



M. E. N. D.

Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

## Mother's Day/Father's Day

Usually, our May/June issue focuses mostly on Mother's Day rather than Father's Day, despite the topic pertaining to both holidays. I think this is because, sadly, others (and even sometimes we, the moms) assume Mother's Day is much worse for women than Father's Day is for the men. Maybe for the majority of men this is the case, but what about the men who struggle just as much on the special Sunday in June as we moms do on the special Sunday in May?

Certainly, I think by nature females "feel" more than males, but that does not mean dads do not grieve or feel sad on the Sunday that is supposed to be devoted to them as dads. Typically, most of the moms, even if they don't have living children on earth, are acknowledged by *someone* on Mother's Day. But are the dads on Father's Day? We women silently long to be remembered on Mother's Day for the children we have in heaven, but do we reciprocate that with our men?

Let us all make a point this Father's Day to recognize our babies' fathers with the same

acknowledgement we want from them. Let's also remember that though they may grieve differently than we do, they lost a child too.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*

*Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell*

*M.E.N.D. President/Founder*



Byron Mitchell spending special time with his son, Jonathan.

Dear readers,

At the 2014 M.E.N.D. Leadership Conference, our leaders shared memories of a Mother's Day/Father's Day which included their babies in heaven. These memories are shared throughout the newsletter. We hope they bring comfort and remind you that you are not alone in this journey. Following is a memory from our President, Rebekah Mitchell:

During praise and worship on Mother's Day at church several years ago, I was looking around for women who might appear really sad that day. At that time, we were singing "Resurrection Song," in which the chorus says, "Holy, Holy, Holy, is the Lord God Almighty, Who was, and is, and is to come..." I glanced down at the youth section and noticed my teenage son with a cousin on each side of him. All three had their hands raised high in worship. In that moment, all I could think was that all three of my children, one on earth and two in heaven, were probably worshipping the Lord together. What more could a mom want, especially on that special day?

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell, Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell, M.E.N.D. President/Founder*

*A new chapter of M.E.N.D. will be opening in Chicago, Illinois, in June! For more details, see page 14.*

*Nota Española:* El artículo de Rebekah Mitchell aparece en cada emisión de nuestro boletín para la audiencia latina.

Para ver el artículo de este mes en español, por favor vea la página número 3.

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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 at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org).

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## The Heart of the Leader

When I made “my” plans for my future during my college years, it most certainly did not include burying a child and the long road of grief and depression following. It was a wonderful plan which included a loving husband, the perfect dog, a nice home, two little boys and lots of baseball games. In 2000, “my plan” was on schedule. I had the husband, the dog and the home; it was time to add the children. We were blessed with becoming pregnant right away and later found out we were having a boy ... after all, that was the plan. In November 2000, my life and “my plan” were rocked to the core. My baby boy, Carter Patrick Outen, was stillborn at 32 weeks due to unknown causes.

As you know, words cannot describe the depth of shock, sadness and anger that consumed me. I was determined to get “my plan” back on track. We soon began to try to conceive again and sadly, within the next year, we suffered two early miscarriages. At this point, I was hopeless. I didn't think my body was capable of producing a live baby. I was mad at everyone, myself and God. How could He let this happen? I thought “we” had a great plan, and I thought I was doing all the right things in order to make that happen.

My depression was consuming. Reality set in, and I realized I was not the one in control of the “plan.” It was God's plan all along. With some encouragement from my husband, I finally had the strength to attend a M.E.N.D. support group many years ago. At this meeting, I remember a huge weight lifted off my shoulders! I always knew in my heart I was not the only person to go through these tragic losses, and to meet other families in person and hear their stories helped me immensely.

Some women there had been down this same road many years before me and were doing great. After that night, I saw a glimmer of hope for myself. I was determined to move beyond my grief and become one of those women others could look to for hope. It didn't happen overnight, and it certainly wasn't easy, but I finally made it to this point in my life.

Serving on various M.E.N.D. committees and on the board of directors has allowed me to share my experiences and what I have learned along my journey with others. My greatest hope is that someone may see hope through me, just as I saw hope at that support group meeting many years ago. God's plan is not always our plan, and it definitely took me years to see that His plan is good. I encourage all of you to find a way to become involved in some way with M.E.N.D. or some other group to honor your baby. The reward for me has been immeasurable.



♥ Shannon Outen,  
Mommy to Carter Patrick,  
Baby Outen I and Baby Outen II  
M.E.N.D.—Board of Directors

I completely dreaded my first Mother's Day. Just the anticipation was horrible. Yet one day, just prior to the “Big Day,” I got a Mother's Day card from a good friend. No one else contacted me about Mother's Day, so this little acknowledgement was a huge blessing for me. Now, in turn, I try to send a Mother's Day card to friends or acquaintances on their first Mother's Day after a loss to remember their deserved motherhood when no one else may.

♥ Shannon Outen, mommy to Carter Patrick, Baby Outen I and Baby Outen II,  
M.E.N.D.—Board of Directors

## Día de las Madres/Día de los Padres

Generalmente, nuestro boletín informativo de mayo/junio se concentra más sobre el día de la madre, que ni el día del padre, a pesar del tema referente a los dos días celebrados. Creo que es porque lamentablemente, otros (y a veces, las mamás) asumen que el día de la madre es demasiado peor para nosotras las mujeres que ni el día del padre para los hombres. Quizás para la mayoría de los hombres esto es el caso, pero ¿qué pasa con los hombres que luchan tanto en ese domingo de junio así como nosotras las mamás en ese segundo domingo de mayo.

Ciertamente, creo que por naturaleza las hembras “sienten” más que los varones, pero eso no significa que los padres no lamentan ni sienten tristeza el domingo que se supone que se dedica a ellos como padres. Típicamente, la mayoría de las madres, incluso aunque no tengan hijos que viven en la tierra, son reconocidas por alguno en el día de la madre. ¿Pero será que los padres son reconocidos? ¿Las mujeres silenciosamente deseamos ser reconocidas en el día de la madre por él bebe que tenemos en el cielo, pero intercambiamos ese sentimiento con nuestros hombres?

Hagamos el esfuerzo este día del padre de reconocer el padre de nuestro bebé con el mismo reconocimiento que deseamos de él y otros. Recordemos también que aunque lamentan diferentemente que nosotras, también perdieron a un hijo.

♥ *Rebekah Mitchell,*  
*Presidente y Fundadora*  
*Mamá de Jonathan Daniel y Mitchell bebé Mitchell*

My first Mother's Day was about a month after Dharma died, and I had no living children. My neighbor, who had a newborn, brought me over a rose they got me at their church. They wanted me to remember that I was still a mom. It was a very special random act of kindness.

♥ *Jennie Drude, Mommy to Dharma Lucille and Stella Darling,*  
*M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station Chapter Director*

## Book Review

### *Joy, Interrupted: An anthology on motherhood and loss*

Edited by Melissa Miles McCarter  
Fat Daddy's Farm Press  
Fatdaddysfarm.org

This collection of short stories, poetry, artwork, essays, fiction and creative non-fiction begins with a poignant quote from Nancy Bern's 2012 TED Talk:

“Joy and grief—that space between is not so far apart. It's actually intertwined. And I know that can be scary. I get that. But it can also give you freedom. There's freedom in knowing you can carry joy and grief together.”

That quote is the heart of this beautiful anthology. Though it is not an infant loss-specific collection nor Christian based, I think we can all relate and connect with every contributor's words and expressions.

♥ *Reviewed by Rebekah Mitchell,*  
*Mommy to Jonathan Daniel and Baby Mitchell*  
*M.E.N.D. President/Founder*

*M.E.N.D. has a complete list of books, websites, organizations, and music resources available online at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org).*

*If you would like to submit a review of books, music, websites or other resources dealing with infant loss, please email them to our newsletter editor Jennifer Harrison at [jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org).*

### *July/August Topic*

Generational Grief  
Deadline: May 31, 2014

### *September/October Topic*

Counseling: Improving Quality of Life  
Deadline: July 31, 2014

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 website 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. Because our newsletters are posted online, please understand that your name will likely be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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**Letters to the Editor** should be sent to [jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org). All letters submitted to the editor are subject to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests that it not be published.

**Birthday Tributes:** M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding newsletter. Tributes must be submitted via the online form at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org).

<u>Heavenly Birthday</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
January/February	November 30
March/April	January 31
May/June	March 31
July/August	May 31
September/October	July 31
November/December	September 30



# Birthday Tributes

## Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Henry!

Always in our hearts

*Henry Simon Gaudette*  
*June 21, 2011*  
*Unknown cause*  
*Parents: Bill and Catrina Gaudette*



## Happy 7<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Baby C!

We miss you, Baby C, every day! You would have been 6 years old December 15, 2013, had you been born. Your brothers talk about you all the time, and we all wish you were here with us. I know in my heart your Grandma Donna is taking very good care of you in heaven. Until we meet someday, we love you!

Mommy, Daddy, Cameron and Carson

*Baby C Chlup*  
*Miscarried May 6, 2007*  
*Parents: Jim and Cyndi Chlup*  
*Big brothers: Cameron and Carson*



## Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Liam!

Our sweet angel, Liam, was my first pregnancy. We were overjoyed when we found out on Easter morning we would have a new addition to the family. Liam went to heaven at 17 weeks, measuring 4 ounces and 6 inches long. We will forever remember our sweet angel. Mommy and Daddy love you, Liam.

*Liam Alexander Banis*  
*June 26, 2013*  
*Heart failure due to Down syndrome*  
*Parents: Chris and Amber Banis*  
*Little brother: Paul*



## Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Chandler!

Our precious baby angel, Chandler Michelle Baichtal, even though you didn't get to spend time in this world with your family who loves you so much, I know you are in heaven with our Heavenly Father. He has more love for you than we will know here on this earth. We will meet in heaven; this is certain. Until then, we will take comfort knowing you are watching over us. You will never be forgotten, sweet baby. We love you so.

*Chandler Michelle Baichtal*  
*June 10-11, 2013*  
*Cord accident*  
*Parents: Shad and Amanda Baichtal*



## Happy 7<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Liam!

My sweet little lambchop, you are 7 years old now. Seven! Wow! I can only imagine how much you have grown and learned during your time in heaven so far. There is one thing I don't have to imagine: my love for you. I am so proud and honored to be your mom. We miss you and think of you every single day! I will miss you forever and love you even longer. You are my sunshine. We love you more than there are words to say.

Love,  
 Mommy and Jayden

*Liam Scott Elmer*  
*April 9-May 17, 2007*  
*SIDS*  
*Mommy: Hillary Elmer-Fedoroff*  
*Sister: Jayden*



## Happy 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Destiny!

Destiny, happy birthday on your big day, baby girl. It's been eight years now since I've held you in my arms. I can only imagine how big you are now, but I am at peace knowing you are in the best place possible. Words could never express how much I love and miss you! What I would give for just one more day. Until the day I see your beautiful face again, have an amazing birthday! Mommy loves you!

*Destiny B. Coronado*  
*June 9, 2006*  
*Cardiac anomalies*  
*Mommy: Karina Sanchez*



## Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Scarlette!

To my beautiful angel, my daughter, I love you with all my soul. On this day, your birthday, you are in heaven celebrating with a big party! But you are also here with me, holding me tight. You are my everything, my life, my love, my reason for being, and I want to send so many kisses this day up to heaven, and the biggest hug to wish you a very happy birthday. Until we unite again in heaven, I will always have you in my mind and in my heart. Mommy loves you, and I thank you for changing my life in the best way I could have ever imagined. Happy birthday, my sweet baby girl. Mommy loves you sooooo much!

*Scarlette Faith Hite*  
*June 14, 2013*  
*Mommy: Caroline Perez*



**Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Lucy!**

We miss you daily and see you through the eyes of your little sister. Although you are not with us, you will never be forgotten, and your little sister will know you well.

Love always,  
Mom, Dad and Sadie

*Lucille "Lucy" Swearingen*

*May 1, 2012*

*Cord accident*

*Parents: Ross and Tia Swearingen*

*Little sister: Sadie Olivia*

**Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Lyla Rose!**

Happy birthday in heaven, my sweet Lyla Rose! Mommy had such a hard time after realizing your tiny spirit had left this earth, but I know you are with your older brother or sister, and you are watching over your baby sister, Maci. I have found strength in the Lord and knowing He holds you while I cannot.

Through the coming years  
I will carry you  
All your life  
I will praise the One  
Who's chosen Me  
To carry you

*Lyla Rose Taylor*

*Miscarried May 15, 2012*

*Mommy: Victoria Dickerson*

*Also remembering*

*Baby Taylor*

*Little sister: Maci Monroe Taylor*

**Happy 6<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Ramiro!**

Happy 6<sup>th</sup> birthday, my love. Oh how I wish you were here with me. I'm always looking at your pictures and looking through your box, still not understanding why you were taken away from me, my dear son. I can still remember the smell of you and how you liked to be on Mama's chest. I think of what we'd be doing for your birthday since you'd be in school now, taking your favorite character cupcakes to class, but instead you are with Grandpa now, and I'm okay with that because I know he'll keep you close until I get there. Have a very special birthday with all the other angel baby boys, and Mama will celebrate it, too.

*Ramiro Faustino Jr.*

*May 20-June 19, 2008*

*Prematurity*

*Mommy: Elisa Frances Ramirez*

**Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Isaac!**

We can't believe you are celebrating your 1<sup>st</sup> birthday in heaven. What a celebration you must be having. Our hearts have been touched and changed by the impact you left on them. We love and miss you so much. We can hardly wait for the day we can be reunited as a family. Now, that will be a celebration. Give your big sister, Elizabeth, big hugs for us, and we will see you soon, son. Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday.

We love you to the heavens,  
Mommy, Daddy and big sister Emily

*Isaac David Jackson*

*June 24, 2013*

*Trisomy 13*

*Also remembering*

*Elizabeth Abigail Jackson*

*April 29, 2002*

*Trisomy 16*

*Parents: Jeromye and Angi Jackson*

*Big sister: Emily Faith*

**Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Gideon!**

Gideon, I hold you in my heart, and with every beat, I love you even more. Your life has brought me and your daddy even closer to the One who holds you in His arms today. Thank you for all the gifts you have given us. I can't believe it's been three years since I wrapped you in my arms, kissed your perfect face and breathed in your sweet smell. We are in awe of how God uses your life for His glory. You have given us joy. Silas knows you already, says your name and kisses your picture. We love you so much. We can't wait hold you again and to see Jesus face-to-face!

Until Forever,  
Mommy, Daddy and Silas

*Gideon Zeller Mitchell*

*Stillborn May 17, 2011*

*Membranous cord insertion*

**Happy 6<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Avery!**

Avery, thank you for making us parents. You were with us only a short time, but you are cherished by your daddy and me. We loved you from the moment we knew about you. Your life gave me hope. We can't wait to get to meet you! I know you and your little brother are having a blast with Jesus!

With Love,  
Daddy, Mommy and Silas

*Avery Mitchell*

*Miscarried May 2008*

*Unknown cause*

*Parents: Todd and Stormy Mitchell*

*Brother: Silas*



**Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Abby!**

Happy birthday, baby girl!  
 Let the butterflies fly, and let your eyes cry,  
 Everything happens the way  
 That it's supposed to.  
 And then you smile.  
 We love you and miss you very much.

*Abby Garcia*  
*June 17, 2011*  
*Unknown cause*

*Parents: Adam and Alex Garcia*  
*Siblings: Kylie, Adayna and Aj*

**Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Alissa Grace!**

Alissa Grace, you are our Sunshine! Every moment of your short life was filled with joy, in touching you, singing to you, loving you. Our hearts are broken you are no longer with us! Your short life changed us forever! You are always loved and forever missed! Psalms 23:6

*Alissa Grace Keasling*  
*May 25—June 16, 2013*

*Pulmonary hyperplasia caused by Hydrops Fetalis*  
*Parents: Kevin and Michele Keasling*  
*Siblings: Jeremiah, Noah and Hannah*

**Happy 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Matthew!**

Again, it's that time of year -  
 another birthday in heaven.  
 This time it's number eleven.  
 Eleven years ago -  
 that time so short and sweet;  
 I held you close in my arms.  
 I couldn't see how the world  
 would ever be happy again  
 if you were not in it.  
 Eleven long years -  
 God has worked miracles of healing.  
 God created you; you lived your complete life.  
 I don't understand, but I trust God's perfect work.  
 My little boy is now a young man.  
 Still, you're so close to my heart and life.  
 I love you more than words can say!  
 Happy birthday, sweetheart!

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

**Happy 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Amar!**

Happy 13<sup>th</sup> birthday to our little angel, Amar. It seems like just yesterday you were on that ultrasound, and we were looking forward to your birth, but you went on to another place. Your big brother Aakash, and your little sister and brother, Rumya and Abhi, miss you so much. Grandma, Mom and Dad miss you too. Our greatest regret is that only Dad and I got to meet you, but you will be forever in all of our hearts.

Love always,  
 Your family

*Amar Padakandla*  
*June 28, 2001*

*Multiple congenital heart defects*  
*Parents: Menaca and Bhaskar Padakandla*  
*Siblings: Aakash, Rumya and Abhi*

**Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Baby Wheeler!**

Hi, sweet baby! Mommy is so sorry she put in your birthday tribute late. Please know we still think about you and love you and miss you very much. We can't believe it has been five years now! Five years since you slipped away. If you were here, we would be working on letters and numbers and getting ready for school. You would be such a big boy now. We hope you are being good! We will hold you in heaven!

Love,  
 Mommy, Daddy and Juju

*Baby Wheeler*  
*Miscarried March 2009*  
*Also remembering*  
*Michael Noah Wheeler*  
*Stillborn January 27, 2010*  
*Parents: Jim and Larissa Wheeler*  
*Sister: Julianne*

**Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Cecilia!**

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday, baby girl! Not a day goes by that we don't think about you and wonder how you would be at the age of 2. We think about what your smile would look like and what your first words would have been. Your sisters have not forgotten about you and ask when they will meet you, but they try to understand God needed an angel. We hope you're happy being a big sister to baby Edward. Although we wish you could have stayed with us, we respect God's decision. Happy birthday, baby girl. We love you so much!

Mommy, Daddy, Abby, Angie and baby Edward

*Cecilia Gonzalez*  
*June 12-13, 2012*  
*Bilateral renal agenesis*  
*Parents: Edward and Mayra Gonzalez*  
*Siblings: Abigail, Angeline and Edward Jr.*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Ariel and Angel!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> heavenly birthday, sweet babies! There are many hugs and kisses to give you, many things to tell you, and, surprisingly enough, many things to be thankful for after your return to heaven. The most important: you are both celebrating your 1<sup>st</sup> birthday in the best place with the best company ever, our Lord. We miss you so much, and love you even more! One year less until we are together!

With all our love,  
Mommy, Daddy and little brother or sister

*Ariel and Angel Wong-Eguiarte*

*June 26, 2013*

*Incompetent cervix*

*Parents: Ari and Emy Wong*

*Sibling: Little Wong due August 2014*



### Happy 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Griffin!

Hey, this is your little sister asking some questions. What would you act like on earth? I sooo wish I knew what you looked like. Are you funny, serious or smart? Do you like books? Would you have a special need? What would it be? I wish you could answer them! Love you.

Your little sis,  
Mya

P.S. Are you throwing a party in heaven? Can I come? I might be decades late though. :]

*Griffin Caleb McIntosh*

*Stillborn June 6, 2001*

*Parents: Matthew and Naomi McIntosh*

*Siblings: Mya Quinn and Aidan Pierce*



### Happy 6<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Andrew!

Happy birthday, little man! We love you so much and can't wait to see you one day!

Love,  
Your family

*Andrew Mallette*

*March 21, 2008*

*CMV*

*Parents: Michael and Nicole Mallette*

*Sister: Bree*



### Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Julian!

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday Julian, our little monkey. You are missed and loved by your family. What we wouldn't give to have you here again. You will always be in our hearts.

Mommy and Daddy love you always!

*Julian Juarez*

*Miscarried May 25, 2012*

*Parents: John Juarez and Leticia Guillen*

*Siblings: Alia and Mya*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Gene!

Happy heavenly birthday, sweet Baby Gene! Although we never got to hold you or see your beautiful face, you are forever in our hearts. We will never forget how happy we were when we first found out we were expecting you! Losing you has hurt deeply, but they say God picks the freshest fruit first. During our journey of grief we have gained an underlying strength we never knew was possible! And I know one day I will see you in heaven, and, oh, what a rejoicing day that will be! Until then I will carry you in a special place in my heart forever! I love you, my Angel Baby Gene!

*Gene Johnson*

*Miscarried May 9, 2013*

*Unknown cause*

*Parents: Cody and Kelly Johnson*

*Siblings: Makenna, Jaylynn and Wyatt*



### Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Elena!

"Your absence has gone through me like thread through a needle. Everything I do is stitched with its color."

-W. S. Merwin

Our Sweet Elena, we are at a loss for words as we reach your 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday—how can you have been gone three years? We miss you and can't wait to see you again. We love you so much, and we carry you always in our hearts. Happy birthday, beautiful princess.

Love always,  
Mommy, Daddy, Liam and Asher

*Elena Marie Rusert*

*May 23, 2011*

*Prematurity*

*Parents: Michael and Tina Rusert*

*Brothers: Liam and Asher*



### Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Emma!

Happy birthday, Emma! We can't believe you would have been 5 years old by now. Mommy, Daddy and little sister Bella always remember you. You will always be in our thoughts, and we know we have our little angel who takes care of us every minute of our lives. You were a fighter and an example of life for Isabella, and she will never let you down.

We love you and we miss you so much.  
Daddy, Mommy and little Bella

*Emma Krymkiewicz*

*May 5, 2009*

*Neonatal Hemochromatosis*

*Also remembering*

*Baby Girl Krymkiewicz*

*Miscarried June 13, 2008*

*Parents: Herman and Ana Krymkiewicz*

*Sister: Isabella*



### Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Emily!

Darling Emily, how quickly two years passed. Daily I dream of you running, playing and giggling with Tito and Zoey. We talk about your heroine victories in our bedtime stories. Even though you are not here with us physically, we carry you every moment in our hearts. Tito tells everyone of his little angel sister. Mommy and Daddy proudly say we have three kids: one boy, one angel and one girl. Zoey listens to stories of you. You are our angel, our darling, our star, and our love will find you wherever you are. Happy birthday! We miss you and love you so much.

Love,  
Mommy, Daddy, Tito and Zoey

*Emily Elizabeth Valladares  
Miscarried May 7, 2012*

*Parents: Justin and Gabriela Valladares  
Siblings: Justin Anival Michael (Tito) and Zoey Marie*



### Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Leah!

Our words and hearts can't begin to tell you how much we miss you. We would give anything to hold you and touch your sweet face and shower you with kisses. We love you so much, Leah Bear, and we can't wait for the day to come when we will be able to wrap our arms around you. Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> heavenly birthday, our precious Leah! We love you and miss you and are sending butterfly kisses to you.

Love,  
Mama, Daddy and Ashley

*Leah Sue Jernigan  
Stillborn May 7, 2012*

*Parents: Ronnie and Whitney Jernigan  
Sister: Ashley*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Gabriel!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> heavenly birthday, Gabriel! At this time last year we held you in our arms and showered you with love and kisses. We long to hold you and kiss those sweet lips again and look forward to the day we see you in heaven! Your short time on this earth brought us such joy and touched so many lives. Your big sister Kendall misses you and talks about her "Gabriel Lion" often. We wonder if you will hate getting cake on you like she did at her 1<sup>st</sup> birthday! We wish we could be there for your celebration with all our loved ones and our heavenly Father. We can't wait to see you and celebrate your birthdays together, our brave little soul! We love you and miss you bunches!

Love,  
Mommy, Daddy and Kendall

*Gabriel Lee Butler  
June 14-15, 2013  
Anencephaly  
Parents: Brandon and Angie Butler  
Big sister: Kendall*



### Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Jordan!

Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, our precious Jordan! Heaven is where you are! It feels so far when Mommy and Daddy want you here with us! Heavenly birthdays must be amazing! We can only dream of all the awesome cake and so much ice cream! Mommy and Daddy have no doubt that when those three candles are blown out, heaven is where you are! Our hearts and our whole selves ache for you, our precious little girl! We love and miss you always!

Mommy and Daddy

*Jordan Anne Haney  
May 23, 2011*

*Incompetent cervix  
Parents: Joe and Julie Haney*



### Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Margot!

Happy birthday, precious girl. It has been a year since we held you, and we carry you in our hearts every day. Your big sister Adeline loves to look at your pictures and kiss you goodnight. Our brief time with you has changed us forever. We love being your parents and wish we could be with you as you learn to sit up, crawl and take your first steps. You are our sunshine. We love you, sweet angel.

Love,  
Mommy and Daddy  
How softly you tiptoed into our world.  
Silently, only a moment you stayed, but what an imprint  
your footprints have left upon our hearts.

*Margot Lily Perry  
Stillborn June 10, 2013*

*Cord accident  
Parents: Brandon and Marisa Perry  
Siblings: Adeline and Bennett, due May 2014*



### Happy 5<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Lindsay!

Lindsay, sweet Lindsay, you are our precious child, and we celebrate your birthday by remembering our three days together here. How gentle, sweet and strong you are. When Mom and Dad asked the Lord for more time with you, we received it, if only for a little while. Knowing you are not alone and are with the Lord Jesus makes us happy, as one day we will all be together with Him. We love you, Lindsay, and so does your sister Haley and brother Jacob. The Lord blessed us with you, dear one, and you will always bring a smile to our heart. Happy birthday!

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Haley and Jacob

*Lindsay Claire Alexander  
May 24-27, 2009  
VLCAD—Fatty Acid Oxidation Disorder  
Parents: Lane and Leslie Alexander  
Siblings: Haley and Jacob*





**Happy 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Emma!**

Mommy and Daddy love and miss you very much.

*Emma Jean Remy  
June 18, 2010  
Incompetent cervix  
Parents: Mitch and Crystal Remy*

**Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Merida!**

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday to our sweet angel baby in heaven. We cannot believe it has already been a year since you went to be with God. You are missed so very much, each and every day. We know one day we will finally get to hold you in our arms again. Until then we will keep you so very close to our hearts, and we will never forget our first daughter. Keep watching over your two big brothers for us! We love you, our sweet Merida Rose.

*Merida Rose Wendt  
Stillborn June 24, 2013  
Cord accident at 18 weeks  
Parents: Jonathan and Sara Wendt  
Big brothers: Leo and Owen*

**Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> Birthday, Max!**

Happy 3<sup>rd</sup> birthday, sweet boy! We all miss you so much. We talk about you all the time. Sam asks to come see your grave when we drive by. You would be very proud of how your sisters are growing up. Someday we all be together again, but until then know that you are and will always be a huge part of our family! We love you!

Love,  
Mommy, Daddy, Sam and Jenna

*Max Emmanuel Novik  
May 9-10, 2011  
Anencephaly  
Parents: Mark and Melinda Novik  
Sisters: Sam (Max's twin) and Jenna*

**Happy 7<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Adrian James!**

Happy birthday, AJ! Our big guy is 7 years old; time has gone by so fast. Time flies by every time we think about you. It feels like it was the other day we were holding you. We miss you and think about you a lot. Your little brother and sister are 5 now and mention you on a weekly basis during our prayers or simply because they want to know more about you. Please continue to watch over them.

We miss you daily, love you forever!  
Mom, Dad, Bear and J

*Adrian James Hernandez  
June 23—July 14, 2007  
Necrotizing enterocolitis  
Parents: Fito and Jackie Hernandez  
Siblings: Adrina and Julian*

**Happy 14<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Sydney!****Happy 13<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Ashley!**

We love and miss you very much.  
May all your tea parties be together.  
“Until we meet again!”

*Sydney Lynne Brown  
May 18, 2000  
Unknown causes  
Ashley Mackenzie Brown  
May 18, 2001  
Premature at 24 weeks due to  
Antiphospholipid antibody syndrome  
Parents: Brian and Marilyn Brown  
Sibling: Samuel*

**Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Victoria!**

I can't believe it's been a year. It just seems like yesterday you were given and taken from me. I love you so much, and that love will stand the test of time. I pray for strength every day, and I always send my “I love you.” Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday.

XOXO,  
Mommy

*Victoria Grace Walls  
May 1-8, 2013  
Massive brain stroke  
Parents: TJ and Ashley Walls  
Siblings: Addie and Landen*

**Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Emilyynn!**

Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> birthday to our beautiful heavenly princess! We can't believe it has been two years already. We love and miss you so much every day! Happy birthday, Emilyynn! We will love you always and forever!

Love,  
Mom, Dad, Nolan and Mary Britton

*Emilyynn Larren Schrader  
Stillborn June 19, 2012  
Parents: Daniel and Kellie Schrader  
Siblings: Nolan and Mary Britton*

**Happy 2<sup>nd</sup> Birthday, Connor!**

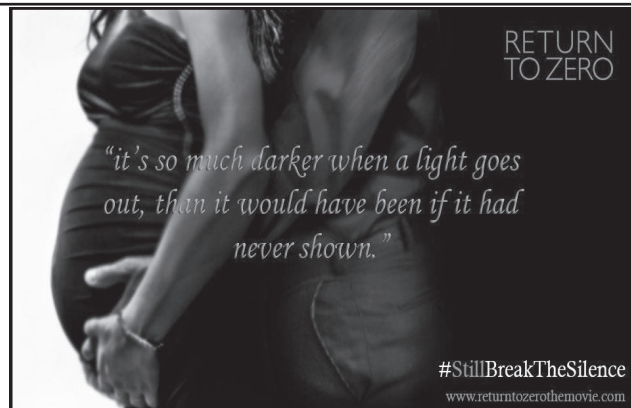
Our sweet angel, it is hard to believe it has been two years since we held you in our arms. We hold you tight in our hearts each day. We wish you were here to meet your baby sisters. We can't wait to see the three of you make birthday wishes together one day.

*Connor James Hutchens  
Born sleeping May 1, 2012  
Parents: Gary and Stacie Hutchens  
Little twin sisters: Abigail and Allison*



## *Return to Zero* to premiere on May 17!

Make plans to support *Return to Zero*  
by watching the premiere on Lifetime!  
Watch your M.E.N.D. chapter's Facebook page for events  
and your local television listings to view the premiere.



"Every once in a while, a film comes along that has the power to make a difference in the lives of others. *Return to Zero* is that powerful and moving story that so many people around the world who have faced similar challenges can relate to. We felt it very important to present this moving film with such incredible performances from A-list stars as the first global premiere for Lifetime."

*Christian Murphy, Sr. Vice President, International Programming & Production, A+E Networks.*

## *Return to Zero*

"There is no agony like bearing an untold story inside of you."  
-Maya Angelou

We are often asked "How many children do you have?" or "When are you going to have children (more children)?" We pause to decide if this person is worthy of hearing our "untold story" we bore inside of us, literally—worthy of the pain we endure as we relive each moment and worthy of the trepidation we face as we wonder how this person will react to our story. Will they offer words of comfort or make one of the many painful comments we have heard from others who do not understand? We begin to keep our story close to our hearts, sometimes locked away for no one to hear because the pain we endure in loss is too great. Even if we share about our babies, we may not speak of the other losses we endured: the loss of innocence that babies die, the loss of our happiness, the loss of a relationship with the other parent, family or friends, sometimes the loss of our faith and sometimes the loss of making it through each day.

*Return to Zero* is about breaking this silence. It is making the voices heard of those that have suffered a loss, the battles they endured and the strength it takes to make it through each day after a loss. *Return to Zero* is based on a true story of a successful couple, played by Paul Adelstein (Aaron Royal) and Minnie Driver (Maggie Royal), who are preparing for the arrival of their first child. Life appears to be picture-perfect, until a few weeks before their due date they receive the devastating news that their baby son has died in the womb and will be stillborn.

Maggie and Aaron attempt to go on about their lives, but as many of us have experienced, they cannot escape their postpartum grief. The loss of this little child forever alters their lives and relationship, to the point that they turn to other ways to handle their grief, through denial, escape, alcohol and even an affair. The movie follows the couple through marital strife, a subsequent pregnancy, and the choices they must make as they move forward from grief into a new normal.

This film will open doors of discussion about pregnancy and infant loss. While we wish these losses never occurred, unfortunately, they do, and those suffering should not suffer in silence. We each have a story to be heard, and it is time for each of us to break the silence.

To read stories from others breaking the silence, visit <http://returntozeromovie.com/blog/>.  
To share anything about your experience with the *Return to Zero* community, just e-mail  
[info@returntozeromovie.com](mailto:info@returntozeromovie.com)

## M.E.N.D. Sponsors Return to Zero

M.E.N.D. is a proud sponsor of the new movie, *Return to Zero*. This movie captures the lives of a successful couple preparing for the arrival of their new baby, only to find out weeks before the due date, the baby died in the womb and will be stillborn. The film focuses on the heartache and many issues that follow after the loss of a child.

M.E.N.D. is encouraging our members, family and friends to support this movie, and to draw as many as possible to the showing of this film on Lifetime. To learn more about this film, please visit [www.returntozeromovie.com](http://www.returntozeromovie.com). Please watch your M.E.N.D. chapter's Facebook page for events surrounding this film. Here's why it's important to invite everyone you know to watch *Return to Zero* on Saturday, May 17 on Lifetime:

The more people you tell, the more people who watch.

The more people who watch, the higher our ratings.

The higher our ratings, the more re-airings of the film.

The more re-airings of the film, the better chance we have of breaking the silence about pregnancy and infant loss.



### **Minnie Driver—Lead role as Maggie Royal**

Best known for her Oscar-nominated performance as Skylar in *Good Will Hunting* and also nominated for an Emmy and Golden Globe for her work as Dahlia Malloy/Cherien Rich in the television series *The Riches*

### **Paul Adelstein—Starring role as Aaron Royal**

Best known for his role as Dr. Cooper (Coop) in *Private Practice* and Paul Kellerman in *Prison Break*. Also played supporting roles in *Intolerable Cruelty* and *Memoirs of a Geisha*. Also the lead singer of Doris and just released their second album called *All the Details*



### **Alfred Molina—Robert Royal, father of Aaron Royal**

Nominated over 30 times for performances both on stage and screen, including on screen as Doc Oc in *Spiderman 2*, Diego Rivera in *Frida* and on stage in *Art* and *Fiddler on the Roof*.

His comment on the script of *Return to Zero*: "Loved the script, Sean! Really moving and powerful. It's an amazing story, deeply touching and truly universal"



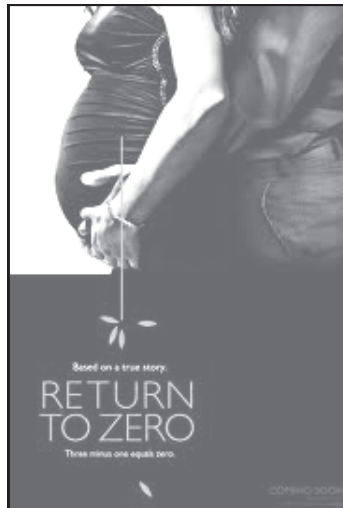
### **Connie Nielson— Dr Claire Holden**

Famous for her role opposite Russell Crowe in *Gladiator*



### **Kathy Baker— Kathleen, mother to Maggie Royal**

Best known for her role as the small-town doctor on *Picket Fences*



### **Andrea Anders— Maggie's friend Trish**

Famous for roles in *Joey*, *Better Off Ted* and *The Class*



### **Sarah Jones— Aaron's coworker, Dana**

Best known for roles in *Vegas*, *Sons of Anarchy*, *Ugly Betty* and *House*

*In Loving Memory***Mason and Mathew Bass**

April 10, 2008

Prematurity

Parents: Chad Bass and Leah Robilotto-Bass

Little brothers: Miles and Graham

Given by grandparents

Michael and Eileen Robilotto

**Grace Irene Biglieni**

December 6-19, 2007

Hypoplastic left heart syndrome

Given by mommy Lindy Biglieni

**Brooke Sophia Daily**

Stillborn March 11, 2010

Vasa Previa

Gifts given by

Parents Jeremy and Lisa Daily

and sisters Sarah and Savannah

Ed and Sandy Rybicki

Aunt Jennifer and Uncle Kollin Green

**Riley and Parker Davis**

November 14, 2006

Prematurity

Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis

and little sister Annalise

**Everett Christopher Delmar**

Stillborn April 18, 2012

Unknown cause

Parents: Chris and Miranda Delmar

Given by Carolyn Delmar

**Dharma Lucille Drude**

March 31—April 1, 2008

Anencephaly

**Stella Darling Drude**

Stillborn January 23, 2014

Anencephaly and exencephaly

Parents: Jason and Jennie Drude

Siblings: Max and Molli

Gifts given by

Grandmother Marilyn Branson

Billy and Charlotte Brown

Kristen Rabe

Christopher and Beverlyann Whigham

Bethany Dufilho

**Kyler Paul English**

Stillborn January 20, 2006

Cord accident

Parents: Laurie McPike and Bob English

Gifts given by

Jon and Laurie McPike and

brothers Kinser, Kelson and Kayden

Remarkable Healthcare of Dallas

Remarkable Healthcare of Fort Worth

**CJ Gold**

Miscarried August 12, 2008

**Mariana Gold**

Miscarried July 14, 2009

Parents: Greg and Kathleen Gold

Big sister: Emily

Given by John and Shirley Day

**Baby Hardy**

Given anonymously

**Serenity Harrison**

Miscarried December 3, 2009

Given by parents Cutis and Jennifer Harrison

and little brother Leviticus Aaron

**Carson Lewis Humphries**

March 23, 2009

Trisomy 9

Parents: JJ and Amy Humphries

Big sister: Sarah Jessica

Gifts given by

Parents JJ and Amy Humphries and

big sister Sarah Jessica

PopPop and Nana

DonDon and Pa Joe

Uncle Brian and Aunt Jess McDonald

and cousins Avery Jo and Annistyn

Uncle TaTa and Aunt Sarah

**Jude Hope Johnson**

Miscarried October 30, 2009

MTHFR

**Luke Noe Johnson**

July 26, 2010

Preterm labor due to MTHFR

**Faith Johnson**

Miscarried September 2, 2011

MTHFR

**April Johnson**

Miscarried April 10, 2012

MTHFR

**Abril Johnson**

Miscarried April 10, 2013

MTHFR

Given by parents James and Merle Johnson

and sister Emma Grace

**Jaden Noah Kaye**

Stillborn October 10, 2006

Unknown cause

**Tucker Steven Kaye**

Stillborn February 8, 2010

Genetic disorder

Given by parents JD and Magen Kaye

and little siblings Noah and Mia

**JJ Kojich**

February 19—March 9, 1996

Omphalocele complications

Given by mommy Linda Kojich

and brothers Adam and Alex

**Joseph Charles Libby**

Stillborn May 26, 1999

Cord accident

Given by parents Wim and Sharlene Libby

and siblings Will, John and Mary Grace

**Gideon Zeller Mitchell**

Stillborn May 17, 2011

Membranous cord insertion

**Avery Mitchell**

Miscarried May 2008

Given by parents Todd and Stormy Mitchell

and little brother Silas

**Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

**Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December 2001

Gifts given by

Parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

and big brother Byron, Jr.

Grandparents Dennis and Sue Brewer

Kerry and Valerie Jones

**Lily Joy Moore**

Miscarried March 2, 2011

Early pregnancy loss

Gifts given by

Parents Jeremy and Kathleen Moore and

brothers Isaac and Judah

Grammy Marsha Neely

**Margot Lily Perry**

Stillborn June 10, 2013

Unknown cause

Parents: Brandon and Marisa Perry

Big sister: Adeline

Gift given by

"Grammie" Marie Perry

**Mindy and Maggie Smith**

Stillborn November 4, 1997

TTTS and Polyhydraminos

Given by parents Scott and Karla Smith

and siblings Travis and Julia

**Alivia Elizabeth-Grace Walker**

July 24, 2006

Incompetent cervix

Given by parents Robert and Liz Walker

and siblings Jaxson and Lauryn

**Gifts of Support**

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

West Conroe Baptist Church, Conroe, TX

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!**

## Mother's Day Memories

One Mother's Day, we went out to the National Forest in the middle of nowhere with sandwiches and water. We hiked and ate by the river. It was a beautiful day. I missed having Lily there, but my heart was so full of joy sitting in the sunshine.

♥ Kathleen Moore  
Mommy to Lily Joy

M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri Chapter Assistant

There is not a particular Mother's Day that sticks out, but since the loss of Malen, I really appreciate that my husband always signs the card, "Wes, Nathan, Lena and Malen."

♥ Becky Anderson  
Mommy to Malen

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo Chapter Director

I think the first year it was as simple as getting a Mother's Day card in the mail, just knowing I was remembered as a mom that day. At church that year, our pastor changed the service to a celebration of all women. The children in church handed gifts to all women in the congregation.

♥ Tania Greer  
Mommy to Macey Spencer Avis

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana Chapter Assistant

The second Mother's Day after our loss, Nobel gave me a "mom" ring with my birthstone and the birthstones of both our children at a special lunch. I don't remember where we ate, but I have a constant reminder of my husband's love.

♥ Paula Schear  
Mommy to Morgan

M.E.N.D.—Advisory Board

My husband always gets me a Mother's Day card and writes about Carson and tells me Happy Mother's Day from him.

♥ Amy Humphries  
Mommy to Carson Lewis

M.E.N.D.—Hot Springs Chapter Director

Mother's Day 2011, I was pregnant with my subsequent baby. After church, I went to the cemetery to visit Daisy and Ellie's grave and spent the afternoon with all three of my children.

♥ Chiara Ott

Mommy to Daisy and Ellie

M.E.N.D.—Houston Chapter Assistant

My daughter, 4 years old at the time, made a plate with a picture she drew of my angel, Jacob, on it. She drew his face and wrote his name, and her teacher kept it as a surprise. She gave it to me on Mother's Day.

♥ Sarah Fukasawa  
Mommy to Jacob

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls Chapter Director

Mother's Day 2011, I was 32 weeks pregnant with sweet Gideon. Gideon loved Italian food, so my husband took me to one of my favorite places to eat. I had delicious fettuccini Alfredo, and Gideon was moving like crazy! He loved pasta as much as mommy does! Exactly one week later, his heart stopped, and two days after that, he was delivered stillborn. That Mother's Day with him was one of the happiest days of my life. I am so thankful to the Lord I was able to experience a Mother's Day with my first son. I will always remember the kicks he gave.

♥ Stormy Mitchell

Mommy to Avery and Gideon Zeller

M.E.N.D.—Houston Chapter Director

May 2010 was my first Mother's Day after Brooke was born without a heartbeat. My husband and daughter took me out to breakfast and later released balloons. They also gave me a Mother's pendant that had my birthstone as well as both of my daughters' birthstones. When our third daughter was born, he had her birthstone added as well. That piece of jewelry was handmade by a good family friend, and it holds a very special place in my heart.

♥ Lisa Daily

Mommy to Brooke Sophia

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa Chapter Director

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*"The reality is that we don't forget, move on, and have closure, but rather we honor, we remember, and incorporate our deceased children and siblings into our lives in a new way. In fact, keeping memories of your loved one alive in your mind and heart is an important part of your healing journey."*

*~ Harriet Schiff, author of The Bereaved Parent*

*Retrieved from [www.griefspeaks.com](http://www.griefspeaks.com), August 13, 2013.*

## M.E.N.D.

**Chapter Corner****Chapter Meeting****Information****M.E.N.D.—Houston**

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday, 7:30 p.m.  
D. Bradley McWilliams YMCA at Cypress

Creek, Schindeldecker Building  
19915 SH 249 Houston, TX 77070

Director: Stormy Mitchell  
stormym@mend.org, (281) 374-8528

**Subsequent pregnancy group** meets  
as needed on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,  
led by Chiara Ott  
(chiara@mend.org).

**Daddy's group** meets quarterly on the 3<sup>rd</sup>  
Thursday at 7:30 p.m.,  
led by Randy Dobbins  
(cortdavis@aol.com)

**M.E.N.D.—Texarkana**

Meets 3<sup>rd</sup> 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.—Tulsa**

Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.  
Canyon Crossing  
1651 E Old North Rd.  
Sand Springs, Oklahoma 74063  
Director: Lisa Daily  
lisa@mend.org, (918) 694-4325 (HEAL)

**M.E.N.D.—SW Missouri**

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 7:00 p.m.  
Project H.O.P.E.  
1419 S. Enterprise  
Springfield, Missouri 65804  
Director: Heather Fann  
heather@mend.org, (417) 818-0489

**M.E.N.D.—Amarillo**

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.  
First United Bank of the Colonies/  
Lonestar Room  
One First United Bank Parkway  
45<sup>th</sup> and Soncy  
Amarillo, Texas  
Director: Becky Anderson  
becky@mend.org, (806) 570-4344

**M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station**

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 p.m.  
Hawthorn Suites  
1010 University Drive East  
College Station, Texas 77840  
Director: Jennie Drude  
jennie@mend.org, (979) 220-7851

**M.E.N.D. Chapter Updates****Chicagoland**

M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland is set to open its doors June 3, 2014. We will be meeting the first Tuesday of every month from 7:00-8:30 p.m. at St. Peter Lutheran Church, 202 E Schaumburg Road, Schaumburg, Illinois 60194. We are so grateful for all the help we are receiving in spreading the word about this new chapter of M.E.N.D. I am so thankful for my assistants, Gretchen Hays, Cheryl Cohen and Kim Nyquist, and all of their help in starting M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland. We are really looking forward to supporting grieving families in the Chicago area and letting them know they don't have to walk this baby loss journey alone.

*Sara Hintz*

**Bryan/College Station**

M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station is growing, and we are so thankful for all the opportunities God has given us. We have now been open three years! We were invited to the open house at our new Scott and White Hospital to help inform the community and hospital staff about M.E.N.D. and what we offer. We also enjoyed a beautiful Sunday at the March for Babies walk where we provided M.E.N.D. resources for the families who were walking in memory of their precious babies. We want to thank Hawthorn Suites for continuing to allow us to meet for our monthly support group meetings pro bono!

*Jennie Drude*

**Tulsa**

M.E.N.D.—Tulsa would like to wish all mommies and daddies in the Tulsa area a Happy Mother's/Father's Day. We will be praying for you all as you remember your precious babies on earth and in heaven.

*Lisa Daily*

**NW Washington**

Our Gig Harbor meeting continues to be a success. We are grateful we are reaching out to the families in that community. As we look ahead to Mother's Day and Father's Day, we know it is a hard time each year, when many are not recognized as parents. We are planning a Mother's Day event on May 10 that will be open to the public. If you would like more information, please email me, at stacym@mend.org or check our events on our Facebook page.

*Stacy McGhee*

**Amarillo**

M.E.N.D.—Amarillo just received our new updated brochures, so we will be revisiting doctors, hospitals, funeral homes, etc., to make sure they know of our ministry and what we offer grieving families.

*Becky Anderson*

**Houston**

M.E.N.D.—Houston is praying for each of our M.E.N.D. mommies and daddies across the world as we walk through another Mother's Day and Father's Day without our children. I pray these next couple months you feel the spirit of the Lord close to you.

We are looking for a new location for our meeting place. Pray for us as we search for the perfect place. We are also planning on some fundraisers in the next couple of months. If you would like to help, email me at stormym@mend.org. Also if your company, or the company where your husband, family or friends work, would like to be a sponsor and give a donation to M.E.N.D.—Houston, please let me know. It would be a huge blessing for M.E.N.D. and for all of the families we touch in the Houston area

*Stormy Mitchell*

## Texarkana

M.E.N.D.—Texarkana will host “A Life to Remember” which is a ceremony dedicated to all babies who pass away each year. This ceremony will be Saturday, May 10, at 10:30, at the Christus St. Michael Serenity Garden. If you would like more information about “A Life to Remember” or other events with M.E.N.D.—Texarkana, please contact Monica at (903) 490-1210, [monica@mend.org](mailto:monica@mend.org) or on our Facebook page.

*Monica Davis*

## Wichita Falls

M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls continues to meet monthly for our support group. On April 29, we are holding another CAbi trunk show fundraiser. Last season was a success, and we are praying for the same this spring. Our chapter continues to grow every month as we welcome new families to the group. Our hearts go out to all of those who have joined us.

*Sarah Fukasawa*

## SW Missouri

M.E.N.D.—Southwest Missouri continues to reach out to the healthcare community by educating maternity, L&D and NICU nurse interns during a recent Maternal-Fetal Medicine Bereavement Conference. We are so thankful these providers want to learn how to better serve our hurting mommies and daddies! We're looking forward to spring and summer with our family picnic on Saturday, June 28, at Nathaniel Greene Park in Springfield. Bring your own dinner and the family for some fun in the sun! For more details, contact [heather@mend.org](mailto:heather@mend.org).

*Heather Fann*

## Hot Springs

M.E.N.D.—Hot Springs wishes all of our families a happy Mother's Day and Father's Day. May God give us peace and the ability to find joy in knowing we will see our children again.

*Amy Humphries*

### M.E.N.D.—NW Washington

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 6:30 p.m.  
Harrison Medical Center/Iris Room  
1800 Myhre Rd.

Silverdale, Washington

Gig Harbor Meeting

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday at 6:30 p.m.

St. Anthony Hospital/Greenpoint Dining Room

11567 Canterwood Blvd NW,

Gig Harbor, Washington

Director: Stacy McGhee

[stacym@mend.org](mailto:stacym@mend.org), (360) 662-6161

### M.E.N.D.—Hot Springs, Arkansas

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 p.m.

National Park Medical Center/Maurice Room

1910 Malvern Avenue

Hot Springs, AR

Director: Amy Humphries

[amy@mend.org](mailto:amy@mend.org), (501) 620-9930

### M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls, Texas

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 p.m.

Christ Home Place Ministries

1420 Twin Oaks Street

Wichita Falls, TX

Director: Sarah Fukasawa

[sarahf@mend.org](mailto:sarahf@mend.org), (940) 642-3284

### M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 7:00 p.m.

St Peter Lutheran Church

202 E Schaumburg Road

Schaumburg, IL 60194

Director: Sara Hintz

[saraann@mend.org](mailto:saraann@mend.org), (630) 267-9134

## M.E.N.D. Support Group Meetings in the Dallas Metroplex

Join us for a time of sharing experiences.

### M.E.N.D. main chapter meetings

are held the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of every month from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

### Daddies group

meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., from 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.*

### Subsequent pregnancy group

meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Tuesday from 7:30 - 9:00 p.m.

Led by Liz Walker: [liz@mend.org](mailto:liz@mend.org)  
*For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.*

### Food and Fellowship

are held the 4<sup>th</sup> Thursday of every month at 8:00 p.m. at the Corner Bakery in Southlake Town Center

*A time to relax and meet with other M.E.N.D. parents in a social setting.*

Contact Brittney Fish:  
[brittney@mend.org](mailto:brittney@mend.org)

### Infertility group

meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 7:30 p.m.

Contact Cheryl Davis for meeting location and information at [Cheryl@mend.org](mailto:Cheryl@mend.org)  
*For families experiencing infertility after a loss.*

### Parenting After Loss Playgroup

Meets monthly at various locations in the Dallas / Fort Worth metroplex.

Contact Magen Kaye: [Magen@mend.org](mailto:Magen@mend.org) or call (214) 435-3870

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

**Unless otherwise noted, all support group meetings are held at:**

**Wells Fargo Bank**

**800 W. Airport Freeway**

**Irving, TX 75062**

(Located in the Crystals Pizza parking lot, between MacArthur and O'Connor)  
Meetings will be in the bank board room, located on the first floor.

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

## Choosing Joy

Mother's Day and Father's Day of 2012 were filled with such joy at our home. My husband got me the Mother's Day card with the big pregnant belly that said, "Kick! Kick! Kick! Translation: Happy Mommy's Day From You-Know-Who!" I must have been around 19 weeks at the time, expecting our first child, and was just starting to feel our little pumpkin's small kicks. As we ate our breakfast in bed, we began to dream of future Mother's Days and what it would be like next year. On Father's Day we visited my husband's parents. I completely forgot to do anything at all for him, but I promised next year would be different. However, 2012 was our only Mother's Day and Father's Day with our firstborn, Kyleigh.

In January 2013, Kyleigh passed away due to SIDS. As Mother's Day and Father's Day 2013 approached, I grew very anxious, as I did with most of our firsts after losing Kyleigh. The thing I struggled with the most was, I honestly did not feel like a mom. No one ever belittled me or just swept her death under the rug, but it was me who felt somehow less than other moms.

My husband was so sweet and brought me breakfast in bed and actually reused the same card since we were expecting our second child, but there was someone obviously missing. We just lay in bed and cried for probably an hour or so, before we got up and went to church. With God's grace, and I am sure hundreds of prayers from my friends and family, church was not a bad thing. We came home, and I don't even remember the rest of the day; I probably just slept. What was surprising for me is how hard Father's Day was. I really wanted to do something for Kyle. I wanted to make Father's Day as normal as possible, for both my husband and I. So my first step was to go shopping for a Father's Day card—BIG MISTAKE! I stood in the card aisle just bawling as I read card after card that just didn't work. I remember

screaming in my head, "Where is the card from your deceased daughter!" Needless to say, I got nowhere and left the store more determined than ever to find or make the perfect gift. After lots of thought I finally decided to make him a collage for his office including his scrubs with Kyleigh's footprints, pictures of him and Kyleigh, and a few ultrasound pictures of Baby Rabe #2. I wrote him a letter since I never found a card. Here is a section:

*Happy Father's Day, Sweetheart. As Father's Day has drawn closer, I find myself looking at cards for you, wondering what it would be like to have our sweet little chunky 8-month-old here to put her little handprint on it. Without that handprint, a card seemed so empty to me and it seemed so inappropriate to just give you a blank card. What do you do on a Father's Day like this?*

Again I don't remember much about the day exactly. I am sure it was more of the same, holding each other while crying, and going to church. The thing I have come to realize after Kyleigh's death is that there are going to be many hard days like Mother's Day and Father's Day, but I get to choose joy. I determine how I will spend this day and how she will be remembered. It may take a little creativity and what we do may seem morbid or weird to outsiders, but one thing M.E.N.D. had helped me with is to learn to not apologize for my grief or remembering my baby every second of every day. As Mother's Day and Father's Day 2014 are drawing near, I will be looking for a new way to celebrate, all the while missing my sweet pumpkin, Kyleigh.

♥ *Kristen Rabe*  
*Mommy to Kyleigh Elaine*  
*M.E.N.D.—Bryan/College Station*

My first Mother's Day after we lost Sophia, my husband bought a special card just from Sophia to me.

♥ *Stacy McGhee*  
*Mommy to Babies 1, 2 and 3 and Sophia Rose*  
*M.E.N.D.—Washington Chapter Director*

I plant a flower for our babies on Mother's Day and wear my remembrance jewelry.

♥ *Rachel Lewis*  
*Mommy to Olivia, Caleb and Elliott*  
*M.E.N.D.—Washington Chapter Assistant*

My first Mother's Day was our first weekend home from the hospital/NICU with our 1-month-olds Charlotte and Henry, but without their triplet brother, Trip. It was bittersweet, but made sweeter by all the flowers and cards from family, friends and area people we didn't know—thinking of me and all our babies. There were even donations made in Trip's memory. It meant the world that other people remembered me and my baby in heaven.

♥ *Lisa Whitmire*  
*Mommy to Trip Anderson and Baby Whitmire*  
*M.E.N.D.—Wichita Falls Chapter Assistant*





### *Subsequent Births*

#### **Nikki and Bryan Thompkinson**

of Keller, Texas,  
along with big sister Brenna  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Brody Kase,  
born March 7, 2014,  
measuring 7 lb.,  
and 19.5 inches long.  
The Thompkinsons  
lovingly remember  
triplets  
Jackson, Lindsey and Brooklyn,  
September 10, 2011

#### **Brian Routh and Sonia Lopez**

of Tulsa, Oklahoma,  
along with siblings  
Lidia and Oliver,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Victoria Maria,  
born January 23, 2014,  
measuring 6 lb., 15 oz.,  
and 19.75 inches long.  
The Routh family lovingly  
remembers  
Emma Maria,  
April 15—July 16, 2008,  
heart defect

#### **Gary and Stacie Hutchens**

of Boutte, Louisiana,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Abigail Grace and Allison Diane,  
born March 17, 2014.  
Abigail measured 5 lb., 13 oz.,  
and 18.25 inches long.  
Allison measured 4 lb., 13 oz.,  
and 18 inches long.  
The Hutchens family lovingly  
remembers  
Connor James,  
born sleeping May 1, 2012

#### **Andy and Brooke Harrington**

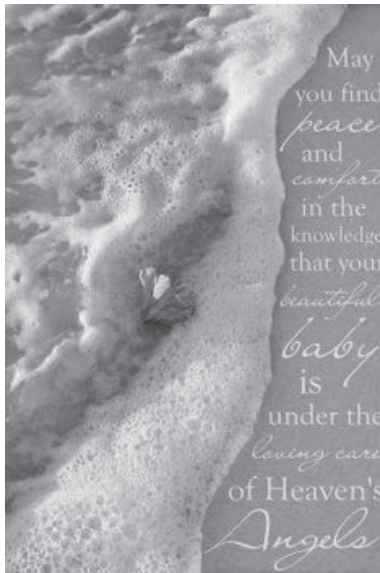
of College Station, Texas,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Charlotte Renee,  
born March 6, 2014,  
measuring 5 lb., 11 oz.,  
and 19 inches long.  
The Harringtons lovingly remember  
Reese Elizabeth,  
stillborn August 16, 2012,  
auto accident

#### **Mike and Jennifer Vance**

of Garland, Texas,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Micah David,  
born February 11, 2014,  
measuring 5 lb., 14 oz.,  
and 19.5 inches long.  
The Vances lovingly remember  
David James,  
December 16, 2012-  
February 1, 2013,  
sepsis

#### **Ken and Lexi Moore**

of Dallas, Texas,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Thomas Garschagen,  
born March 4, 2014,  
measuring 6 lb., 6 oz.,  
and 18.5 inches.  
The Moores lovingly remember  
Isabella Carolyn,  
January 28—February 2, 2013,  
lung problems



#### **Chris and Miranda Delmar**

of Rosenberg, Texas,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Christian Matthew,  
born December 25, 2013,  
measuring 5 lb., 12 oz.,  
and 17.5 inches long.  
The Delmars lovingly remember  
Everett Christopher,  
born at rest April 18, 2012,  
unknown cause

#### **Dave and Kate Thomas**

of Sapulpa, Oklahoma,  
along with big sister Alice,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Emma Michelle,  
born January 21, 2014,  
measuring 8 lb., 2 oz.,  
and 21.5 inches long.  
The Thomas family lovingly  
remembers  
Baby Thomas,  
miscarried June 1, 2010

#### **Timothy and Michelle Griffin**

of Poulsbo, Washington,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Evelyn Marjorie,  
born March 15, 2014,  
measuring 8 lb., 9 oz.,  
and 20.25 inches long.  
The Griffins lovingly remember  
Babies 1, 2, 3 and 4,  
miscarried in 2012,  
unknown causes

#### **Paul and Kristin Brander**

of Port Orchard, Washington,  
joyfully announce the arrival of  
Aubree Mae,  
born March 20, 2014,  
measuring 9 lb., 9 oz.,  
and 20 inches long.  
The Branders lovingly remember  
Cameron Nicole,  
miscarried October 12, 2010,  
PROM

## 2014 M.E.N.D. Leadership Conference

The annual M.E.N.D. Leadership Conference was held the first weekend in February in the DFW metroplex. Each of our 11 chapters were represented, along with our newsletter editor, Jennifer Harrison, and our webmaster, Max Friz. We had a great time bonding with one another and sharing what the Lord is doing in our chapters as well as coming up with new things we can implement.



M.E.N.D. Chapter Directors (top left to bottom):

Monica Davis, Jennie Drude, Becky Anderson, Rebekah Mitchell, Stormy Mitchell, Stacy McGhee, Lisa Daily, Sara Hintz, Amy Humphries, Sarah Fukasawa  
Not pictured: Heather Fann



M.E.N.D. Board of Directors (left to right):

DaLana Barsanti, Shannon Outen, Marilyn Brown, Rebekah Mitchell, Byron Mitchell, Brandee Dill, Brittney Fish, Amber Zuckerman



M.E.N.D. Advisory Board (left to right):

Cheryl Davis, Calli Stanley, Magen Kaye, Liz Walker, Paula Schear, Brea Darnell, Norma Jordan



M.E.N.D. 2014 Leadership Conference

The first Mother's Day after Samuel's stillbirth, I was still grieving so deeply. Having moved to a new city two months before my loss, my support system was lacking because I was so new, sadly especially lacking at my church (M.E.N.D. was the greatest support and the place where I felt the most normal). That first Mother's Day at church, I was greeted by an older woman with a small vase of flowers hand-picked from her garden. She specifically wanted to honor me as a mommy to my Samuel in heaven, as well as my living kids with me that day. My heart sang as she recognized my son who seemed to be so often overlooked. What a blessing it was to this mom's heart.

♥ Sara Hintz, Mommy to Samuel, Baby Joel and Taylor,  
M.E.N.D.—Chicagoland Chapter Director

Mother's Day is always a difficult day for me. I remember my first one, seven months after our first child, Samuel, went to heaven. It was hard not being acknowledged as a mother. My husband and I went out to the cemetery and released a balloon to remind me that I was a mother and for the sake of our precious son, I had to acknowledge myself as such. Every Mother's Day since is bittersweet, rejoicing in my blessings and yet missing all my children growing up together. I am so thankful for my little Samuel, who first made me a mother.

♥ Marcie Nienhuis, Mommy to Samuel James,  
M.E.N.D.—Tulsa Assistant

## Gifts from Above

I looked into the face of my newborn son as I walked into church on Mother's Day 2012. From the outside we looked like a complete family, smiling and talking to everyone, and people were wishing me a happy Mother's Day. Some even commented how this was my first Mother's Day as a mom. Only it wasn't. It was my fourth Mother's Day, and fresh in my mind were memories from a year before, on Mother's Day 2011, when I was 32 weeks pregnant with our first son, Gideon. At dinner with my husband, I felt Gideon kicking me, loving that I was eating Italian food. I didn't know just one week later he would die inside of my womb.

I like the fact that a day is set aside each year to honor our moms and dads (or those women and men who assume a parental role in our lives). Mother's and Father's Days are important because our parents play such a vital role to shape and mold us. From the time I was little, I wanted to be a mom. I was the little girl who put balloons and basketballs up her shirt to pretend she was pregnant. I would pretend to nurse my dolls after they were "born." I had so many Cabbage Patch Dolls that were my babies! Anyone who knows me won't be too surprised at that story! I loved babies and kids. I still do.

For years, Mother's Days were torture. We decided in 2007 to start a family, not knowing from then on out, Mother's Day would be a complicated, bittersweet day. Since that year, it has never been the same.

We began trying to have a baby, and after a year and a half of testing, infertility treatment and IUIs, we finally were expecting a baby! Only too soon, way too soon, we were told we would lose this baby whom we already loved so much. After that loss, participating in Mother's Day was filled with anxiety. I never felt like I belonged. I was a mom but didn't have my baby. No one really recognized me as a mother, so I was left out. But I was a mother! Because the day filled me with dread, I decided to take the focus off of myself, and I made a point to focus on my own mother on Mother's Day. It became more about my mom and the blessing she is in my life, and less about what I didn't have in my life.

God brought about a lot of healing in my heart over the next few years. Even as we continued to struggle with infertility, I was able to celebrate Mother's Day. I focused on the blessings the Lord gave me through the women in my life who had influenced me. I leaned on Him and let Him hold me on those Mother's Day church services.

On Mother's Day 2011, we were finally expecting again.

As I sat in one of my favorite Italian restaurants in Houston, I felt our son, Gideon, moving all around inside of me. My husband and I talked about how we would be welcoming our son into the world in just a few short weeks. It was the most joyful I had ever felt on a Mother's Day. I smiled back as people smiled at my round belly. I was happy. I didn't know that just one week later, we would hear the words "I'm so sorry." I didn't know that a week and two days later, I would hold the beautiful body of my son in my arms and kiss his face for the first and last time on this earth. I didn't know in just a week, my entire world would crash down around me. Mother's Day would NEVER ever be the same again.

After losing Gideon, we became pregnant very quickly with our subsequent baby. Mother's Day 2012 was filled with immense joy and deep pain. I ached to have Gideon there with me, but I was so glad his baby brother was in my arms. I felt incomplete. I felt broken. My hand ached to hold the chubby hand of my oldest son. I sat in the church pew that morning and imagined the little red-headed 1-year-old who should have been sitting next to me, as I held his newborn brother. My heart physically hurt. I missed my son! Tears rolled down my face as I knew I really have three children, not just the one people can see. All my emotions were confusing. Happy, sad, joy, pain, all wrapped into one.

I cried out to God for comfort, I let His peace fall on me. I focused on Him—on all He has given me. I knew, no matter what, I would be able to hold my children in my heart and one day I would hold them in my arms. God reminded me no matter how long we get to have our children, they are a blessing and a gift. Psalm 127:3 says, "Children are a gift from the LORD; they are a reward from him." This fact doesn't change if our children died; they are STILL a gift from Him. ALL children are a gift from God, no matter if we have them for five weeks, 33 weeks or for our entire lives. They are blessings. So this Mother's Day and every Mother's Day for the rest of my life, I will focus on the gift the Heavenly Father has given us in Himself. I will praise Him because of the extravagant love He pours on us constantly. And I will be joyful and thank Him because he made me the mom of three children. Today, even though I miss having all of my kids with me, I am blessed and filled with joy.

Thank you Jesus for the gift of every single one of our children in M.E.N.D.

♥ Stormy Mitchell

*Mommy to Avery and Gideon Zeller*  
M.E.N.D.—Houston Chapter Director

*They say that heaven is compared to "the blink of an eye" for us on this earth. Sometimes it helps me to think of my child running ahead of me through a beautiful field of wildflowers and butterflies, so completely caught up in what she is doing that when she looks behind her, I'll already be there.*

-Author Unknown

M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death  
 P.O. Box 631566, Irving, TX 75063  
 USA  
 (972) 506-9000  
*Return Service Requested*

Nonprofit Organization  
 U.S. Postage Paid  
 DeSoto, TX 75115  
 Permit No. 614

*“... 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 in Texas and Louisiana who have their Kroger Plus Card linked to M.E.N.D. To link your card, go to [www.krogercommunityrewards.com](http://www.krogercommunityrewards.com) and set up an account if you do not already have one. Once you receive the email after setting up your account, click on “My Account,” then go to “Edit Kroger Community Rewards” and input your Kroger Plus card number. You’ll see a screen with your information in boxes, at the bottom right, there is a box that says Community Rewards. Click that, then enter the M.E.N.D. number, which is 80513. Once that’s entered, you’ll confirm that M.E.N.D. is your charity of choice. This link will be good until the 2013-2014 program expires. You must link your card each year to M.E.N.D.
- **Tom Thumb** also has a program in Texas that can benefit M.E.N.D. If you have a Tom Thumb Reward Card, please contact Rebekah ([rebekah@mend.org](mailto:rebekah@mend.org)) to obtain the Customer Letter. You must only present this letter one time to link your card to M.E.N.D. Reward cards can also be used at Randalls and Simon David stores.
- **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](http://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](http://www.missionfish.org) to find out how.
- **Igive.com** will donate a penny a search and a portion of each purchase made through their website to M.E.N.D. Sign up today! M.E.N.D.’s cause number is 52025.



[www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org)