



Friendship and Support The Compassionate Friends SOUTH AUSTRALIA

*OFFERING FRIENDSHIP & SUPPORT BETWEEN BEREAVED
PARENTS, GRANDPARENTS & SIBLINGS*



National Grief Support Line

Free Call – 1300 064 068

The Compassionate Friends South Australia - 0456 820 133

www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au



COMMITTEE UPDATES

The Compassionate Friends SA (TCFSA)

Secretary's Update

It has been another busy few months for The Compassionate Friends South Australia, with some wonderful opportunities to come together as a community, raise funds and continue building awareness of the support available to bereaved families.

We recently held a **movie fundraiser at the Capri Theatre**, which was a fantastic evening of connection, community and fundraising. Alongside the movie night, we also held **raffles with some wonderful donated prizes**, which were very generously supported by those who attended. We are pleased to have raised **\$ 1,713** from the evening, with these funds going directly towards supporting the ongoing work of TCFSA. A big thankyou to **Richard from "Flowers Everywhere"** for generously providing the beautiful flower bouquet.

A very special thank you to the Capri Theatre for supporting our fundraising event and providing us with such a wonderful venue. Their generosity and support helped us create an enjoyable evening while raising much-needed funds for our organisation.

We also held our **Bereaved Father's Day gathering at Woodville Bowling Club**, providing an opportunity for bereaved fathers to come together in a relaxed and supportive environment, share stories, connect with others and remember their children. A big thank you to **Woodville Bowling Club** for generously providing the venue, bowling green and equipment, as well as opening the bar for the afternoon.

As part of the Bereaved Father's Day event, we also held two raffles featuring wine and chocolate hampers, which were well supported and helped us raise additional funds for TCFSA.

Fundraising is an important part of enabling our organisation to continue growing and reaching more bereaved families. The funds raised through these events will assist us in **reaching out to further communities and providing opportunities for support groups and informal gatherings**.

These gatherings are so important. Grief can be incredibly isolating, and simply having the opportunity to sit with others who understand the experience of losing a child can make a meaningful difference. Our goal is to create more opportunities for bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents to connect, share, listen and know that they are not alone.

A heartfelt thank you to everyone who attended our events, purchased raffle tickets, donated prizes, donated funds, volunteered their time or supported TCFSA in any way. **Your support helps us continue our mission of supporting bereaved families and creating meaningful connections within our community.**

Thank you also to our wonderful volunteers and committee members whose time, energy and commitment make these events possible.

Together, we can continue reaching more bereaved families and providing safe, understanding spaces where no one has to walk their grief alone.

Kind Regards,
Vicki Shaw (Secretary)



The Compassionate Friends (SA) Inc. is part of a world-wide organisation offering friendship and understanding to families following the death of a son or daughter, brother or sister. TCF offers support in the grief and trauma which follows the death of a child at any age and from any cause. Our purpose is to offer friendship and understanding by reaching out to bereaved parents, to the surviving siblings and other family members to support them in the grief and trauma which follows the death of a child. We promote the positive resolution of parents' grief, and to foster the physical, emotional and spiritual growth, in an open and friendly environment of bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings. At The Compassionate Friends you will find the special understanding of those who have "been there". There are no pressures to talk or not talk, to cry or not cry, just a chance to be yourself, to have time-out. The Compassionate Friends offers a safe haven, a listening and understanding ear, a place where you can let down the masks, and if you wish, talk about your son or daughter who has died. The Compassionate Friends offers no miracle cure, just comfort and the consolation and hope that broken threads can be picked up again. The Compassionate Friends Support Groups offer the opportunity for bereaved parents and siblings to meet in a safe environment with others who have 'been there' who understand and care.

Monthly support groups are held at:

6:30 pm on the 1st Wednesday of each month.
Eastwood Community Centre,
95 Glen Osmond Rd, EASTWOOD. SA



Grief does not discern time. We understand there are times when you need to speak with another bereaved parent. Our grief support telephone number 0456 820 133. Please leave a message and we will return your call as soon as possible. If you do not want to wait for a call back, please phone our National Ph: 1300 064 068 Grief Telephone Support. When a son or daughter dies, no matter what their age or the cause of death, grief lasts for longer than society in general recognises. The death of your child is an unacceptable tragedy, and it can take a long time before you regain any sense of normality in your life.

" We Need Not Walk Alone."

**Please Note: TCFSA is not a crisis service. If you need immediate crises support, please contact:
Suicide Line on 1300 651 251 - Suicide Call Back Service on 1300 659 467 - Lifeline on 13 11 14.*



"For more information on TCFSA – Please refer to our Website & Facebook"

To our new members

Attending your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But you have nothing to lose and everything to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. Often, it is the second, third or fourth meeting where you will find just the right person or the right words said that will help you along in your grief.

To our long-standing members

We need your encouragement and continued support. You are what ties our group together. Sadly, each meeting brings new parents. THINK BACK... what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "Oldtimers" to welcome you and share your grief and encourage you and tell you that in time, the pain will soften...with time, there is hope.

**WE NEED NOT WALK ALONE
WE ARE THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS**

Our Values

These basic principles guide all our interactions and activities:

- Empathy
- Compassion
- Respect
- Integrity
- Inclusivity

Our Volunteers – all bereaved parents, siblings or grandparents themselves - provide support, understanding and hope to those who have suffered the death of a son or daughter from any cause.

TCF has no religious affiliations - we offer support to all bereaved parents, adult siblings and grandparents both with faith and those with none.





Our recent fundraiser at the Capri Theatre on Sunday 2nd August 2026 was a great success! We are deeply grateful for every donation, ticket purchase, and the community support. Thanks to your incredible generosity, we raised a fantastic **\$ 1,713**.

These vital funds will go directly toward supporting The Compassionate Friends SA as we continue providing free peer support to bereaved families across South Australia after the loss of a child.

A special, heartfelt thank you goes out to Rebecca Chittleborough for bringing this fundraising idea to the forefront and enthusiastically worked to make it happen. We also want to recognise the committee members (Deborah Morgan, Vicki Shaw, Binita Whitford, Diana & Daryl Brooks, Graeme Crook and Helen Baczynski) who uplifted this event with their amazing dedication and teamwork.

Thank you again for standing alongside us and supporting our families. Your presence and generosity mean the world to us.

*A special thank you to **Richard from "Flowers Everywhere"** for your beautiful donation of flowers for our Fundraiser Raffle.*



Bereaved Father's Day held on 30th August 2026



Thank you to **Terry Hughes and the Woodville Bowling Club**- for letting us use your wonderful club to host our Bereaved Father's Day event over the weekend and supporting The Compassionate Friends SA. While Father's Day can be an incredibly tough time for bereaved parents the venue was the absolute perfect fit for bereaved fathers and families to connect, in such a welcoming space. Everyone had a fun, relaxed, and uplifting day. A special thank you to **Mark Hanrahan** for all his help, for your patience and your tips on how to bowl. You did your best with us, but after watching the day unfold, I think it's safe to say there may **"NOT"** be some upcoming bowlers amongst us. We might not be turning pro anytime soon, but we had the best time. Thank you for your warmth, your laughs, and for helping everything run so smoothly around the club. A shout-out to Frank Pisani for also being on hand-thankyou.



The Compassionate Friends SA **FIRST** Support Group Meeting took place in Christ Church Hall
on 9th November 1990



Christ Church Hall
31-40 Palmer Place (also known as 62-80 Jeffcott Street)
NORTH ADELAIDE SA



History

Acre 745 was the original name of the plot between Jeffcott Street and 36-40 Palmer Place, North Adelaide, a suburb immediately north of Adelaide city centre. The foundation stone was laid on 1st June 1848 by Augustus Short, the first Anglican Bishop of Adelaide, and the church was consecrated in 1849. Christ Church was the pro-cathedral until 1877 when St Peter's Cathedral opened.

In 1850 a parsonage was built on the southern half of Acre 745. It became the deanery for Dean Marryat in 1887, then a rectory from 1906.

In 1868 a site on Jeffcott Street opposite the church was purchased for a schoolroom. The foundation stone was laid on 26 September, 1868.

The Compassionate Friends SA (TCFSA) held its **FIRST** inaugural South Australian meeting on
9th November, 1990.

Joan and Tony Van de Water were a South Australian couple who were directly connected as founding figures of The Compassionate Friends SA (TCFSA). They were part of the core group of bereaved parents who organised the November 9, 1990 inaugural meeting at the Christ Church Hall in North Adelaide.

TCFSA expanded its peer-support reach, eventually transitioning away from the Christ Church location to provide a wider variety of statewide resources, newsletters, and grief support. Today, the parent organisation, The Compassionate Friends SA - continues its mission of offering hope and understanding to bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings across the South Australia.

Their Connection and History

The Partnership: Joan and Tony Van de Water were husband and wife. Following the devastating loss of their own child, they sought a community of peers who understood their specific trauma.

The TCFSA Link: Finding a lack of localised support structures in South Australia at the time, they joined forces with a few other local families to establish the SA branch, heavily leaning on the established guidelines of the Victorian division.

Early Roles: Tony and Joan were highly instrumental in the logistical rollout of the first 1990 meetings and committees. Because early iterations of the group were entirely voluntary and self-funded, the couple actively helped distribute those early typewritten notices and newsletters to ensure isolated grieving parents across Adelaide knew they had a safe haven to visit.

The First Newsletter Purpose: The inaugural newsletter was a brief, typewritten, and photocopied bulletin posted directly to members. It served to announce meeting dates in North Adelaide, share personal poems or memorial messages, and outline the fundamental TCF principle of mutual grief support.

The Legacy Today: While the 1990 edition is not on the web, TCFSA is currently up to **ISSUE 272** of its official newsletter. The modern publication has evolved but continues the original mission of connecting bereaved families where the shared language of compassion and mutual support remains exactly the same.

1990 - 2026

Peace

As bereaved parents, we look to others for answers about our grief journey. For 12 years I have listened as so many parents spoke about the combination of factors which brought peace to their hearts and allowed them to move forward into a different, less painful life. I have read books, watched movies, attended seminars and retreats. I have gone to **138 Compassionate Friends meetings**. And I have discovered one key factor in finding peace and resolution on this terrible grief journey: there is no single element or singular combination of elements that answers the needs of more than one parent. Each parent must patiently seek those elements that will enhance the individual and each unique personal journey: there is no magic map to finding the path to peace. There is one common denominator in this quest for the peace on our long journey, and that is patience. Patience with ourselves is mandatory, because the grief journey after the death of our precious child is so horrible, so painful, and so isolating that our psyches and our bodies take so very much time to begin the healing process. There are setbacks. There is progress. Each of these comes in spurts. Each is partially reversed and the process begins anew. Friends and family do not thoroughly understand our perspective on our unique journey. We must make allowances for them. But we must ask that allowances be made for us. For we are finding ourselves while on a path that we did not choose. We are lost. We are weakened. We are heartbroken. Each of us in our own way is seeking the formula that is uniquely our own. Some parents find a kind of peace in their religion. Some parents are angry with their God. Many parents seek private counselling. Other parents read prolifically about the grief journey, seeking some element which resonates with them. Many parents come to **Compassionate Friends** meetings and actively participate. Others attend meetings and say little. Some parents slip into denial and proceed on the old path of their lives. We each make choices. We are different people with different experiences, backgrounds, cultures, genetic hard wiring, education and abilities. The path to peace is found by searching, by reaching out to every resource available. We will reject much of what we find; but if we search, we will find what we need. For most of us, finding other bereaved parents presents an opportunity to listen to the stories, of their child and their journey and, within those stories, we find many threads that fit our unique journey. Many stories, many journeys, many new threads are shared in group discussion and in private discussions. We find “seasoned” grievers who provide perspective on our feelings, and listen to our story. We find newly bereaved parents who touch our hearts and remind us how we have built our path to peace brick by brick. Their pain brings reflection and new revelations about our own grief journey. I found kindred souls at **Compassionate Friends**. These kindred souls have allowed me to explore the various aspects of my being and gradually create a path of peace for myself. But the journey does not suddenly end. We will walk this path for the rest of our lives. And if we do the hard work and face our demons early on, we accept the unacceptable and face life on our own terms. And that is as it should be.

by Kate Shand - In memory of her beloved son John Peter Butler  TCF Johannesburg Chapter

Friendship in Grief

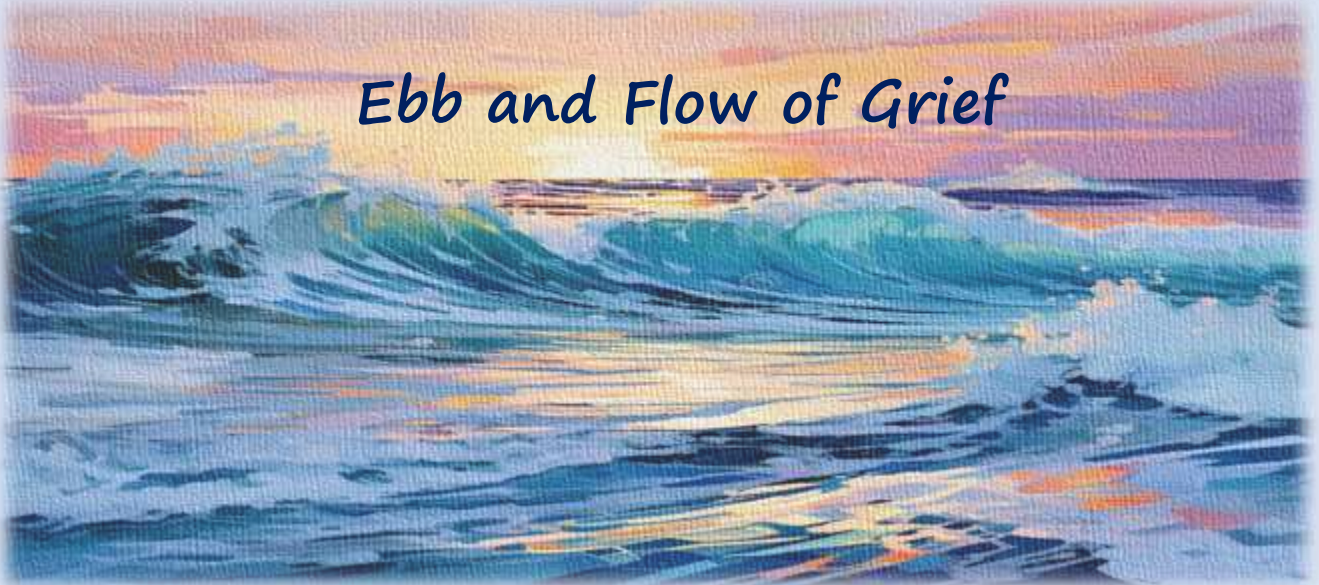


Friendship in grief speaks a quieter, truer language. It forms with people who don't need the backstory, who understand loss without being told. It might be a simple coffee, a shared silence, or a conversation that doesn't have to be tied up neatly, especially when the rest of the world has moved on and you're still carrying what you carry.

There is something both strange and deeply special about these connections. They are born from a burden no one would ever choose. You wish you had never needed to meet this way, and yet you come to feel profoundly grateful that you did. Over time, these relationships often grow into the deepest friendships, because there is no need to perform, explain, or protect others from your truth.

With people who understand, the mask can come off. You can be exactly as you are: tired, raw, unchanged, or quietly okay. There is room for tears and laughter, for the messiness of grief, and for being real in a way that can feel impossible elsewhere. In that shared understanding, something steady forms, a connection that holds, not because the pain is the same, but because it is recognised and honoured.





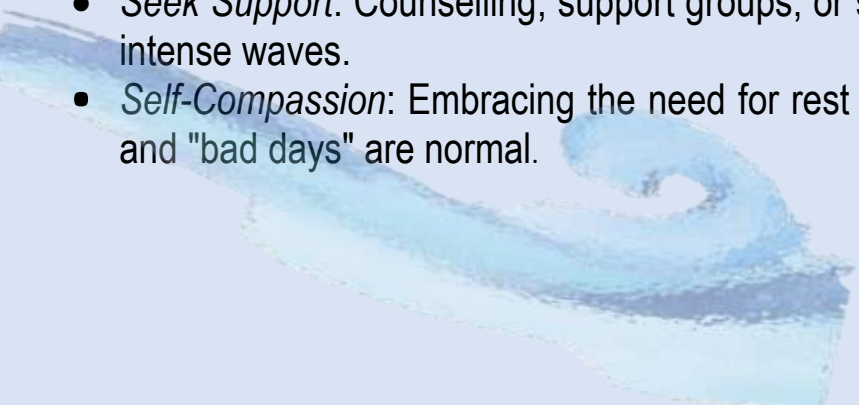
Ebb and Flow of Grief

The ebb and flow of grief describe its non-linear, unpredictable nature, often likened to ocean tides that surge and recede. It involves alternating between intense, overwhelming pain (high tide) and periods of relative calm or engagement in daily life (low tide), often described in the Dual Process Model of Grief.

Key Aspects of the Ebb and Flow:

- *Unpredictability:* Grief is not a linear, step-by-step process; it can trigger unexpectedly, with sharp, intense waves of emotion returning months or years later, particularly around anniversaries.
- *The "Tidal Pool" Analogy:* People often move from a period of "flowing" (functioning) into a "secluded, eddying pool" of profound, isolating sadness in a single moment.
- *Dual Process Model:* This framework normalises the back-and-forth between loss-oriented stressors (processing the loss, crying, yearning) and restoration-oriented stressors (dealing with daily life, distracting oneself).
- *Physical/Emotional Waves:* Experiences often include intense fatigue, difficulty concentrating, anger, guilt, and a longing for the deceased.

Navigating the Tides:

- *Give it Time:* The intensity of the pain typically decreases over time, though it may never fully disappear.
 - *Seek Support:* Counselling, support groups, or sharing stories can help manage the intense waves.
 - *Self-Compassion:* Embracing the need for rest and understanding that "good days" and "bad days" are normal.
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Navigating the Ebb and Flow of Grief

(By Maria Kubitz TCF Contra Costa County, CA - In Memory of my daughter, Margareta)

At almost four years after the death of my daughter, I had thought it would be easier than this. In those early days and months when my grief made it feel like I simply couldn't survive this loss, I saw others in support groups who had lost their loved ones many years before, and they seemed ok. They looked almost "normal" again. They told me it wouldn't always be like this. They said you learn to live with the pain, and it would lessen over time. They said you will eventually find joy and happiness again. They said you create a "new normal." And they were right. I have worked hard for almost four years on working through my grief. I have faced it head on through continual counselling and support groups and still seek out ways to express my pain, so as not to hold it in and let it consume me. Along the way, I have given myself permission to smile once more, and even to allow joy to enter my heart again. I have enjoyed my other children.

I have volunteered my time with **The Compassionate Friends**. I have created my own grief support website. I have consciously tried to focus my energies on remembering my daughter's life rather than only looking at the pain her death has brought.

And yet grief remains a constant part of my life. Grief is fickle. Unpredictable. And indifferent to whatever mood I'm in. Most days my grief lies dormant under the activities of everyday life. Little triggers will continually remind me it's there. A sad news story on the TV. A girl at the park who reminds me of my daughter.

But I can go about my regular routines with no interruptions. Other times, the triggers are bigger, and the grief bubbles up and takes over my mood. Tears well up behind my eyes, ready to release at the first opportunity. My patience seems to evaporate and everyday tasks become cumbersome, meaningless, and even difficult. Usually, the bursts of grief from larger triggers only last a few hours or at most a few days. But sometimes it lingers and grows. What I didn't expect is that even coming on four years after her death, I still find myself in situations where grief becomes so overwhelming again that it feels like I've gone right back to the debilitating early days of grief. Feelings of sadness, pain, lethargy, dis-interest in things I normally enjoy. Going to work becomes a struggle. Even taking care of my kids feels like a burden. I know these periods require extra attention and care, and I navigate through the best I can, asking for support along the way. I just wonder if these episodes will ease over time, or if I should just expect them to become a permanent fixture of my "new normal" life?

If the death of my daughter has taught me anything -- and it has taught me A LOT -- it has taught me that we have more inner strength than we can ever imagine, and that with time, attention, and support, we can navigate through just about anything life might throw at us.



Poetry helps with grief by providing a safe, structured, and creative outlet to process complex emotions that are often hard to verbalise. It transforms overwhelming, internal pain into externalised, tangible words, offering comfort, catharsis, and a sense of shared human experience.

Here is how poetry aids in navigating grief:

Validates & Names Emotions: Grief can feel chaotic and messy. Poetry, with its focus on metaphors and fragments, allows you to express confusion, longing, anger, and sadness without needing to fix or organise them immediately.

Provides Catharsis and Release: Writing poetry acts as a release valve for pent-up emotions, reducing the isolation often felt during loss. It is a way to "pour pain onto paper".

Connects Through Shared Experience: Reading poetry written by others in similar pain can make you feel less alone, providing a "light in the darkness".

Slows Down the Mind: Poetry offers a slow, reflective space in a fast-paced world, allowing you to dwell in and process your feelings rather than ignoring them.

Creates a Lasting Tribute: Poetry can help preserve memories of a loved one and find meaning in the loss, transforming pain into something enduringly beautiful.

You don't have to be a "word nerd" to turn to poetry in grief. Whether you're reading someone else's poems or scribbling your own creations into a notebook, poetry offers multiple entry points for grief expression.





October is recognised globally as Pregnancy and Infant Loss Awareness Month to honour babies who passed away too soon, break the stigma surrounding miscarriage and stillbirth, and offer support to bereaved families. Throughout October 2026, events and campaigns will raise awareness, with a special **"Wave of Light" on October 15th at 7:00 p.m.** encouraging people to light a candle for one hour.

Key Aspects of the Awareness Month:

Focus: Acknowledges all types of loss, including miscarriage, stillbirth, SIDS, and ectopic/molar pregnancies.

Significance: Approximately 1 in 4 pregnancies end in loss, making this month crucial for breaking the silence.

Remembrance Day: **October 15th** is widely recognised as International Pregnancy and Infant Loss Remembrance Day.

Actions: Activities often include lighting pink and blue candles in windows, wearing ribbons, and participating in memorial walks or ceremonies.

A Message of Hope

To anyone reading this who has experienced pregnancy loss or infant death, you are seen. You are not alone. Your grief is valid. And although the future may feel uncertain, there is also space for tenderness, for connection and for healing. In remembering these lives, we create a legacy of compassion. In speaking of them, we change the silence. In supporting each other, we move slowly from despair toward hope.

Central to our vision and objectives, listening to the voices of parents and families is a fundamental principle of the Stillbirth CRE (Centre of Research Excellence).

“Sophie’s Story” by Heidi and Ned Mules

We met in Brisbane in 2006 and soon followed a dream to move to London where, after a few years of work and travel, we eventually had our first child Amelie in 2010. In 2011, Heidi fell pregnant again and we decided to move home to have our second baby in Brisbane and set ourselves up to raise our family here in Australia.

Heidi had regular visits to our obstetrician and was considered a low-risk pregnancy. Our baby hadn’t arrived by the due date of the 1st of December. We decided not to force the matter so we waited another week to allow baby to arrive naturally, after which time we would induce the birth if needed. Our baby Sophie was born on the 7th of December 2011. She never opened her eyes and she didn’t make a sound. Sophie was stillborn. Sophie was perfectly healthy as far as we know, but she died due to an abruption of the placenta, which cut off her life support system while she was in the womb. Everything seemed to be normal when Heidi went into labour but we only found out when we were at the hospital that Sophie had died earlier in the day.

No words can describe the feeling of dread and shock that come with being told your baby does not have a heartbeat. The next thing that comes is disbelief that this is even possible. How could our baby, who we had seen healthy and normal on the ultrasound the day before, suddenly pass away? We knew that it was possible for a baby to be stillborn, but of course we didn’t think it could happen to us because we didn’t personally know anyone who had lost a baby, it was never mentioned as a possibility by our doctors and there is generally very little public awareness of stillbirth. In hindsight, you might think that would mean that we were incredibly unlucky to have lost our baby to a very rare event, but it turns out that stillbirth is very common in Australia and its rate of incidence has hardly decreased in the last 30 years.

In the aftermath of Sophie’s death, we were very lucky to have the support of our family and friends. They were all as shocked as we were to learn how common stillbirth is in Australia and how little is known about its causes and indicators. So, to give our friends and family a way to show their support and make a difference, we decided to raise some money for research by doing a 10km run as part of the Gold Coast Marathon. Our friends, family and some generous strangers donated over \$7000 in total, which we decided to pass on to ANZSA. This money was used to help pay for a priority setting workshop, where social workers, clinicians and researchers gathered to decide the most important areas to focus on to reduce the frequency of stillbirth and its impact on the community. We were invited to attend and add our perspective as parents who have lost a child. On the back of this set of priorities, Vicki, Fran and their hard-working teams eventually won a grant to establish the CRE (Centre of Research Excellence).

Changing the Future of Stillbirth in Australia

Whilst we can't bring Sophie back, we want to do what we can to save other families from having to go through this heart-breaking experience and to ensure that the best possible support is available for those who do. For this to happen, doctors, midwives and allied health professionals need the best possible information and practices to help prevent stillbirth, and also the skills to help families to cope with their loss and educate the public about its prevalence and impact.

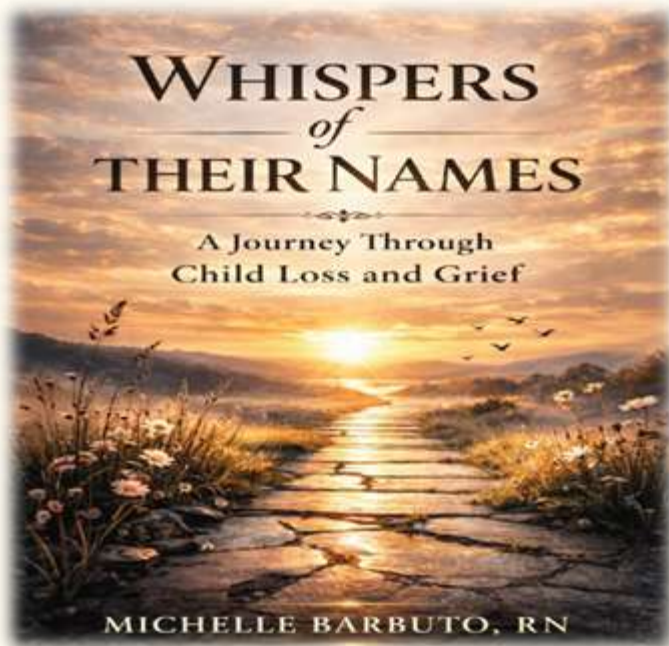
In the time since our fundraising effort, we have found that there are many separate organisations in Australia that are working towards some or all of these goals. Aftercare for families is gradually becoming standardised and public awareness is slowly being raised, but everyone involved would like to see this happen faster and there are too many stories of babies being lost in part due to a lack of awareness of the indicators and warning signs. We sincerely hope that the CRE (Centre of Research Excellence) will be able to help the many groups dedicated to this cause to work together and get the most out of every dollar and every hour they invest.

The Stillbirth Centre of Research Excellence (Stillbirth CRE) is a national, collaborative initiative—including strong ties to the **South Australian Health and Medical Research Institute (SAHMRI)**—aimed at reducing stillbirth rates and improving care for bereaved families. It focuses on education, research translation, and implementing evidence-based care, such as the Safer Baby Bundle.

Key aspects of the Stillbirth CRE (Centre of Research Excellence) in South Australia include:

- **Research & Prevention:** The CRE, which features investigators from SAHMRI, works to reduce the incidence of stillbirth through targeted research, including data, education, and clinical practice improvements.
- **Safer Baby Bundle:** A key initiative promoted in South Australia to address risk factors like smoking, foetal growth restriction, and sleeping positions to prevent stillbirth.
- **Support & Advocacy:** Collaborative efforts with organisations to provide better care, including the Stillbirth Foundation Australia and PSANZ-SANDA.





*Whispers of Their Names: A Journey
Through Child Loss and Grief
by Michelle Barbuto RN*

When a child dies, life divides into before and after, and nothing about grief follows a straight line. *Whispers of Their Names* is a grief memoir and companion book for parents navigating life after the loss of a child. Michelle Barbuto, RN is a grief advocate, trauma-informed guide, and mother walking the unimaginable path of child loss. Through personal story, reflection, and gentle grounding practices, Michelle Barbuto offers a steady presence for parents learning how to live in the after, without timelines, stages, or expectations to heal.

Written by a mother who has lost three sons through accident, homicide, and suicide, this book centres who children were in life, not how they died. It speaks with particular care to parents carrying layered or complicated grief, including those living with guilt, unanswered questions, and the quiet fear of being left behind by the world.

Each chapter blends lived experience with reflection prompts, simple practices, and permission slips parents can return to again and again. This is not a book to finish quickly, but one to open when you need footing, language, or rest.

This is not a book about moving on. It is a book about navigating grief while continuing to love your child out loud.



Are you frustrated with practically no one understanding your grief?

Do you wish there were other mothers who were there at the push of a button?

Are you hoping there's a way to connect no matter what you're doing throughout your busy day?

Hello, I'm Angela R. Presley an Angel Mom and Founder of Alonna's Song... And even though I hate being a member of this unwanted club I am here for you! Inside this podcast you will find my personal stories, interviews with other Angel Moms and Experts to offer their professional advice.

Angela Presley Podcast can be accessed by



I CARRY YOU WITH ME ALWAYS



I carry you with me always, not as a memory sealed in the past, but as a presence woven into my days, a companion on this journey. You are there in the pause before decisions, in the echo of your steady logic, your gentle insistence that I not be so hard on myself. You appear in grocery aisles when I reach for the brand you preferred, and in the quiet satisfaction of choosing it anyway.

I carry you in my habits, in the choices I make without thinking, the songs I skip because they hurt too much, and the ones I play because they still feel like home. I catch myself setting aside stories to tell you later, forgetting, for a moment, that "later" has changed.

I carry you in laughter that arrives unexpectedly, in jokes you would have loved, in moments where your reaction is so clear I can almost see your smile. Sometimes that laughter comforts me. Sometimes it cracks the ache wide open again. Both belong to you.

I carry you in grief, too, in the way certain dates feel heavier, in how silence can suddenly feel crowded.

Yet I also carry you in resilience, in the quiet courage of getting through ordinary days. You are present in every step forward, not urging me on, but walking with me.

I carry you forever, because love does not disappear. It changes shape, but remains a part of me, always.



POEMS and QUOTES

QUIETLY

I missed you quietly today. So quietly, that no-one noticed.

I missed you as I climbed out of bed and as I brushed my teeth; when I waited at the lights on the drive into work and as I heard the rain outside my window.

I missed you as I ordered lunch and as I kicked off my shoes when I got home; as I switched off the lights and climbed into bed for the night.

I missed you without tears or noise or fanfare. But oh...how I felt it!

I felt it in the morning, at lunchtime, in the evening and at night. I felt it as I woke, as I waited, as I worked. I felt it at home, on the road, in the light, in the dark, in the rain.

I felt it in every one of those moments, each one sitting heavier and heavier as the weight of missing you kept growing and growing.

Yes, I missed you so quietly today.

But I felt it so loudly.

by Becky Hemsley

*"Well, everyone can master a
grief, but he that has it."*
by William Shakespeare

THAT DAY

Right in the middle of our life, on an ordinary day,

the unthinkable happened. Everything went from ordinary to chaotic,

and there I stood, in the mess of it all, knowing there will now forever be a before and an after.

That day.

by Sharyn Marsh-Leave her Wild

GRIEF

For those of us who understand,

No explanation is needed.

For those of us who do not,

No description is possible.

Unknown

I am sorry if I talk about my loved one too much or if I like to share old memories.

But the truth is, memories are all I have.

So, I guess I am not really sorry at all...

by Daphne Bach Greer

Here's the thing: Every loss is valid, and every loss is not the same.

**You can't flatten the landscape of grief and say that everything is equal –
It Isn't!**

by Megan Devine



HEAVENLY BIRTHDAYS



OCTOBER

13th October 1971 – **Lisa**, daughter of Annette, sibling to Ian

25th October 1977 – **Lee**, son of Maureen

26th October 1977 – **Andrew**, son of Pauline & Graham, sibling to Rebecca & Sarah

NOVEMBER

10th November 2010 – **Caitlin**, daughter of Megan, sibling to Tyson

20th November 1996 – **Aurora**, daughter of Julie & Jonathon, sibling to Cordelia

28th November 1980 – **Natasha**, daughter of Diana & Daryl, sibling to Alana

*Natasha, your star shines so bright,
Each and every night.
A golden colour just like your hair,
Letting us know you're always there.
Your eyes twinkle just like a star,
We know you're not too far.
One day we will all be together,
And stay that way forever.*



Love Mumma & Dad



XXXX



DECEMBER

31st December 1980 – **Gemma**, daughter of Kay

31st December 1995 – **Nathaniel**, son of Karen & Danny, sibling to Tracey & Michelle

♥ *Happy Birthday in Heaven, our Forever Angels* ♥

The name of your Child/ren has been published here from the list of current members. If you prefer this to not appear, please let us know and we will respect your wishes. Families are welcome to submit up to 30 words about their child on this anniversary.



ANNIVERSARIES



Wherever a beautiful soul has been, there is a trail of beautiful memories^{RR}

OCTOBER

17th October 2002 – **Andrew**, son of Pauline & Graham, sibling to Rebecca & Sarah

20th October 2011 – **Lisa**, daughter of Annette, sibling to Ian

21st October 2017 – **Matthew**, son of Deborah, sibling to Levi & Natacha

NOVEMBER

9th November 2021 – **Brandon**, son of Kyla & Justin, sibling to William

B - 5 long years since we were all together.

We love and miss you every day.

Time has not healed the pain of missing you,

We are just learning how to carry it.

Love always Mum, Dad and William xxx



27th November 2022 – **Megan**, daughter of Maureen

DECEMBER

25th December 2020 – **Caitlin**, daughter of Megan, sibling to Tyson

26th December 2022 – **Laura**, daughter of Connie & Graeme, sibling to Emma

31st December 2023 – **Tyler**, son of Alison, sibling to Dillon

♥ *"Though you are gone, your light continues to shine in our hearts"* ♥

The name of your Child/ren has been published here from the list of current members. If you prefer this to not appear, please let us know and we will respect your wishes. Families are welcome to submit up to 30 words about their child on this anniversary.



Grief is not the kind of lonely where you miss a call or spend a night alone. It's the kind that makes you feel like you've been dropped into another world, one where no one speaks your language, and everything familiar has gone quiet. You can be surrounded by people, even people who love you, and still feel completely unseen.

Grief is lonelier than you ever imagined. Because no one else lost your person. No one else carries the exact story, the exact moment, the exact ache that you do. People try to understand, they really do, but most don't know what to say. So, they say nothing. Or they change the subject. Or worse, they disappear altogether.

The silence can feel unbearable. And in that silence, you start to wonder if your pain even matters to anyone anymore. Does anyone see how heavy it is? Does anyone notice how much effort it takes just to get through each day?

So, I want to say this clearly:

I see you.

I see your pain. I see your exhaustion. I see the way you carry it all while the world keeps spinning as though nothing happened. You're not imagining how hard this is, it is hard. Devastatingly so.

There's a whole silent, aching circle of us, grieving parents, grieving children, grieving humans, sitting in that same space. We may not talk about it often, but we're here. Quiet, hurting, and holding space for each other the best we can.

You may feel like you're the only one. But you're not. You're one of us. And even if we never meet, even if we never speak, you're not alone.

Because here's the truth:

Grief connects us in ways words cannot. It ties us together silently, invisibly, profoundly. We may walk different paths, but we share the same weight.

And that means something.

WORLD DAY OF REMEMBRANCE FOR ROAD TRAFFIC VICTIMS

SUNDAY 15th NOVEMBER 2026



The World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims is commemorated on the third Sunday of November annually to honour the millions killed and injured on roads. Endorsed by the UN in 2005, it focuses on remembering victims, those who died or were injured from road crashes and the plight of their loved ones who must cope with the consequences of their deaths or injuries, and advocating for improved road safety to prevent future tragedies.

Key Details About the Day

Purpose: The day is dedicated to remembering the victims of road traffic crashes and acknowledging the work of emergency services. It also highlights the emotional and economic impact of road trauma.

Significance: It serves to raise public awareness about the consequences of road crashes.

Origin: Initiated by the British charity RoadPeace in 1993, the day was formally adopted by the UN in 2005.

Observance: Activities often include lighting candles, vigils, memorial services, and public campaigns to encourage safer driving behaviour.

***According to the Association for Safe International Road Travel (ASIRT) nearly 1.25 million people around the world die in road crashes each year. This equals 3,287 deaths a day.**

***A Yellow Candle** is lit for the World Day of Remembrance for Road Traffic Victims to symbolise solidarity, hope, and the commitment to road safety, often directly representing a pledge to drive safely so others survive. It acts as a beacon of light for the millions killed and injured annually, bringing awareness to the preventable nature of road trauma.



The narrative below reflects the chronological stages of grief, shock, and advocacy that Parent/Parents experience when a child's life is cut short by a car crash.

The reality of a parent/parents losing her child to road trauma is a sudden, violent shift from normal life to enduring devastation, a pain documented across global road safety campaigns and support networks like the Australian Road Safety Foundation.

The Illusion of a Normal Day:

The day always begins routinely. Parent/parents recall the last mundane interactions—packing a school lunch, buckling a seatbelt, or sending a child off to get a drink from a local shop. There is no warning. The tragedy often occurs on familiar roads close to home, where safety is entirely taken for granted.

The Point of Impact:

For many parent/parents the nightmare begins with an unread text, a sudden siren in the neighbourhood, or an unexpected knock on the door.

The Scene:

Proximity brings immediate trauma. Some parent/parents arrive at active crash sites, witnessing the physical destruction of the vehicles and emergency responders performing desperate, futile CPR.

The Phone Call:

For those further away, a single phone call permanently divides their timeline into "before" and "after".

The Finality:

Being told a child was pronounced dead at the scene strips away the chance to say a final goodbye, leaving an immediate sense of numbness and disbelief.

The Aftermath and Corroding Grief:

The initial shock gives way to a heavy, physical grief that clinical studies note as one of the most intense forms of human stress.

The Silence:

The parent/parents describe returning to a home that feels entirely empty, where the silence of a missing voice becomes unbearably loud.

Mental Fog:

The trauma frequently causes memory lapses or a feeling of moving through life in permanent slow motion, acting as a psychological shield against the full weight of the loss.

Guilt and "What Ifs":

Even when a crash is entirely the fault of a speeding or intoxicated driver, mothers often battle severe, irrational guilt for not being there to protect their child, or for allowing them to go out that day.

Facing the System:

The trauma is routinely prolonged by the legal system. They must navigate painful court dates, face the drivers responsible, and process sentences that frequently feel entirely inadequate compared to the permanent loss of a life. Families are often forced to rely on community fundraisers just to manage sudden funeral costs and secure a final resting place.

Turning Pain into Purpose:

To prevent their child from becoming just another statistic in the rising road toll, many grieving Parent/Parents eventually channel their exhaustion into road safety advocacy. They share their deeply personal stories through platforms like Hannah's Blue Butterflies Road Safety Awareness or the I4Give Foundation. Their target is the daily complacency of other drivers, pleading with the public to stop speeding, never drive under the influence, and put down mobile phones.



THE SUNFLOWER

The Sunflower is a profound metaphor for navigating grief, representing how the human spirit can persist, find rays of light, and slowly bloom again after a devastating loss. Unlike traditional symbols of bereavement, the sunflower stands as a radiant beacon of enduring love, resilience, and the continuation of life.

The Sunflower Model of Grief

The Dark Centre: The large, dark core of the sunflower represents the raw, unchanging pain of your loss. In the beginning, this darkness feels overwhelming, heavy, and all-consuming.

The Growing Petals: As time passes and you actively nurture your healing, bright yellow petals begin to grow around that dark centre. The dark core never disappears completely, but your life expands around it. The petals represent new memories, moments of joy, and a slow return to living.

Tracking the Light: Young sunflowers practice heliotropism—they face east in the morning and track the sun across the sky to survive. In grief, this serves as a gentle reminder to intentionally turn your face toward whatever brings warmth, connection, and light, even on your darkest days.

Finding Comfort in the Process

If you are using sunflowers to process your own grief, remember that the flower's journey from a tiny seed hidden in the dark dirt to a towering blossom mirrors your own path. It takes time, care, and patience. Even when the petals eventually drop late in the season, they leave behind seeds that feed others and spark new life next spring—a beautiful symbol of the lasting legacy left by those we have lost.



*End of Year
is
Approaching*

As we approach the final weeks of the year, the TCFSA Committee would like to take a moment to look back—not just at the days that have passed, but at the bridge we have built together at TCFSA.

Thank you for showing up, listening and supporting each other. The true heart of our group this year has been the simple act of coming together. Our greatest achievement this year hasn't been 'getting over' our loss, but the fact that we chose to ***not walk alone***. While grief is a personal journey, it doesn't have to be a lonely one. We have shown up for one another, shared the weight of our heaviest days, and created a safe place of warmth and understanding.

I believe by working together, we can continue to provide a safe and supportive environment for bereaved parents to heal and find hope.

We understand that the Christmas/New Year can be a particularly difficult time for those who have experienced loss. We are always here to listen, support, and offer a space for connection and healing. We hope you'll continue to find solace and strength in our group meetings and within the community.

The TCFSA Committee wish you and your loved ones a blessed Christmas with moments of peace and healing.



*With Warmest Regards,
Helen Baczynski (Editor)*



PLEASE NOTE: THERE WILL BE A "CHRISTMAS EDITION NEWSLETTER" COMING OUT IN THE FIRST WEEK OF DECEMBER 2026



May you find Peace and Comfort during the Christmas Season

SUPPORT GROUP MEETINGS

If you will be attending a support group for the first time, please try to call our message bank in advance so that the facilitator knows to expect you.

Phone: 0456 820 133 (Telephone or Text)

6.30pm start first Wednesday of each month.

EASTWOOD COMMUNITY CENTRE

95 Glen Osmond Road

EASTWOOD SA 5063

(Parking is available in Front and at the rear of the Centre, with additional parking nearby)

Committee Meetings dates to be advised held at:

Location to be Advised

OPPORTUNITY

Have you lost a child, grandchild or sibling?

Do you think you could support others who have also?

We are inviting you to join our Volunteer Committee and assist in this Organisation.

Many in need and many ways you could help.

EMAIL ENQUIRIES: tcfsainc@outlook.com

We are on the Internet: www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au

and Facebook: The Compassionate Friends SA Inc

MAIL: PO Box 26, Kent Town SA 5071

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

On behalf of the committee, we wish to acknowledge the following people and businesses who have offered us services or awarded financial contributions such as grants. Also, our sincere appreciation to all the businesses displaying TCFSA pamphlets. We thank them for their generosity and support.

WEBSITE - Alex Kebbell



Support Services

Please find here details of support services which may be of assistance to grieving parents.

Centacare

Centacare offers a confidential, professional counselling service for those confronted by loss and grief and work to provide a sympathetic and practical support as people journey through the grieving process.

www.centacare.org.au

Grieflink

Information resource for the bereaved and grieving, their carers, friends and colleagues, and for health and welfare workers.

www.grieflink.asn.au

LIFELINE

LIFELINE provides a 24hr telephone counselling service that is compassionate, non-judgmental, confidential and supportive of people from all walks of life, in need or in crisis. Counsellors are trained to help with crises in areas such as isolation, relationship difficulties, loss and grief, mental health, etc. LIFELINE has been helping South Australians of all ages, religions and social groups since 1963.

Services provided: Telephone counselling 24 hours 131114 Grief education classes as part of training of telephone counsellors.

www.lifeline.org.au/Get-Help

Loss and Grief Service (Anglicare)

A specialised loss and grief counselling service for people of all ages who are bereaved or experiencing other types of loss. Fee for service with fees structured to ensure everyone is able to access counselling support. AnglicareSA Loss & Grief services also offer support groups and grief counselling for children and young people.

www.anglicaresa.com.au/support-disability/loss-grief

Living Beyond Suicide

A free program providing practical and sensitive support to families and individuals bereaved through suicide. Staff and specially trained volunteers can offer home visits and telephone support. The service is available from 10am to 10pm, seven days a week. Anyone in the community can contact Living Beyond Suicide directly to access support. Living Beyond Suicide hosts the annual walk of remembrance "Walk Through the Darkness" in November.

www.anglicaresa.com.au/support-disability/loss-grief/living-beyond-suicide

Pregnancy Loss Australia

The program offers support meetings across Australia for bereaved families. The meetings offer the opportunity to share, connect & relate with others who have experienced the loss of a baby. The meetings are set in a relaxed friendly atmosphere that enables you find extra support. We hope you come away feeling supported and understood from sharing amongst others who have had similar experiences.

www.pregnancylossaustralia.org.au

SANDS SA - SANDS offers support to all bereaved parents and relatives who have suffered the death of a baby anytime from conception through to 28 days after birth – this includes, miscarriage, neonatal death, stillbirth, ectopic pregnancy and genetic/medically advised termination.

www.sandssa.org

SIDS and Kids (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome)

SIDS and Kids provide bereavement support for all sudden unexpected deaths from conception up to and including 6 years of age. The cause of death could be SIDS, accidental death, fast onset illness, stillbirth or drowning.

www.sidsandkids.org.au

Support after Suicide

The impact of losing someone to suicide can be intense and overwhelming. We have information and resources and we provide counselling and group support directly to those bereaved by suicide. Support After Suicide is a program of Jesuit Social Services and is funded by the Department of Health under the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

www.supportaftersuicide.org.au

Teddy Love Club

Pregnancy and infant loss support.

We are a support program for bereaved parents' family & friends who have suffered any gestation loss of their baby to miscarriage, stillbirth, genetic induction or neo natal death.

www.teddyloveclub.org.au

TCF Victoria

www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au

TCF New South Wales

www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au

TCF Queensland

www.compassionatefriendsqld.org

TCF Western Australia

www.compassionatefriendswa.org.au

TCF Mandurah

www.tcfmandurah.bravehost.com

tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

TCF UK

www.tcf.org.uk

TCF USA

www.bereavedparentsusa.org

Alive Alone

Parents living alone with no surviving children

www.alivealone.org

Rural Resources

Adelaide Hills Bereavement Services

Phone: (08) 8393 1888

Southern Fleurieu Bereavement Support

Phone: (08) 8552 0600



The Compassionate Friends
South Australia

0456 820 133

PO Box 26

Kent Town

S.A. 5071

tcfcsainc@outlook.com

www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au



ABN: 79953386024

Application for Membership

Please complete and return this form by post or email Compassionate Friends SA

Member Details

Membership Type:	☐ Parent	☐ Sibling	☐ Grandparent	☐ Associate
Name:				Date of Birth: / /
Address:				
Postal Address: (if different to above)				
Home Phone:				
Mobile Phone:				
Email Address:				

Joint Member Details (a partner living at the same address can be included in your membership)

Name:				Date of Birth: / /
Home Phone:				
Mobile Phone:				
Email Address:				

Sibling Details (children under 18yrs are included on your membership, and will receive sibling loss support)

Name:				Date of Birth: / /
Home Phone:				Mobile Phone:
Email Address:				

Loved Ones Details (print additional copies for multiple children)

Loved Ones Name:				Date of Birth: / /	☐ Male
Cause of Death:				Date of Death: / /	☐ Female
Include a Birthday Notice in TCFSM Magazine	☐ Yes (optionally enter text below) ☐ No				
Include a Memorial Notice in TCFSM Magazine	☐ Yes (optionally enter text below) ☐ No				

Membership Option

Amount

☐ \$50.00 –Family Membership	Membership including a digital copy of the magazine sent to your email address	
☐ \$30.00 - Single Membership	Membership including a digital copy of the magazine sent to your email address	
☐ Free – Financial Hardship	Free membership is available if you are unable to pay at this time (please consider making a donation to support us)	

Donations

Donations are highly encouraged – please ensure a separate transaction is made for donations to receive a tax-deductible receipt. All donations over \$2 are tax deductible.

We gratefully accept donations via cash or through our website:

<https://compassionatefriendssa.org.au/donate-now/>

Payment Method

Total \$

Direct Deposit	Direct deposit to our Account enter the reference number as your initial and surname	Bank SA	TCFSA
		BSB:	105-151
		Acct:	563946040