.
- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please ask your Tom Thumb cashier to link your card with M.E.N.D. Our number is **6265**. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.
- **Glenn Martin** is looking for M.E.N.D. families willing to grant space for small gumball machines in order to raise funds for M.E.N.D. If you have a retail business or connections to a high traffic location in the Grapevine, Southlake, or metroplex area, Glenn will place, stock, and service the equipment and give M.E.N.D. 35 percent of the proceeds. Glenn can be contacted at (817) 874-5366 or glmartin@attg.net.
- M.E.N.D. can now earn funds through **i.think inc.**, an online marketing research firm. You can help by signing up as a survey panel member and designating us as the recipient of your fee. Just go to the website at <http://www.ithink.inc.com> and choose "Sign up to become an i.think inc. panel member." Fill out the sign-up survey. Under the "Funds for Charity" section, select M.E.N.D. from the list of names.
- **Little Beads & Macaroni & Cheese**, owned by M.E.N.D. member Marilyn Brown, offers custom jewelry. Her keepsake angel bracelets are \$20 each, and ten percent of each angel bracelet sale will be donated to M.E.N.D. Marilyn can be reached at 817/996-1920 or msbrown16@hotmail.com.
- **IBM** employees may now make charitable donations to M.E.N.D. through automatic payroll deductions. Choose Charity Code 0M562 from the *IBM Employee/Retiree Approved Charity List*.
- **GoodSearch.com** is a search engine that donates half its revenue, about a penny per search, to the charities its users designate. Powered by Yahoo!, it is used like any other search engine. To earn money for M.E.N.D. using Goodsearch.com, go to www.goodsearch.com and designate M.E.N.D. as your charity of choice.
- **Ebay** has a charitable giving program that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you sell items on Ebay and would like to designate a percentage of your revenue to M.E.N.D., visit www.missionfish.org to find out how.