



BEREAVED FAMILIES OF ONTARIO-DURHAM REGION

SUMMER BULLETIN

"Bereaved helping the bereaved learn to live with grief"

ISSUE 3

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2015

FROM THE DESK OF YOUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The season we long for all year round is finally upon us. For some of us, there seems to be an endless list of things we wish to accomplish because of the nice weather. We are able to keep ourselves busy with all of the outdoor activities that define the season. However, for some, especially those who are newly bereaved, the long anticipated sunshine may not have the same reaction experienced by others. We may find it hard to enjoy the activities that would normally be part of our day during the summer months.

Summer can offer unique opportunities to reflect and remember our loved ones. We can enjoy peaceful moments as we watch butterflies and hummingbirds take flight or while gazing at a beautiful rainbow shimmering after a sun shower. Some of us may wish to honour our children's memories by doing something special this summer, such as planting a memorial garden or taking a trip to a destination that you once enjoyed together.

Remember, whatever you do in the summer, we hope you find comfort in knowing you're not alone in this journey. BFO-Durham will continue to offer their regular drop-ins throughout the summer and you can connect with others who understand what you are experiencing.

Summer always seems to fly by right before our eyes. As we race to enjoy barbeques, pool parties and trips to the lake, it is important to take time to stop and smell the flowers, breathe in the fresh clean air and warm our hearts with happy memories of our children and the sunshine they brought to our lives.

Please note — **AN ADULT SIBLING LOSS DROP-IN** has been scheduled for Tuesday, September 15th from 7-9 p.m.

~ Sharon

7TH ANNUAL RUN TO REMEMBER



ON MAY 24TH, 2015 THE 7TH ANNUAL RUN TO REMEMBER EVENT WAS HELD WITH ALL PROCEEDS DONATED TO BFO-DURHAM. ON THIS BEAUTIFUL MORNING, FRIENDS, FAMILIES AND BFO-D MEMBERS GATHERED TOGETHER TO WALK, RUN OR CYCLE THROUGH PETTICOT CREEK IN PICKERING.

THANK YOU TO ALL THE SPONSORS, VOLUNTEERS AND PARTICIPANTS WHO ONCE AGAIN HELPED MAKE THIS EVENT, A VERY SUCCESSFUL FUNDRAISER.

ALL MONIES RAISED WAS DONATED TO BFO-DURHAM IN MEMORY OF JEFFREY WARNE.

VOLUNTEERS DON'T JUST DO THE WORK, THEY MAKE IT WORK!

AS ALWAYS, A BIG THANK YOU GOES OUT TO ALL OUR VOLUNTEERS.

ONE-ON-ONE AND GROUP SUPPORT FACILITATORS – Jane Carter, Charlotte McMorrow, Margaret Fortune, Magda Zoelman, Nichole Dickhoff, Denise Love, Jackie Foster, Denise Robinson, Angela White, Cheryl Clarke, Jan Mclean, Kathryn Holden, Yvette Byrne-Menard, Louise O'Donnell, Lisa Fogg, Rebecca Alley-Wilson, Denise Calbery, Donna Christie, Vicki Davis D'Abreau, Sherene Donovan, Gary Goswell, Jennifer Carter and Kevin Goswell

LIBRARIAN – Denise Love

ASSISTANT LIBRARIAN - Alexis LoveGordon

FUNDRAISING – Denise Robinson and committee members, Jackie Foster and committee members

OFFICE VOLUNTEERS – Denise Love, Marlene Charewicz, Beth Bryan, Angela White, Debbie Brown

ANNIVERSARY LETTERS – Office volunteers

WEB SITE – Ronda Evans

NEWSLETTER – Micheline Ball

BOARD MEMBERS – Gary Goswell, Louise O'Donnell, Marian Rehr, Jane Carter, Margaret Fortune, Micheline Ball



NEW BOOKS ADDED TO THE LIBRARY

Our library has acquired several excellent new books.

ALAN D. WOLFELT, PH.D - HEALING THE ADULT SIBLING'S GRIEVING HEART

When your adult brother or sister dies, part of you dies, too. This compassionate guide offers 100 practical ideas to help you understand and embrace your unique grief and practice self-compassion. Some of the ideas teach you the principles of grief and mourning. The remainder offer practical, action-oriented tips for embracing your grief. Whether your sibling died as a young or older adult, whether the death was sudden or anticipated, this easy-to-use resource is for you. Turn to any page and seize the day by taking a small step toward healing.

MICHELLE LINN-GUST, M.S. - DO THEY HAVE BAD DAYS IN HEAVEN?

Surviving the Suicide Loss of a Sibling. Regardless of age, sibling suicide survivors, the forgotten mourners, will find identity, comfort, and encouragement in Michelle Linn-Gust's poignant recount of her grief journey following her sister's suicide. For brothers and sisters yearning to relate to others struggling in the aftermath of sibling suicide. (LaRita Archibald, Founder, HEARTBEAT/Survivors After Suicide)

NINE MOTHERS IN COLLABORATION WITH ELLEN MITCHELL - BEYOND TEARS (LIVING AFTER LOSING A CHILD)

The death of a child is that unimaginable loss no parent ever expects to face. Only those who have lived through it themselves can fully comprehend it. In Beyond Tears, nine mothers whose children died as young adults lend comfort and direction to other bereaved parents in a chorus of supportive voices. They candidly share what to expect in the first year and beyond. Because these mothers lost their children more than seven years ago, they are in a unique position to provide perspective on what newly bereaved parents can expect to feel. It also includes a brand-new chapter written by young adults who lost their siblings.

DENNIS L. APPLE - LIFE AFTER THE DEATH OF MY SON.

What I'm learning. Even though years have gone by and life has moved on, Dennis Apple still struggles with living in a world without his son. These pages share a glimpse of the unspeakable pain, helplessness, and frustration parents experience when their child dies. Using excerpts from his journal, Dennis shares his painful yet promising story and offers comfort and connection to those walking similar paths.

WAYNE TRIPLETT - THE SUN WILL COME OUT TOMORROW.

Beginning again after the death of a child. This is a compassionate, faith-based book about real grief and real people dealing with it. With compassion and understanding, Wayne Triplett explores the journey through grief after the ultimate loss – the death of a child. If you are a parent who has lost a child, you will recognize yourself in this book, in all your pain, and you will be helped by learning that you are not alone. You can survive the death of a child.

The above books are available for borrowing from our library. The review/descriptions are copied from the back of each book and the name of the reviewer is mentioned where available. ~Marian Rehr

"WHAT TO SAY AND NOT TO SAY TO A BEAREAVED PARENT"

WHAT TO SAY TO A BEREAVED PARENT

"I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY"

An honest, straightforward response to parents, that still ACKNOWLEDGES THE LOSS. When friends and family do not mention the loss, it can feel like the child never existed.

"YOU MUST MISS (CHILD'S NAME) " OR "I WAS THINKING ABOUT (CHILD'S NAME) TODAY."

Use the child's name as often as you would if they were alive. They still live in the hearts of their parents.

"HOW IS TODAY GOING?"

This is a great alternative to "how are you". In the early stages, you can be sure that parents are not "fine" even though they may say that out of habit.

"DO YOU HAVE A PICTURE OF YOUR CHILD" OR "WHAT WAS YOUR CHILD LIKE"

Parents want to know that whatever the age of their child, their life had meaning. When you ask about the child, it reinforces the fact that they played an important role in the family. This is especially important for parents surviving SIDS or stillborn deaths.

WHAT NOT TO SAY TO A BEREAVED PARENT

YOU CAN HAVE MORE CHILDREN"

Remember that all a bereaved parent really wishes, is to have their child back. Not a replacement child. When people suggest having more children, the importance of the child who died is diminished as if they can be replaced somehow. There may be reasons that the parents cannot have children, which would make a comment like this even more inappropriate.

"THANK GOD YOU HAVE OTHER CHILDREN"

Somehow suggests that the surviving children in the family will make up for the dead child. It is true that when the energy for life is restored, there are activities and experiences the surviving children provide for bereaved parents. However, the loss of the individual who was your child is gone forever: even tiny babies have personalities.

"GOD WANTED HER"

Whether the parents have a religious affiliation or not, some parents do not believe that their child was "chosen" to die. For some bereaved parents, issues around faith are challenged most at the loss of a child. For some parents, it can be their greatest source of strength.

"HE'S IN A BETTER PLACE"

Comments like this imply that parents maintain a belief system, which teaches that there is a "better" place. Not all bereaved parents have a belief system, let alone believe in a better place. For some, they simply feel their child is gone. One parent said, "the best place for our child was in his home."

"YOUR CHILD WOULD NOT WANT TO SEE YOU SO SAD"

As with many types of grief, this comment can create guilt feelings for the bereaved parent. It suggests that although they loved their child, they "owe it to their child" to be happy and there is a limit to the amount of sadness they can experience.

"DON'T GRIEVE AROUND THE SURVIVING CHILDREN; IT WILL UPSET THEM"

Yes, a grieving parent can be very frightening for surviving children in a family. But when parents "hide" their grief or feelings, they create mystery around a very normal human process. The only way children learn healthy grief responses is through their parents. It is acceptable for parents to explain to their children when they are sad or that they need time to be alone to work through their grief. It is especially important for parents to talk about the child who has died.

"I KNOW HOW YOU FEEL....MY FATHER (MOTHER, AUNT) JUST PASSED AWAY"

When a child dies, a parent is left to mourn a life that was not lived. They are grieving what could have been, first steps, graduation, wedding etc. The loss of a parent cannot be compared to the loss of a child even though the separation from both is very painful.

"ARE YOU FEELING BETTER?"

Whether the loss occurred 4 months or 4 years ago, there may never be a time when a bereaved parent feels "better". They may just feel different. This does not mean they cannot enjoy life again, but they will never lose that part of them which belonged to their child. The scar is always present.

DONATIONS

IN LOVING MEMORY OF

Ivan Necakov
From Christian Hajok and Friends

Charlotte Yeo
Love, John and Helen Lovisek

Charlotte Yeo
Love, Frank and Penny Bannister

Charlotte Yeo
Love, Susan MacDonald

Charlotte Yeo
Love, Marco and Donna Rialetto

Erin Reed
Love, Family and Friends

Allan Sweetman
From Fritz and Cathy Wiener

From T.D. Volunteer Network

*To honour John and Mary Gallello's 50th Wedding Anniversary and to acknowledge the precious children in their lives,
John-John Gallello 1973-1991 and Tanya Gallello-Dobbin 1970-2000
Love, Bernie and Joyce MacIntyre
And
Love, Vince and Susan Hendricks*

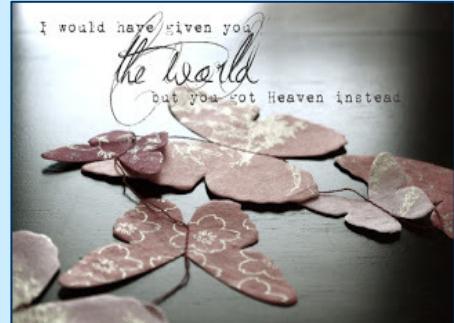
Marie Vandepoel
From James and Elise Vanhaverbeke

Marie Vandepoel
From Rory and Alison Ebdon



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OFFICE HOURS — MONDAY TO THURSDAY 10 A.M. TO 3 P.M. AND CLOSED FRIDAY

REFLECTIONS



YOUR FEED-BACK IS VERY IMPORTANT!!

PLEASE CONSIDER CONTRIBUTING TO THIS NEWSLETTER, WHICH IS A VOICE FOR THE BEREAVED. WE ENDEAVOUR TO KEEP YOU AS UP TO DATE AS POSSIBLE WITH ALL ON-GOING INFORMATION AND WELCOME YOUR HELP; SHARE YOUR THOUGHTS, IDEAS OR REQUESTS THROUGH THIS VENUE. RECOMMEND A BOOK AND WRITE WHAT YOU LIKE ABOUT IT. SHARE YOUR STORY, SUBMIT A POEM, YOUR SONG OR TELL OF THINGS THAT HAVE HELPED YOU ALONG YOUR GRIEF JOURNEY. WE WELCOME ALL SUBMISSIONS AND THANK YOU IN ADVANCE FOR GETTING INVOLVED!