



# Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death

*Miscarriage, Stillbirth and Infant Loss Support*

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## Grandparents' Perspectives

This issue focuses on loss from a grandparent's perspective. Oftentimes grandparents are the forgotten grievers when a baby dies. Not only are they sad that a little life was lost, they grieve deeply and helplessly for their child who lost a child. We greatly appreciate the submissions we received from grandparents who have walked this grief journey with us, and may it enlighten us as the parents that the loss of our baby affects more than just us as the moms and dads – truly, it impacts our entire family.

### In this issue...

#### Grandmothers

We were so blessed to hear from the grandmothers of Baby Jonathan and Baby Mitchell, each sharing their stories of the loss of grandbabies.

*page 3 and page 11*

#### M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K

We were so blessed by all who participated in our Virtual 5K. Read more about it on page 6 and see pictures throughout the magazine.

*page 6*

#### A Baby is Stillborn...

A study was conducted focusing on a grandmother's experience after the stillbirth of a grandchild. Read more on what they have to say on page 10.

*page 10*

**September/October Topic**

*Secondary Fears*

*(Living children, husband, anxiety)*

*Deadline: July 31, 2021*

**November/December Topic**

*Holidays*

*Deadline: September 30, 2021*

Stories, poems, thoughts, and/or feelings regarding these topics are welcome. Submissions must be received by the deadline to be considered for publication in the magazine. Unfortunately, there is not enough room to include all submissions. Choices will be left to the discretion of the editors. Please send any submissions to our Magazine Editor, Jennifer Harrison, at [jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org). Any submission printed in our magazine will also be posted to our website indefinitely. Because our magazines are posted online, please understand your name will be attached to your submission when searched on the Internet.

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to be published in future issues, both in the print version and online, unless a letter's author expressly requests it not be published.

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**Birthday Tributes:** M.E.N.D. publishes heavenly birthday tributes in the corresponding magazine. 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



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As a national organization, M.E.N.D. Leadership continues to monitor conditions in the United States relating to COVID-19. Since restrictions differ in each state, please follow your chapter on Facebook or connect with your Chapter Director for updates regarding support groups. For information on support groups, including the M.E.N.D. Nationwide Support Group that meets year-round, please see page 19.

## Feature Article

In place of our normal feature article by our President and Founder, Rebekah Mitchell, we are sharing the perspective of the grandmothers, Sue Brewer, maternal grandmother, and Marnie Mitchell, paternal grandmother, to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell. The article below was written based on an interview I had with Sue Brewer. Words could not capture

the love and grief I could hear through the tears in her voice as she retold the story as a mother to Rebekah and grandmother to these children she will reunite with in heaven. Throughout the course of the interview, she would continue to tell me "...but it's not about me" as she shared her part in these lives. Instead of sharing this as a normal interview, I have written this as her story. Marnie Mitchell, also wrote her perspective that can be found on page 11.

*Jennifer Harrison, M.E.N.D. Magazine Editor*

My heart is so full. So full of the memories... wonderful memories. It is as fresh to me today as the day Jonathan was stillborn. I saw everything from many perspectives, as a mother to Rebekah, as a grandmother to Jonathan and to Byron Jr., who was 3 at the time, and mother to the rest of our family.

Rebekah is my little hero, my miracle. She is my youngest of my children - five daughters and one son - born 19 minutes after her twin sister, Rachael. She was our miracle because they had to do surgery just to get her out of my womb, and then we had to help her thrive after not being held for 13 days after birth. Twenty years later, after just getting married, she was diagnosed with a kidney disease. It was an awakening and heartache to us, but with the Lord and her bravery, she went through that beautifully and still is.

With each pregnancy, there was a risk of damage to her kidneys. When she was pregnant with Byron, Jr., she and Byron moved in with us while she was on bedrest until it was time for her to deliver, and she made it to the full 9 months. With Jonathan, three years later, we were faced with similar circumstances, yet we had the faith to believe everything would go smoothly like it did with Byron Jr. We were so happy, and it was wonderful seeing her get into her cute maternity clothes again. About halfway through her pregnancy, she and her family stayed in our home again when she was put on bedrest, so we could help care for her and Little Byron.

A few weeks later, she was admitted to the hospital due to high blood pressure and to monitor her kidney function. I tried to go to the hospital every day, but on one afternoon when I wasn't there, I received a call. I don't remember the details of the call, just that they couldn't find a heartbeat and I needed to come to the hospital quickly.

When I arrived at the hospital, the doctors met me at the elevator to tell me what was happening. We gathered as a family and began to pray before

## Grandmother's Perspective

Rebekah's c-section. After Jonathan was delivered and Rebekah and Byron spent some time with him alone, I'll never forget seeing Byron walk down the hall to where we were, carrying their lifeless little baby. It was just so emotional! I didn't even know what to say. I remember asking about Jonathan, trying to understand. I wanted to be strong for my daughter and Byron, even though I wanted to collapse myself.

As a grandmother, and as a mother, you are hurting yourself. I adore all my grandchildren, and in that moment, I couldn't believe I was losing one of them. I was seeing my daughter suffer and witnessing the hurt of her and Byron. I grieved over them. I grieved over Byron Jr., who loved to talk to and play with his little brother through his mommy's tummy and who was going to have to be told that Jonathan was now with Jesus. I felt all of that. As a mother you want to take care of your children. All I could think about was Rebekah and Byron, and I was hurting so much myself.

Rebekah was able to keep Jonathan in her hospital room for a few days, which was new to the nurses at that time. Freshly out of the womb we were able to bond with him and love on him. I would have been one of the caregivers for him after he was born, packing up my "Mary Poppins" bag and going to take care of him. While I didn't get to do it at home, I was able to spend this time with him at the hospital, grandmother to grandson, doing some of the things I desired to do as "Gaga." I wouldn't trade anything for the wonderful gift of God-given time we had with him.

Those days were so emotional. I thought "Lord, why is this? Something great has to come out of this." My heart was breaking, not just for myself as a



Continued on page 7

# Birthday Tributes



## Happy 4<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Cuddles!

Happy 4<sup>th</sup> birthday, sweets! We love and miss you! How we wish we were celebrating with you here with us. But you, baby, will never be forgotten. We celebrate you and appreciate the little time we had you here. We are grateful for the time we had with you. Continue to watch over us! Hope you enjoy your special day in heaven. Happy heavenly birthday, Cuddles! We send you all our love to heaven.

*Zoey Von Martinez*  
*August 16 - December 16, 2017*  
*Respiratory failure*  
*Parents: Vanessa Hernandez and Eli Martinez*  
*Siblings: Cecilia, Deja and Peyton*



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

Mommy, Daddy, and little brother love and miss you so very much. Please watch over Evan and protect him like the wonderful big brother you are. You are always in our hearts.

*Erik Björn Murray*  
*Stillborn August 26, 2020*  
*Parents: Claire DeMar and Ty Murray*  
*Little brother: Evan*



## Happy 1<sup>st</sup> Birthday, Daniel Tiger!

Happy 1<sup>st</sup> birthday to our precious baby boy. You were given the nickname Daniel Tiger because your nurses saw your determination to live from the moment you took your first breath. DT, not one day goes by you are not in our thoughts. Although our hearts ache for you, we thank God for giving us four beautiful months with you. Mommy misses playing possum with you and brushing your hair. We know you're enjoying your time with Jesus. Please kiss Mama Mary, Papa Akwasi, Mom-Mom and Pop-Pop. We love you and long to see you again.

Love,  
 Mommy and Daddy

*Daniel Yankyera*  
*March 9 - July 20, 2020*  
*Pulmonary hypertension*  
*Parents: Pastor Michael and Mrs. Awn Yankyera*



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

Carter, we miss you so much. You brought so much joy and love into our home. You never gave up and had so much strength all the way. Thank you for blessing us with your love and your presence. Keep giving us strength and keep watching over the sick and healthy babies. Rest now, sweet child. You deserve it.

*Carter Louis Pitts*  
*April 13 - July 9, 2020*  
*Unknown cause*  
*Parents: Chris and Abbey Pitts*  
*Big brother: Braxtyn*



## Happy 10<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Aubree!

My precious girl, how are you already 10 years old?! A whole decade since I last held you in my arms and kissed your sweet lips. I know you are living the dream with Jesus and our family. I just miss you so much. I constantly think about you and wonder who you would be today. What kind of music would you like? What would your favorite color be? Would you always want to hang out with your big brother and sister or would you be a momma's girl? My sweet Aubree, I love you to heaven and back! Until we meet again, my sweets.

*Aubree Faith Carmichall*  
*August 18, 2011*  
*Uterine rupture*  
*Mommy: Kelly Carmichall*  
*Siblings: Ryan and Breean*



## Happy 11<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Caelan!

We love and miss you so much. The memories we have of our time together are very special. We think about you often and can't wait until the day we can hold you again in heaven. You are so precious to us and are dearly loved.

*Caelan Matthew Wallace*  
*July 30 - August 3, 2010*  
*Pre-term birth*  
*Also remembering*  
*Oakley Jaden Wallace*  
*Miscarried February 2016*  
*Olivia Hope Wallace*  
*Miscarried September 30, 2016*  
*Lincoln Avritt Wallace*  
*Miscarried May 11, 2018*  
*Parents: Andy and Dana Wallace*  
*Sister: Finlea*



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

My baby, my boy was taken from me far too soon. I still remember that night. It will haunt me. But the love for my son will carry me through all of that. The smallest nose and feet, but the biggest heart to give. I will see you one day in heaven, my beautiful little angel. Momma loves you. Forever and always, whichever one is longer.

My heart goes out to every other mother. You are in my prayers, and you are not alone. Never forget.

*Samual James Eddington*  
*Miscarried August 2, 2019*  
*Mommy: Shelbe Eddington*



### Happy 16<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Ryland!

It is hard to believe so many years have gone by, but you are always loved and remembered.

Until we see you again...

Love,

Mommy, Daddy, Sissy and Buddy

*Ryland Michael Dixon*  
*Stillborn August 12, 2005*  
*Parents: Bryan and Kelly Dixon*  
*Siblings: Leighanne and Conor*



### Happy 8<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Eleanor Jolene!

Happy 8<sup>th</sup> birthday, precious girl. We miss you so very much. I wish you were here every day. I wish I could see how your beautiful red-brown hair would blow in the wind playing outside in the bright sunshine. You are so very loved and missed. Until heaven, baby girl.

*Eleanor Jolene Reed*  
*August 1, 2013*  
*Premature birth*  
*Parents: Chasty Nacole and William Reed*  
*Siblings: Julie, Jonah and Chloe*



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

Happy 5<sup>th</sup> birthday, Connor! We love and miss you every day. We wonder who you would be. Have a wonderful birthday in heaven.

Until we meet again,

Mommy, Daddy, Kelsey and Cooper

*Connor Nathaniel Cash*  
*August 31, 2016*  
*Cord Anomaly*  
*Parents: Jenna and Dustin Cash*  
*Siblings: Kelsey and Cooper*



### Happy 17<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Jordyn!

We celebrate you and thank God for letting you be part of our lives. Jordyn, you are always in our thoughts and truly missed. Your loss has taught us how to be one strong united family. Throughout life's journeys we know that you are always there watching over us. Sending balloons up in your honor, happy heavenly birthday to our precious angel.

Forever always in our hearts,  
 Mommy, Daddy, Jada and Bruce Jr.

*Jordyn Lynae Johnson*  
*July 13-16, 2004*  
*Cord accident*  
*Parents: Bruce and Debra Johnson*  
*Siblings: Jada and Bruce Jr*



### Happy 9<sup>th</sup> Birthday, Catherine!

Happy 9<sup>th</sup> birthday, sweetheart. We miss you beyond the ends of the earth. Your little brother talks about you all the time, and this year has really started to understand you're in heaven. Watching him not having his sister here is heart-wrenching. Being your mother is one of my greatest joys, no matter how far away you are. I'm forever grateful you made me a mom. All my love forever, sweet girl. Until we meet again.

*Catherine Grace Wilkerson*  
*August 10-12, 2012*  
*Extreme Prematurity due to H.E.L.L.P syndrome*  
*Also remembering*  
*Baby Wilkerson #3*  
*Miscarried August 2019*  
*Parents: Kara and Charlie Wilkerson*  
*Little brother: Cannon*



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

Happy 7<sup>th</sup> birthday to our beautiful angel! Not a day goes by we don't think about you. We know you're celebrating in heaven, and we will continue to celebrate you here on earth until we see you again. We love you, and we miss you more than words can say! Forever in our hearts!

Love,  
 Daddy, Mommy and Bubba

*Trinity Ann Faram*  
*August 1, 2014*  
*Placenta abruption*  
*Parents: Bradley and Elizabeth Faram*  
*Brother: Brentley*



# M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K



This year, 2021, marks the 4<sup>th</sup> year for our M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K. When this first began, many had never heard of a virtual 5K. In 2020, when we found ourselves physically separated from those who understood and comforted us best, the virtual 5k allowed us to share our stories and remember our babies on social media platforms, connecting us to more families virtually who experienced similar situations.

In 2021, many of us gathered with our chapters, as small groups, or on our own to participate in memory of our babies. We had 473 registered participants from 38 different states, furthest state being Hawaii, plus hundreds more who joined us on our 5K without registering. Best of all, sharing stories continued on social platforms. I poured over pictures and stories shared using #MENDINGMilesVirtual5k, such as the one shared below. Thank you to all who participated in our event, not only supporting M.E.N.D., but in remembering our babies. I hope you enjoy some of the pictures throughout the rest of the magazine from those who participated in the 4<sup>th</sup> Annual M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K.

*Jennifer Harrison, M.E.N.D. Magazine Editor*

On this day two years ago, we heard Isaiah's heart beat for the last time.

We didn't know it at the time, of course. While we knew his days were numbered, we continued to hope and pray for more time. That day, when we went in for our weekly vitals check, we got just that – a little more time. His heart was still beating; and for a moment, I felt like I could breathe again.

What Chad and I didn't know when we left the doctor's office that day was that very soon, we would be joining a new group. It's a group I never in a million years would have chosen for us to be part of. And yet, we will be for the rest of our lives. Because just eight days later, when we had to say goodbye to our son, we began the journey of parenting a child in Heaven.

I'll be honest, when I first became a loss parent, I didn't think I could do it. The simplest of tasks, like getting out of bed or going to the store, seemed insurmountable most days. I couldn't imagine a day without tears and the ever-present aching feeling in my heart. And yet, by the grace of God, the support of family and friends, and a newfound community of other parents walking a similar road, the days began to get easier. And now, two years later, I can honestly say that it does get better. Certainly the grief is always there, and I have been inexplicably changed in ways that I never would have expected. But, I have also found that there is a way to move forward; to experience the joy and fullness of life in the midst of deep loss. I have found rest in the knowledge that my child is in a place where there is no pain or sadness or loss. There is peace in knowing that Isaiah has never known anything but the perfect presence of God. This is what has gotten me through the hardest of days, and I know it's what will carry me through in the future.

One of the support groups I am part of is called *Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death* (M.E.N.D.). I find the name so fitting because baby loss so often feels like a constant test of your endurance. Birthdays, anniversaries, holidays, and random days that end in "y" can just be plain hard, and I sometimes find myself wishing that the journey were easier. But, it's the one I'm meant to be on. And just like running a race, you find a way to push through, even when it's tiring. Even when it's painful.

Today, I laced up my shoes and did what I have done so many times before. I ran a 5k. But, this one was different. It wasn't about time or splits or competition. It was about honoring our son and our daughter and the lives of all of the other sweet babies in Heaven. It was about reflecting on the things I've learned over the past two years. It was about taking steps for those who never did.

This one was for you, Isaiah Jude. I can't think of any better way to begin your (almost) birthday week than this.

Written by Sarah Kraklio  
Mommy to Isaiah



### Grandmother's Perspective" continued from page 3.

grandmother, but also seeing my Rebekah and Byron hurting. I was grieving for them, and Byron Jr., and my entire family as we were all hurting and grieving.

As time went on, I watched Rebekah begin to recover physically, but saw her continue hurting emotionally. And hurting with the desire to have more children.

Six years later and after a kidney transplant, she did become pregnant again. I remember Rebekah finding me at the beauty shop and coming in with a package from the boutique next door. As I opened the bag, there was a pillow that said, "Love blooms in a Grandmother." This was her third pregnancy, and I was excited. We rejoiced in her pregnancy, and I prayed it would be okay. But then I received the call a few weeks later, "Mom, there is no heartbeat."

My world was upside down... my child... another disappointment for her...the hurt and pain of it. It's a pain you truly feel; you feel it for your child. It hurts so bad because you want everything good for your child. She wanted so badly to have more children. It was a very hurtful time. I hurt as a mother. I hurt as a grandmother. I hurt for my daughter.

My struggle in her losses was to do the right thing by her and figure out how to be a mother to help her, and how to be strong for them. One way I was helpful was after Jonathan died, I went to the funeral home while she was in the hospital to help make funeral arrangements. But there were other things I tried, thinking it would be helpful and good for her, like re-doing Byron, Jr.'s little bedroom, that turned out not to be good. In grief, it was just learning what to do, trying to get through my own grief, but also trying to understand my daughter's grief.

I lost 2 babies myself through miscarriage. I grieved my miscarriages, but I had many babies afterward, and Rebekah could not. Loss is a family affair. During this time, her siblings were also having more babies, and I knew that was hard for Rebekah. It hurt me to see her hurting.

It is very special to me that Jonathan is not only buried right next to my mom and dad, but also with my sister, Ruby Joyce who died as an infant and whose death led my mom to the Lord and into full-time ministry. Like in my sister's death, God has made something beautiful through Jonathan's death, and He has used him and Rebekah in so many ways, reaching out to others in similar situations. I thank God Rebekah was able to start M.E.N.D., a beautiful ministry that reaches and provides comfort to thousands of others.

My little Jonathan Daniel is very precious to me. I always count all my grandchildren - 16 total. That count includes Jonathan and Baby Mitchell. I talk about them just as any of my grandchildren. Life is precious; every pregnancy is a miracle.

My advice to other grandparents would be to share your grief with your children. Talk about the baby; keep the baby alive and recognize it as your grandchild. Celebrate the life of that baby, no matter what stage of life it was in. Be sensitive to your children as they grieve the loss of the baby. Let them know you are grieving too, but keep the focus on them. Share the tears of joy; share the tears of grief. Let them express themselves, even if it is silence. Let them know you will always love that baby and are hurting along with them, but your main concern is for them.

Jonathan changed all of us as a family. Even after so many years, we still talk about him often. As a loss grandparent, I understand the biggest gift I can give to my daughter is to let her know his memory is still very much alive in us, and he will never be forgotten.



#MENDINGMilesVirtual5k

# Losing a Child From a Grandparent's Perspective

*Written by Julie Gallagher-Gough*

*Grandmommy to Baby Jackson Talkington and Olivia Abigail Gallagher*

Losing a child from anyone’s perspective is hard. Life is such a gift that I think we all take for granted until we come face to face with losing a child, a baby, a cherished soul. We are all so excited when we receive the news of a new child, and are ready to celebrate with showers and gifts, but what happens when our expectations turn to loss? Heartache and maybe even anger?

I know what it’s like to want a child so bad that all we can think about is having a baby. When I first got married many years ago, I was that person. Unfortunately, my first pregnancy ended in a miscarriage, and it was nine years before I conceived again. I was jealous of all my friends who seemed to be able to get pregnant so easily. Why was it so hard for me? And I was angry about those who didn’t want their babies and abandoned or abused them, and the news seemed to be filled with such stories.

But this experience didn’t deter me, and I had 3 children: one stepdaughter, one adopted child and one biological child. All three are precious in my sight and loved equally. So, when I watched my own children lose a baby, I felt the pain for them and their loss, and for me who lost two precious grandchildren.

My children and I recently lost their father and were still struggling with his death when my daughter became pregnant. The joy of this pregnancy gave us something to concentrate on and enjoy. When she learned it was a boy, she named him after her father. What a beautiful tribute.

However, something went wrong. She was admitted into the hospital, and at 25 weeks, went into labor and gave birth to a stillborn baby boy. It seemed unbearable in those moments, holding this beautiful baby boy, longing for him to know the depth of love we had for him, to see him play and watch him grow up to be the person God designed him to be. This was so difficult trying to be there for my daughter and give her the support she needed.

Then, a little over ten years later, we were experiencing this all over again with my daughter-in-

law and son. They, too, were so excited to learn they were pregnant, and later learned they were expecting a baby girl. The excitement and anticipation were almost too much to bear as we were finally getting a little girl after so many boys in our family.

Yet this time, she was 20 weeks along, and just as it had been with my daughter, she gave birth to a beautiful little baby girl who would never take her first breath. She, too, would never get to see and experience the love that was waiting for her from a family that was so looking forward to this beautiful little girl.

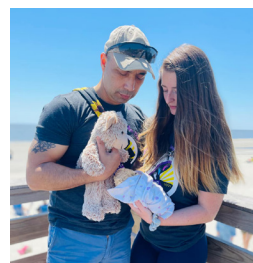
My daughter-in-law and my daughter both handled their grief very differently, and to this day it is so hard to know how to love and support them with their loss and ours. I believe that both precious babies are in heaven and looking down on their earthly brother and sister and cheering them on. I think they are there to comfort them when they feel sad, scared or lonely.

Recently I was on a Zoom call with five people, one of whom had just lost her first baby and was struggling just as my two daughters had. As each one of us tried to console her, we all shared how each one of us had experienced a loss of our own, either through a miscarriage or through losing a baby before full-term. As I listened to each person’s story and thought of my two children who had also recently experienced such a loss, I was reminded how much life is a gift. There are so many babies who do not make it to this world. Each life is a constant reminder of God’s love and how each one is His masterpiece. (Ephesians 2:10)

My daughter did have another baby and he is now about to be 12, and my daughter-in-law had a beautiful baby girl who is about to be 3. Both grandchildren are so special to me, and maybe it’s because of the loss we experienced with their big brother and sister. The amount of love we have for our grandchildren is too big for words.



Mallory Gallagher, Mommy to Olivia





## Our Grief Journey

*Written by Patricia Stockford*

*Grandmother to Brayden*

My husband passed very suddenly in February of 2012. I didn't know how I was going to survive without him. As the months grew longer, I found myself in the stages of grief, at times overwhelmed by the loss.

When my daughter told me she was pregnant, I immediately had something to look forward to. I pictured myself as the doting grandmother. I became as excited as my daughter about her pregnancy. I was even planning a trip from Maine to Missouri to help her after the birth. I pictured myself loving this "little one," reading to him, taking walks with him, playing with him, and just enjoying his presence! God had certainly answered my prayers, and I knew I would be okay now.

Then that December morning came when I received a phone call from my daughter saying her water broke, and she was in labor. I thought to myself, "No, it is way too early. The baby was not due until April."

I started praying and worrying, and being more than 1,400 miles away was not helping. I thought, "How could God take my husband and now my grandson?" Certainly this was not happening! I wanted to take the next plane to Missouri, but due to Christmas and New Year's, there were no flights available. I was also supposed to leave for Florida in two days, driving down with a friend and returning to where my husband had died!

## Baby K

*Written by Grandma J Jane Lucas*

*Grandmother to Baby Ethan Kozar*

We were so excited to be first-time grandparents (like all first-time grandparents I'm sure). We had set such high expectations for this little baby. He was going to change our world, and, boy, he sure did.

The phone rang at about 4:30 AM (which is never a good thing). It was the police telling my husband that our darling 4-day old grandchild was gone! I couldn't believe this, so in a panic, I called my daughter. The pain and grief in her voice cut so deeply, I just wanted to hold her and tell her everything was going to be okay. But it wasn't, and I knew it!

For me the loss of my grandson (whom I never got to meet or hold due to COVID restrictions) was two-fold: the

loss of my daughter as I knew her and the loss of our beautiful grandson along with all the dreams we had for him. This would forever change our family.

A grandparent's grief is very real, but it is so hard for us to grieve when our own children are in such pain. We try so hard to be strong, even trying to hide our own pain as we try to be supportive, but we also need to grieve.

I am so grateful our daughter and son-in-law began counseling and joined M.E.N.D. I believe this was what they needed. They needed to know they were not alone in dealing with this terrible tragic loss. I truly wish grandparents had a group like M.E.N.D. to help them deal with the loss as well. I still think about all the plans I had for Baby K and tears still come, but I know I am not alone in my journey either. My Baby K lives in my heart until we meet in heaven. Thank you M.E.N.D. for helping my family and many others!

We lost sweet Brayden that very evening, and I was crushed. I knew I needed to be strong for my daughter. No words were of comfort to either of us. Our journey of grief began again; only this time I was a bit more prepared for the waves of grief that I would experience.

Since those nine years have passed, tragedy brought me to move from Maine to Missouri. God had a plan for me, and I know that plan was the right one. Having lived in Missouri for almost six years, Heather was able to find M.E.N.D., and I was able to connect with an organization called "Lost and Found" which supports families with losses.

Although there are times when grief comes flooding back, my daughter and I each have been able to move forward in our grief journey and even help others through M.E.N.D. and Lost and Found. When waves of sadness come over me, I picture Brayden with his Grandfather learning all kinds of things together. I am now a bonus Grandmother to many little ones and even a Great-grandmother to one! I am not saying I am completely healed, but the hole in my heart doesn't seem as deep. My heart is full again, and sweet Brayden will always have a part of it!



#MENDINGMilesVirtual5k



# When a Baby is Stillborn, Grandparents Are Hit With "Two Lots of Grief." Here's How We Can Help

Written by Jane Lockton, PhD Candidate (Psychology, Health), University of Adelaide  
 Clemence Due, Senior Lecturer in the School of Psychology, University of Adelaide  
 Melissa Oxlad, Lecturer in the School of Psychology, University of Adelaide  
 Posted August 28, 2019, on The Conversation

**S**ix babies are stillborn every day in Australia. This significant loss affects parents for years to come, often the rest of their lives. However, stillbirth also affects many others, including grandparents.

But until now, we have not heard the experiences of grandparents whose grandchildren are stillborn. Their grief was rarely acknowledged and there are few supports tailored to them.

Our recently published research is the first in the world to specifically look at grandmothers' experience of stillbirth and the support they need.

In Australia, a baby is defined as stillborn when it dies in the womb from 20 weeks' gestation, or weighs more than 400 grams. Other countries have slightly different definitions.

About 2,200 babies are stillborn each year here meaning stillbirth may be more common than many people think. And people don't tend to talk about this openly despite it leading to significant grief.

To explore grandparents' experience of stillbirth, we interviewed 14 grandmothers for our initial study, and a further 23 grandmothers and grandfathers since then.

Many grandparents were not aware stillbirth was a risk today. Most felt unprepared. Like parents, grandparents experienced grief like no other after their grandchild was stillborn.

Rose said:

*The grief is always there,  
 it never leaves you [...] I don't know why  
 but sometimes it is still very raw.*

Sally said:

*I [would do] anything in my power to take it away, even if it meant, you know, something dreadful happening to me, I would have done it.*

Grandparents also spoke of anticipating the arrival of their grandchild, and disbelief at their loss.

Donna said:

*It was as bad as it could be and [...] I thought it just couldn't be real, it couldn't be real.*

Where grandparents lived a long way from their child, the loss was even more profound. Distance prevented them from holding their grandchild after birth, attending memorials, or helping their own children.

Iris said:

*I still miss her now [...] When she was born and they had her in the hospital, they would text me and say, "You know she's got hair like her daddy" [...] and they would describe her and how beautiful she was, and that's all they have, you know [...] that's all I have really.*

Grandparents said they wanted to hide their grief to protect their child from pain. This often made them isolated. Their relationships with family members often changed.

Mary said:

*It's like two lots of grief [...] but I don't want it to sound like it's as bad as my daughter's loss. It's different, it's a different grief, because you're grieving the loss of a grandchild, and you're also grieving for your daughter and her loss and it's like yeah you've been kicked in the guts twice instead of once.*

## What Grandparents Wanted

# A Grandmother's Perspective

*Written by Marnie Mitchell*

*Grandmother to Jonathan and Baby Mitchell*

June 24, 1995, began as a beautiful summer day in the Dallas, TX metroplex. My husband, Lyle, and I had just arrived from Kansas City, Missouri, to help care for our little grandson, Byron Jr., as we anticipated the birth of our precious grandson, Jonathan.

Around noon, this beautiful day turned into a day of disbelief, sorrow and anguish. Rebekah, our beautiful daughter-in-law, was in the hospital on bed rest. On a routine visit, the medical team became alarmed when they could not detect a fetal heartbeat. By late that evening, baby Jonathan was delivered by an emergency C-section, stillborn.

Words cannot describe our profound grief. Our family gathered at the hospital along with our wonderful pastor and his wife. We all prayed and struggled to grasp and understand this loss and God's plan for our lives.

There seemed to be more questions than answers.

What about our many prayers? How do we sustain our faith? Why did this happen to us and our extended family who love and serve God? Where do we go from here?

As we reflected on God's Word, we remembered that we are not to lean on our own understanding. Our faith in God was not based on events or circumstances in our lives. God was our hope and refuge in times of trouble. God is good all the time and we could trust Him.

In the process of our healing, we depended on God's love, mercy and grace. We trusted His plan for our lives. It was a long process of despair, overwhelming loneliness and many tears.

Even with wonderful notes or words of encouragement, ongoing prayers and support of family and friends, the emotional toll was indescribable for all of us, but especially for the parents, Byron Sr., Rebekah and sibling Byron Jr. Their faith in God, His daily strength and abiding love gave them the courage to a path of healing and peace.

None of us will ever forget or be the same. Every day we remember. We think of the many milestones of Jonathan's life that we will not have the privilege to celebrate. We still grieve, but not like those who have no Hope. Our Hope is in the Lord, and we know that we will have a blessed reunion with Jonathan in heaven.

Out of this devastating loss, the Lord brought "Beauty for Ashes." The wonderful ministry of M.E.N.D. was founded. God gave Rebekah Mitchell a great way of reaching out to others who are bereaved and experiencing this same loss. We are grateful to the Lord for Rebekah's compassion, wisdom, vision, talents, abilities and willingness to share with others.

M.E.N.D.'s Biblical principle is based on 2 Corinthians 1:4, "May the God of all comfort, comfort us in all our troubles, so that we can comfort those in any trouble with the comfort we ourselves receive from God."



## Wyatt James Goforth

*Written by Dale F. Lippert, Sr.*

*Grandfather to Wyatt*

It is my honor to give a grandparent perspective regarding the loss of my grandson, Wyatt James Goforth. When we were informed that our little grandson would not make it in this world, it brought

great sadness to me and my wife, Lolie. My heart ached on behalf of my granddaughter, Emerson Lippert-Goforth, Wyatt's sister and my daughter, Nichol Goforth, and son-in-law, Monty Goforth. As a parent, you like to take away the pain for your family, and this time, I could not. I felt helpless. It is with GOD'S LOVE and GRACE that we were able to get through this incredible pain. Wyatt, Lolie and POP POP love you so much. We miss you!



## La Perspectiva de Una Abuela



En lugar de nuestro artículo habitual de nuestra presidenta y fundadora, Rebekah Mitchell, tuve la oportunidad de entrevistar a su madre, Sue Brewer, abuela de Jonathan y Baby Mitchell. Las palabras no pudieron capturar el amor y el dolor que pude escuchar a través de las lágrimas en su voz cuando volvió a contar la historia como madre de Rebekah y abuela de estos niños con los que se reunirá en el cielo. Durante el transcurso de la entrevista, ella continuaría diciéndome "... pero no se trata de mí" mientras compartía su parte en estas vidas. En lugar de compartir esto como una entrevista normal, escribí esto como su historia en las vidas de Baby Jonathan y Baby Mitchell.

Mi corazón está tan lleno. Tan lleno de recuerdos ... recuerdos maravillosos. Es tan fresco para mí hoy como el día en que Jonathan nació sin vida. Vi todo desde muchas perspectivas, como madre de Rebekah, como abuela de Jonathan y de Byron Jr., que tenía 3 años en ese momento, y madre del resto de nuestra familia.

Rebekah es mi pequeña héroe, mi milagro. Ella es la menor de mis cinco hijas y un hijo, nacida 19 minutos después de su hermana gemela Rachael. Ella fue nuestro milagro en el sentido de que tuvieron que hacer una cirugía solo para sacarla de mi útero, y luego tuvimos que ayudarla a prosperar después de no estar cargada durante 13 días después del nacimiento. Luego, 20 años después de recién casarse, le diagnosticaron una enfermedad renal. Fue un despertar y una angustia para nosotros, pero con el Señor y su valentía, ella pasó por eso maravillosamente y todavía lo es.

Con cada embarazo, existía el riesgo de dañar sus riñones. Cuando estaba embarazada de Byron, Jr., ella y Byron se mudaron con nosotros mientras estaba en reposo en cama hasta que llegó el momento de dar a luz, que llegó a los 9 meses completos. Con Jonathan, tres años después, nos enfrentamos a circunstancias similares, pero teníamos la fe para creer que todo saldría bien como lo hizo con Byron Jr. Estábamos tan felices y fue maravilloso verla ponerse su linda ropa de maternidad nuevamente. Aproximadamente a la mitad de su embarazo, ella y su familia se quedaron en nuestra casa nuevamente cuando la pusieron en reposo en cama, para que pudiéramos ayudar a cuidarla a ella y al pequeño Byron.

Unas semanas más tarde, fue ingresada en el hospital debido a la presión arterial alta y para controlar su función renal. Traté de ir al hospital todos los días, excepto que no estuve allí una tarde, y fue entonces cuando recibí la llamada. No recuerdo los detalles de la llamada, solo que no pudieron encontrar un latido de corazón y necesitaba ir al hospital rápidamente.

Cuando llegué al hospital, los médicos me recibieron en el ascensor para contarme lo que estaba pasando. Nos reunimos como familia y comenzamos a orar antes de su cesárea. Después de que Jonathan dio a luz y Rebekah y Byron pasaron un tiempo

solos con él, nunca olvidaré ver a Byron caminar por el pasillo hacia donde estábamos, cargando a su pequeño bebé sin vida. ¡Fue tan emotivo! Ni siquiera supe qué decir. Recuerdo haber preguntado por Jonathan, tratando de entender. Quería ser fuerte para mi hija y Byron, aunque quería derrumbarme.

Como abuela y como madre, estás lastimada. Adoro a todos mis nietos, y en ese momento, no podía creer que estaba perdiendo a uno de ellos. Estaba viendo sufrir a mi hija y el dolor de ella y Byron. Lamentaba por ellos. Lamenté por Byron Jr., a quien le encantaba hablar y jugar con su hermano pequeño a través de la barriga de su mamá, iba a tener que decirle que Jonathan estaba ahora con Jesús. Sentí todo eso. Como madre, quieres cuidar a tus hijos. Todo lo que podía pensar era en Rebekah y Byron, y yo misma dolía mucho.

Rebekah pudo mantener a Jonathan en su habitación del hospital durante unos días, lo cual era nuevo para las enfermeras en ese momento. Recién salidos del útero pudimos unirnos a él y amarlo. Yo hubiera sido uno de los cuidadores de él después de que naciera, empacando mi bolso "Mary Poppins" y yendo a cuidarlo. Si bien no pude hacerlo en casa, pude pasar este tiempo con él en el hospital, de abuela a nieto, haciendo algunas de las cosas que deseaba hacer como "Gaga". No cambiaría nada por el maravilloso regalo del tiempo que Dios nos dio.

Aquellos días fueron muy emotivos. Pensé "Señor, ¿por qué es esto? Algo grandioso tiene que salir de esto ". Se me rompía el corazón, no solo por mí misma como abuela, sino también por ver a Rebekah y Byron sufrir. Estaba llorando por ellos, Byron Jr. y toda mi familia, ya que todos estábamos sufriendo y afligidos.

A medida que pasaba el tiempo, vi a Rebekah comenzar a recuperarse físicamente, pero seguía sufriendo emocionalmente. Y sufriendo con las ganas de tener más hijos.

Seis años después y tras un trasplante de riñón, volvió a quedar embarazada. Recuerdo que Rebekah me encontró en el salón de belleza y entró con un paquete de la boutique de al lado. Cuando abrí la bolsa, había una almohada que decía "El amor florece en una abuela". Este era su tercer embarazo y estaba emocionada. Nos regocijamos por su embarazo y recé para que todo estuviera bien. Pero luego recibí la

llamada unas semanas después, "Mamá, no hay latidos de corazón".

Mi mundo estaba al revés ... mi niña ... otra decepción para ella ... el dolor de eso. Es un dolor que realmente sientes; lo sientes por tu hijo/a. Duele tanto porque quieres todo lo bueno para tu hijo/a. Ella tenía tantas ganas de tener más hijos. Fue una época muy dolorosa. Me duele como madre. Me duele como abuela. Me duele por mi hija.

Mi lucha en sus pérdidas fue hacer lo correcto por ella y cómo ser una madre para ayudarla, y cómo ser fuerte para ellos. Una de las formas en que fui de ayuda fue después de la muerte de Jonathan, fui a la funeraria mientras ella estaba en el hospital para ayudar a hacer los arreglos del funeral. Pero había otras cosas que intenté pensar que serían útiles y buenas para ella, como volver a hacer el pequeño dormitorio de Byron, Jr., que resultó no ser bueno. En el dolor, solo estaba aprendiendo qué hacer, tratando de superar mi propio dolor, pero también tratando de comprender el dolor de mi hija.

Yo misma perdí 2 bebés por malpartos espontáneos. Lamenté mis pérdidas, pero después tuve muchos bebés y Rebekah no pudo. La pérdida es un asunto de familia. Durante este tiempo, sus hermanas también estaban teniendo más bebés y yo sabía que eso era difícil para Rebekah. Quieres todo lo bueno para tus hijos, así que me dolió verla sufrir.

Es muy especial para mí que Jonathan no solo esté enterrado junto a mi mamá y mi papá, sino también con mi hermana, Ruby Joyce, quien murió cuando

era niña y cuya muerte guió a mi mamá al Señor y al ministerio de tiempo completo. Al igual que en la muerte de mi hermana, Dios ha hecho algo hermoso a través de la muerte de Jonathan, y lo ha usado a él y a Rebekah de muchas maneras, ayudando a otros en situaciones similares. Doy gracias a Dios que Rebekah pudo comenzar M.E.N.D., un hermoso ministerio que alcanza y brinda consuelo a miles de personas.

Mi pequeño Jonathan Daniel es muy valioso para mí. Siempre cuento a todos mis nietos, 16 en total. Ese recuento incluye a Jonathan y Baby Mitchell. Hablo de ellos como cualquiera de mis nietos. La vida es preciosa; cada embarazo es un milagro.

Mi consejo para otros abuelos sería que compartan su dolor con sus hijos. Hablar del bebé; Mantenga vivo al bebé y reconócelo como su nieto. Celebre la vida de ese bebé, sin importar en qué etapa de la vida se encuentre. Sea sensible con sus hijos mientras lamentan la pérdida del bebé. Hágales saber que usted también está sufriendo, pero concéntrese en ellos. Comparte las lágrimas de alegría; comparte las lágrimas de dolor. Que se expresen, aunque sea en silencio. Hágales saber que siempre amará a ese bebé y que está sufriendo junto con ellos, pero su principal preocupación es por ellos.

Jonathan nos cambió a todos como familia. Incluso después de tantos años, seguimos hablando de él frecuentemente. Como abuela que siente el dolor de la pérdida, entiendo que el mayor regalo que puedo darle a mi hija es hacerle saber que su memoria aún está muy viva en nosotros y que él nunca será olvidado.



# In Loving Memory

## Thank YOU for your support

### **Prince Adii II Anyangwe**

October 11, 2019  
Premature  
Given by mommy Ngwisang Anyangwe

### **Levi Samuel Bowmer**

April 19, 2013  
Trisomy 13 and Tetralogy of fallot with absent pulmonary valve  
Parents: Jенаe and Sam Bowmer  
Little sisters: Evie and Val  
Given by Karan Young

### **Oliver Brueck**

March 10, 2016  
Parents: Aaron and Lauren Brueck  
Given by Patricia Mallozzi

### **Madeline Rose Clarkson**

April 6, 2020  
Given by parents  
Christine and William Clarkson

### **Baby Brother Conti**

Stillborn June 5, 2020  
Given by parents Kendra and Chris Conti and big brother James

### **Jackson David Crowe**

August 22 – September 9, 1998  
Congenital heart defect / heart failure  
Parents: Marie and David Crowe  
Siblings: Hannah and Andrew  
Given by Gail and Rick Bohdan

### **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  
Premature  
Given by parents Rob and Cheryl Davis and siblings Annalise and Owen

### **Paislee Ann Frette**

April 4-5, 2012  
Wolf-Hirschhorn Syndrome  
Parents: Brent and Courtney Frette  
Little sister: Colbie  
Gifts given by  
Grandparents James and LuAnn Junkin  
Anonymous

### **Charlotte Heidi-Grace Fuller**

February 18 - March 15, 2020  
Parents: Seth and Rebekah Fuller  
Gift given anonymously

### **Greer Babies**

Given by mommy Kate Greer

### **Serenity Harrison**

Miscarried December 3, 2009  
Given by parents Curt and Jennifer Harrison and siblings Levi, Ziva and Evie

### **Holly Hughes**

Given by Gabrielle Conant

### **Ethan Alexander Kozar**

March 29 – April 2, 2020  
SIDS  
Parents: Katelynn and Ryan Kozar  
Given by grandparents Jane and Dan Lucas

### **Otto Foster Langley**

February 12, 2021  
Pre-term labor  
Gifts given by  
Parents Megan and Jordan Langley  
Aunt Valerie Wenzel and family  
Krystal Langley  
Barbara Wooten

### **Barron Lehr**

December 29, 2019  
Premature rupture of membranes  
Given by parents Morgan and Travis Lehr and brother Bennett

### **Jackson and Tyler Light**

February 23, 2009  
Premature  
Given by parents Diana and Kirk Light and siblings Brayden and Lexi

### **Kenney Elaine Lloyd**

Given by Kristi Jumper

### **Chase Austin Miller**

April 21, 2011  
Incompetent cervix  
**Baby "Blueberry" Miller**  
Miscarried May 4, 2015  
Given by parents Greg and Stefanie Miller and sisters Cora, Hazel and Violet

### **Gideon Zeller Mitchell**

May 17, 2011  
Velamentous Cord Insertion

### **Avery Mitchell**

Miscarried May 2008  
Unknown cause

### **Joy Mitchell**

December 2014  
Vanishing Twin Syndrome  
Given by parents Todd and Stormy Mitchell and brothers Silas and Justus

### **Jonathan Daniel Mitchell**

Stillborn June 24, 1995

Cord accident

### **Baby Mitchell**

Miscarried December 2001  
Given by parents Byron and Rebekah Mitchell

### **Lily Joy Moore**

March 2, 2011  
Early pregnancy loss  
Parents: Jeremy and Kathleen Moore  
Siblings: Isaac, Judah, Mercy and Glory Ruth  
Given by grandma Marsha Neely

### **Baby Nafziger**

Given by Stacy Winters

### **Margot Lily Perry**

Stillborn June 10, 2013  
Cord accident  
Parents: Marisa and Brandon Perry  
Gifts given by grandmother Marie Perry  
Grandparents Mary and Norman Lorentz

### **Airk Phelps**

Given by Evelyn Highlander

### **Douglas James Poirier**

February 8, 1986 – April 3, 2010  
Given by grandparents Georgia and Dick Loy

Thank you to those who recently held a Facebook fundraising campaign or donated to M.E.N.D. through one of these. We are so thankful for our family and friends who show love and support during activities like these or other areas such as sharing about M.E.N.D., assisting at events, or simply and most importantly, praying for us.

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 magazine and other services to bereaved parents free of charge. For more information on how you can support M.E.N.D., please see the "About M.E.N.D." section in the back of this magazine.

**Eyersalem Ruth**

Gift given anonymously

**Ella and Emory Scott**

Given by Jessica Rayhill

**Fintan Patrick Smith**

March 29, 2021

Parents: Samantha and Sean Smith

Given by Karol and Dave Liggett

**Cayden Raine Towery**

June 7, 2004 - January 25, 2019

Cardiac arrest

Parents: Shane and Castle Towery

Siblings: Payton and Brady

Given by

Uncle Todd and Aunt Stormy Mitchell and cousins Silas and Justus

**Gifts of Support:**

Second Baptist Church, Springfield, MO

Tammie Ates

David Davis

Peggy Labuhn

Lena Spotleson

April Jenkins

Kila Hilton

Matthew Patterson

Nichole Flowers

IV Organic

David Davis

Latricia Smith

## Book Review

Hope (Amidst the Stories I Told Myself)

Written by Candice Deleeuw

Reviewed by Danielle Radler,

Chapter Director of M.E.N.D.—East Valley Arizona

Hope (Amidst the Stories I Told Myself) by Candice Deleeuw is a great book that I highly recommend. Candice stripped down her walls and was completely vulnerable, which let me connect with her more than I expected. There were thoughts that I have had over the years, and Candice helped me validate my grief and emotions I didn't realize were still lingering. Her connections with different scriptures were helpful to me, as I am a planner, just as is she. I feel even more confident in my purpose after reading this book!

## "When a Baby is Stillborn..." continued from page 10.

Grandparents stressed the importance and ongoing value of being involved in "memory making" and spending time with their stillborn grandchild where possible.

Creating mementos, such as taking photos and making footprints and hand prints, were all important ways of expressing their grief. These mementos kept the baby "alive" in the family. They were also a way to ensure their own child knew the baby was loved and remembered.

Our research also identified better ways to support grandparents. Grandparents said that if they knew more about stillbirth, they would be more confident in knowing how to help support their children. And if people were more aware of grandparents' grief, and acknowledged their loss, this would make it easier for them to get support themselves, and reduce feelings of isolation.

Families can encourage grandparents to seek professional support if needed.

Our research also found families can recognize that grandparents grieve too, for both their child and grandchild. Grandparents can be encouraged to seek support from other family and friends. Families could also encourage grandparents to seek support from professionals if needed.

In hospitals, midwives can adopt some simple, time efficient strategies, with a big impact on grandparents. With parent consent, midwives could include grandparents in memory making activities.

By acknowledging the connection grandparents have to the baby, midwives can validate the grief that they experience. In recognizing the supportive role of grandparents, midwives can also provide early guidance about how best to support their child.

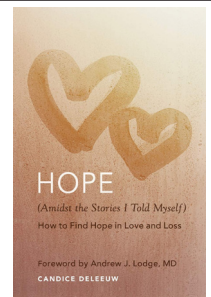
Hospitals can help by including grandparents in the education provided after stillbirth. This might include guidance about support for their child, or simply providing grandparents with written resources and guiding them to appropriate supports.

In time, development of peer support programs, where grandparents support others in similar situations, could help.

And, as a community, we can support grandparents the same way they support their own children. We can be there, listen and learn.

All grandparents' names in this article are pseudonyms.

Retrieved April 9, 2021 from <https://theconversation.com/when-a-baby-is-stillborn-grandparents-are-hit-with-two-lots-of-grief-heres-how-we-can-help-122313>



# M.E.N.D. CHAPTER UPDATES

## MidMichigan

More than 25 people participated in M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan's walk for our M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K. Thank you to everyone who supported our chapter locally and nationally. Our chapter is back to gathering in person the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of every month at 7:00 PM at Ashman Plaza. Please help us spread the word to those who have experienced infant loss in the TriCities area.



*Karen*

## Bryan/College Station, Texas

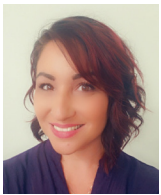
M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station had such a great turnout for our in-person gathering for the M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K! We had newly grieving moms and dads and "seasoned" loss moms and dads walking together in memory of their babies. This is turning into a new favorite tradition of mine. Thank you to EVERYONE who supported this event!



*Jennie*

## NW Washington

It has been great to be back in person for our monthly support group. We met two new loss moms, and while we are sad they needed us, we are glad we could see them and talk to them to offer support.



*Stacy*

We are so grateful for The Oak Table Café and the use of their restaurant for our support group. We are blessed with all they do for us. We look forward to seeing you on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday of the month, 6:30-8:30 PM.

## Men of M.E.N.D.

Men of M.E.N.D. holds a monthly Zoom support group every 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 8:00 PM CST. We continue to see many new dads join our Facebook group. It is great to see dads getting support they need.



*Matt*

## San Antonio, Texas

We are incredibly thankful for the growth of our chapter and are excited to resume in-person support groups. We are grateful for the blessings the Lord granted us and are praying His protective watch will be over M.E.N.D.–San Antonio as our county continues to lift mandates. We are also excited to have more types of support soon and entering the community to help spread M.E.N.D. to Bexar County.



*Katie*

We joined at Phil Hardberger park to participate in the M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K and enjoyed the wonderful weather and fellowship.

## Denver, Colorado

M.E.N.D.–Denver is looking forward to new outreach in area hospitals.

We will be changing support group locations so please connect with us on Facebook or watch your email for our new location.



*Kimberly*

## Chicagoland

M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland is thankful to begin gathering again in person on the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday of the month. While times look different than they used to, families in Chicago continue to lose babies, and we want to continue to offer the same care and support to them now and in the days to come. The M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K has helped us continue to do that. Thank you to all who have supported our chapter now and through the years.



*Sara*

## Nationwide Online Support

The Nationwide Online Support Group gathers on Zoom the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of each month. We also welcome you to connect through our Facebook group to support each other between support groups. Your online M.E.N.D. family is always here for you. Please complete the Online Group Info Sheet found on the M.E.N.D. website to receive the meeting link if you are new. Hope to see you there.



*LaRhesa*



### Columbus, Ohio

"...God has said, 'Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you.'" Hebrews 13:5 NIV

Our monthly support group continues to grow, as we meet virtually to share our journeys. We're praying for your comfort and strength. Please join our private Facebook group where you can share your story and be encouraged...You're NOT alone!

If you need M.E.N.D.-Columbus services, contact me at [latrina@mend.org](mailto:latrina@mend.org).



*LaTrina*

### Lynchburg, Virginia



M.E.N.D.-Lynchburg continues to spread awareness of our chapter and services in our community so we can provide support to hurting families in the area. We continue to gather in person for support group on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday of each month.

*Melissa*

### Palm Beach, Florida

M.E.N.D.-Palm Beach continues to meet online for the health and safety of the residents at Embark. We are currently looking for volunteers to help lead our local chapter. Please contact me at [Jessica@mend.org](mailto:Jessica@mend.org) for more information.



*Jessica*

### Tulsa, Oklahoma

M.E.N.D.-Tulsa continues to seek a new venue for our support groups. We are prayerfully optimistic the perfect space will be available soon.

We participated in the M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K throughout the week of Mother's Day and are so thankful family and friends throughout the country could participate in honor of our babies. As restrictions continue to lessen, we are beginning plans for an October Remembrance Event and our Christmas Candlelight Ceremony, as well as continue our monthly support groups in person. I invite you to follow us on our Facebook group for updates.



*Cat*

### East Valley, Arizona

M.E.N.D.-East Valley Arizona continues to meet in person and hope to organize a few small fundraisers in the near future, so keep an eye on our Facebook group!



*Danielle*

### Greater Houston Area

M.E.N.D.-Greater Houston Area is so blessed that two of our support groups are able to gather in person! The Woodlands and Katy locations are holding in-person support groups, so please check the website or our Facebook group for information on the new locations. Our Kingwood support group still gathers via Zoom, so for those who are still wanting to meet with Houston area moms, please join our Zoom support group on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 PM CST.



We loved seeing everyone's photos on social media from our M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K! Our chapter was able to gather and walk the 5K. It was so nice to be able to chat, remember our babies with each other and walk in their memory. We had about 30 people join us for our 5K. For those who walked at home with their family and friends or by themselves, we remember your babies with you as well. Always.

*Stormy*

### Southwest Missouri

Thank you so much to all who were able to participate in this year's M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K. After many days of rain, it stopped just in time for M.E.N.D.-Southwest Missouri to gather for our walk. Our time together was blessed, even with navigating around large puddles or simply jumping in them. It was such an honor to walk and remember each of our babies in heaven, and even enjoy a family picnic after. Thank you for helping to raise funds to reach local families with our services.



We would like to say a special "Thank you" to our Assistant Chapter Director, Brianne Mansfield, for the way she lovingly supports our families throughout the year, and specifically during the month of May. She coordinated our chapter's participation in the virtual 5K, from finding the location, scheduling the time and helping families at the event. Later, she spent countless hours (and pieces of chalk) remembering close to 240 of our babies from all over the states as she wrote each name on her "Mother's Day Sidewalk Memorial." She has helped many of us remember our babies during this sometimes difficult month.



*Rachel*

## About M.E.N.D.

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 support groups, this magazine, and our website at [www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org). For inquiries, subscription requests, deletions, and submissions to the magazine, contact us at:

M.E.N.D.  
P.O. Box 631566  
Irving, TX 75063  
Phone and Fax: (972) 506-9000  
(Please call before faxing)  
E-Mail: [rebekah@mend.org](mailto:rebekah@mend.org)  
[jennifer@mend.org](mailto:jennifer@mend.org)  
[www.mend.org](http://www.mend.org)

Donations make the printing and distribution of this magazine possible. Your tax-deductible contributions are greatly appreciated and should be sent to the address listed above. If your gift is made in memory of a baby, please include that baby's name (if named), date of birth and/or date of death, the parents' names, and the name of the benefactor. You may also include the cause of death (if known).

M.E.N.D. is a member of  
First Candle/SIDS Alliance  
International Stillbirth Alliance  
Pregnancy Loss and Infant Death Alliance



## M.E.N.D. Leadership

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### Magazine Volunteers

Rachel Dell, Sara Elliott  
and Becky Johnston

## New Support Group Location!

### M.E.N.D. Support Groups in the Dallas/Fort Worth Metroplex

Mommies AND Daddies are welcome at all M.E.N.D. support groups.

Unless otherwise noted, all support groups are held at:

**Irving Archives Museum, 801 W Irving Blvd, Irving, TX 75060.**

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

M.E.N.D. chapter support groups meet the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of each month at 7:30 PM  
Daddies group meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday of March, June, Sept. and Dec., at 7:30 PM  
Moms and dads meet together for introductions before dividing into two groups.

#### Rowlett Satellite Chapter

Dallas/Fort Worth has opened a satellite location to serve families in the eastern area of the metroplex. Support groups are held in Rowlett and are currently meeting in person, rather than via Zoom.

Visit our Facebook group or email [terri@mend.org](mailto:terri@mend.org) for more details.

#### Subsequent pregnancy group

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

Led by Marisa Perry: [marisa@mend.org](mailto:marisa@mend.org)  
For families who are considering becoming pregnant or are currently pregnant after a loss.



**Irving Archives Museum**  
801 W Irving Blvd  
Irving, TX 75060

# M.E.N.D.

## Chapter Information

### M.E.N.D.–NW Washington

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday at 6:30 PM  
The Oak Table Cafe'  
3290 NW Mt. Vintage Way  
Silverdale, Washington 98383  
Director: Stacy McGhee  
stacym@mend.org, (360) 662-6161

### M.E.N.D.–SW Missouri

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM  
Project H.O.P.E.  
1419 S. Enterprise Ave  
Springfield, Missouri 65804  
Director: Rachel Dell  
rachel@mend.org, (417) 770-0600

### M.E.N.D.–Bryan/College Station

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:30 PM  
Hawthorne Suites  
1010 University Drive East  
College Station, Texas 77840  
Director: Jennie Drude  
jennie@mend.org, (402) 704-6363

### M.E.N.D.–Tulsa, Oklahoma

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

### M.E.N.D.–Columbus, Ohio

Meets on the 2<sup>nd</sup> Monday, at 6:30 PM  
Paul Mitchell-The School of Columbus  
3000 Morse Road  
(Upstairs Conference Room)  
Columbus, Ohio 43231  
Director: LaTrina Bray  
latrina@mend.org (614) 530-5128

### M.E.N.D.–Chicagoland, Illinois

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM  
St Peter Lutheran Church  
202 E Schaumburg Road  
Schaumburg, Illinois 60194  
Director: Sara Hintz  
saraann@mend.org, (630) 267-9134

### M.E.N.D.–Palm Beach, Florida

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM  
Embark Lake Worth  
3927 Hadjes Dr  
Lake Worth, FL 33467  
(close to Turnpike and Lake Worth Rd)  
Director: Jessica Gaddie  
Jessica@mend.org, (561) 843-3509

### M.E.N.D.–MidMichigan

Meets the 1<sup>st</sup> Tuesday, at 7:00 PM  
Ashman Plaza  
713 Ashman Street  
Midland, Michigan 48640  
Director: Karen Kilbourn  
karen@mend.org, (989) 577-5755

### M.E.N.D.–Denver

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Tuesday at 7:00 PM  
Journey Church  
9009 Clydesdale Rd.  
Castle Rock, Colorado 80108  
Director: Kimberly Adams  
kimberly@mend.org, (720) 593-0166

### M.E.N.D.–San Antonio, Texas

Meets the 4<sup>th</sup> Monday, at 7:00 PM  
8620 N New Braunfels Ave  
San Antonio, Texas 78217  
Director: Katie McClelland  
katie@mend.org

### M.E.N.D.–Lynchburg, Virginia

Meets on the 1<sup>st</sup> Thursday, at 7:00 PM  
Motherhood Collective  
at DeWitt Cottage #8, 150 Linden Ave  
Lynchburg, VA 24503  
Director: Melissa Scifres  
melissa@mend.org (434) 221-2357

### M.E.N.D.–Greater Houston Area

Greater Houston Area Main Chapter:  
Meets the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 7:30 PM  
Lone Star College,  
3200 College Park Dr, Room A228,  
The Woodlands, Texas 77384  
Greater Houston Area Director:  
Stormy Mitchell  
stormym@mend.org, (405) 529-6363

### Satellites in Greater Houston Chapter:

Katy, Texas:  
Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 7:00 PM  
Katy Community Fellowship  
24102 Kingsland Blvd  
Katy, Texas 77494  
Katy Director:  
Kessi Wilhite, kessi@mend.org  
Kingwood Area, Texas:  
Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday at 6:30 PM  
6450 Kings Parkway  
Kingwood, Texas 77346  
At Rosemont Assisted Living,  
2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Community Room  
Kingwood Director:  
Nikisha Perry, nikisha@mend.org

### M.E.N.D.–East Valley, Arizona

Meets the 2<sup>nd</sup> Thursday, at 6:30 PM  
Queen Creek Library  
Edward Abbey room  
21802 S Ellsworth Rd  
Queen Creek, Arizona 85142  
Director: Danielle Radler  
danielle@mend.org, (602) 699-6228

## Online Support

### M.E.N.D.–Online Support Group

Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday at 8:00 PM (CST)  
to join, contact  
Director: LaRhesa Johnson  
LaRhesa@mend.org

### Men of M.E.N.D.

Held the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday at 8:00 PM (CST)  
to join, contact,  
Director: Matt McGee  
Matt@mend.org  
Facebook Group:  
[www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND](http://www.facebook.com/groups/MENofMEND)

Due to COVID gathering guidelines,  
please follow your chapter on  
Facebook or connect with your local  
Director for updates if your chapter  
will meet in person or virtually.



The Garden of Hope is a place of peace and solace where families can come for a quiet time of reflection, prayer, or even to celebrate the life of their loved one.

The Garden of Hope was established by M.E.N.D. in 2016, and is located on property of Calvary Church in Irving, Texas.

You can remember your loved one by purchasing a brick in the Garden of Hope. Brick purchases can be made at <https://www.mend.org/garden-of-hope>. Bricks purchased by August 15, 2021, will be installed prior to the Walk to Remember in October 2021.



M.E.N.D. Mommies Enduring Neonatal Death  
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 USA  
 (972) 506-9000  
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# Thank you to all who participated in the M.E.N.D.ing Miles Virtual 5K!



#MENDINGMilesVirtual5k

