

The Compassionate Friends

The Modesto Area Chapter of The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Families After a Child Dies

A self-help organization offering friendship, understanding and hope to bereaved families that have experienced the death of a child.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

July 2022

tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com

MONTHLY MEETING

7:00 PM

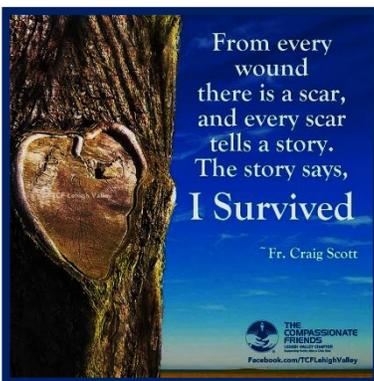
Bridge Covenant Church
2201 Morrill Road
Riverbank, CA 95367
(Corner of Oakdale Rd and Morrill Rd)

Please join us at our
next meeting on
Monday, July 11th

*Please arrive by 6:50 p.m.
so we may begin promptly
at 7:00 p.m.*

Upcoming Meetings

Aug 8th
Sept 12th
Oct 10th



Are you taking a vacation? Visiting family? Moving? Helping someone new to TCF to find a chapter?

Use the link below to find TCF chapters in other cities and states

[Chapter Meeting Locator - Compassionate Friends](#)



Our Mission

*The mission of
The Compassionate Friends:*

When a child dies, at any age, the family suffers intense pain and may feel hopeless and isolated. The Compassionate Friends provides highly personal comfort, hope, and support to every family experiencing the death of a son or a daughter, a brother or a sister or a grandchild, and helps others better assist the grieving family.



MESSAGE LINE

(209)622-6786

Please leave a message and a steering committee member will return your call.



2022 Steering Committee

Tracey Parker
Chapter Leader

Devon Homme
Secretary

Elsie Freeman
Treasurer

Janet Neal
Outreach Coordinator

Vacant Position
Hospitality & Library

Chad Homme
Public Relations

Kris Leitner
Newsletter Editor

Mike & Suzanne Casity
Website

JULY

☆☆INFORMATION☆☆



2nd Monthly Meeting

Thursday, July 28th at 7:00 p.m.

Please join us for an online meeting

Modesto Area TCF Chapter Meeting



Offering Help After A Suicide Death

Friends for Survival Inc. - Suicide Bereavement, Bereavement Support

The group meets, by Zoom, on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 p.m.

Pre-registration is required @ [Meetings \(friendsforsurvival.org\)](https://www.friendsforsurvival.org)



Kristen|Perez

3rd Annual Golf Tournament | 2022

Sunday, July 24, 2022

Player Registration — KCP Golf

The KCP Golf team is happy to announce that we will continue our annual golf tournament this year.

The event will be held at Swenson Golf Course in Stockton, CA.

Please save the date and we hope to see you at this year's event!

Proceeds for this year's event will be supporting [Give Every Child a Chance](#) of Manteca, CA.

Hope to see you there!!

IT'S NOT
TOO LATE!



We are very pleased to welcome back TCF's annual national conference. This year it will be in person! This eagerly anticipated event is for bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings. Those who attend will find renewed hope, ways of coping with their grief, and friendships made with those who truly understand the painful loss of a child, sibling, or grandchild.

The Compassionate Friends 45th National Conference is a much-needed gift that we give to ourselves! There will be inspirational keynote speakers, numerous workshops with a wide variety of topics, the always memorable candle lighting program on Saturday evening, and will culminate with the transformative Walk to Remember on Sunday morning.

This year's conference will be held at the Marriott Marquis Houston. Reservations can now be made [online](#) at TCF's dedicated reservation link. TCF's discounted room rate with Marriott is \$149 per night plus tax. Please note that each attendee will only be able to reserve two rooms. Since the conference begins early on Friday and pre-conference activities are offered on Thursday evening, attendees usually find it beneficial to arrive on Thursday.

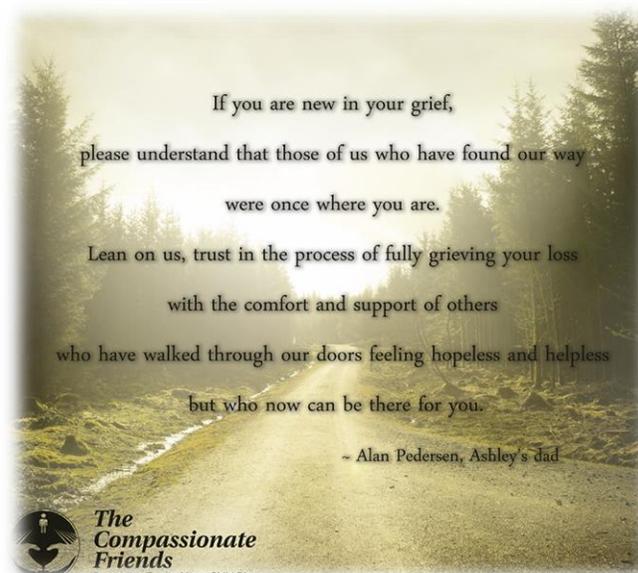
Make your hotel reservations now.

HOTEL RESERVATIONS

For those not able to make your reservations online, call the Marriott Reservation line at 877.688.4323. When calling be sure to mention *The Compassionate Friends National Conference* to receive your room rate.



TCF 45th National Conference
Houston, TX · August 5-7, 2022





Experiencing the loss of a child, no matter their age, is one of the hardest things for any parent to experience. It goes against the natural order of life and is never expected. If you're navigating the grief and heartache that comes with losing a child, let us first say how very sorry we are. And secondly, please know that you're not alone.

Though it may not be talked about often, parental bereavement is more common than you might think. It's common enough that there is even an entire month dedicated to promoting awareness around the pain of loss and grief parents feel after losing a child.

Whether you're anticipating a loss, going through a loss, or know someone who is, there is solace to be found in the opportunity to link arms and join with others who understand the unique grief that comes with the loss of a child. The opportunity comes yearly during Bereaved Parents Awareness Month.

What Is Bereaved Parents Awareness Month?

For many bereaved parents, they suffer a deep hurt that doesn't get seen or understood nearly enough. Society as a whole shies away from talking about death. When it comes to the death of someone's daughter or son, there's even more hesitation to discuss the event.

Why the hesitation? Losing a child is a tragedy of unspeakable proportions. Talking about it forces everyone to look at their own family and ask, "What if that happened to me?" Discussing the death of a child brings everyone face to face with the fact that losing a child can happen to anyone. Whether the child is unborn, two-years-old, or twenty years old, a tragic, unexpected, death could happen. From the place of unspoken-about pain, bereaved parents have started to band together to bring awareness, opportunities for discussion, and support for one another through Bereaved Parents Awareness Month.

When Is Bereaved Parents Awareness Month?

Bereaved Parents Awareness Month occurs every year during July. You may not have heard much about it because the month often gets overshadowed by talk of summer vacation and the July 4th holiday. However, the movement to bring awareness to the journey that bereaved parents face is slowly but surely gaining momentum. Want to see this month of awareness grow? Be a part of helping raise awareness by participating in Bereaved Parents Awareness Month if you've lost a child or if you know someone who has.

How Can You Participate in Bereaved Parents Awareness Month?

There are many ways you can participate in Bereaved Parents Awareness Month. Not all of these activities are going to be the right fit for you. Read through the activities and choose only the ones that bring healing to you or will help bring comfort to a friend or loved one navigating this devastating loss.

Go to an official Bereaved Parents Awareness event

Bereaved Parents Awareness Month has been slowly gaining recognition and ground within the greater bereavement communities. As it continues to grow, you might have an opportunity to attend an event put on for the month. Whether you've lost a child, you know someone who has, or you've never dealt with such tragedy, going is still a good idea.

If you've lost a child, attending an event could help you network and link arms with others who have endured such difficult tragedy. If you're in the camp of knowing someone who has lost a child, you might gain deeper insight on how to love and help them through the trying days, months, and years ahead of them. Even if you haven't had any exposure to someone who has lost a child, attending an event focused on bereaved parents can help grow your compassion, sympathy, and understanding of what this special population needs to survive.

Attend a bereavement support group meeting

Grief support and bereavement support groups are plentiful if you know where to look. There are online grief chat rooms, grief support hotlines, forums, and physical in-person support groups. These options are typically free and open to anyone who is experiencing the pain of losing a loved one. You can find in-person support groups that gather in a variety of places including community centers, religious institutions, and funeral homes.

A note on support groups: If you're not the grieving parent, but you were close to the child who passed away, you're going through your own grief. Grief and bereavement support groups are open and available to you, as well. Be sure to attend to your own healing through the grief you experience.

Go to a memorial held in a child's honor

Do you know of a memorial that's being held for a child who passed away? Perhaps they just passed and you can attend their funeral or memorial service. Maybe they passed several years ago and the family is holding a memorial in honor of their death anniversary or their birthday in heaven. Whatever the occasion, if you have the opportunity to attend a memorial, make every attempt to do so. You may not fully understand the importance of a fifth death anniversary memorial, but if you show up and support the still-grieving parent, it will mean the world to them.

Run a 5K in the child's honor

If appropriate, consider doing something in honor of the child that passed away. Many families choose to run 5Ks in honor of a child who passed away due to a terminal illness such as cancer. Whether the child who passed is your own or a friend's, running in their honor and raising awareness for the disease they died from will help to continue their legacy and keep their memory alive.

Send a message to a bereaved parent

Bereavement doesn't stop after a month, a year, or even ten years. Parents who have lost a child, whether they were two years old or 22-years-old, will feel the loss for the rest of their lives. Though the grief may become lessened over time, the loss and hurt will still be present every day that passes without their child.

If you know a parent who lost a child, send them a message to let them know you're thinking about them and the child they lost. Many bereaved parents encourage their friends and loved ones to not shy away from mentioning their child. Though people seem to think that not mentioning the deceased child will make the incident somehow less painful for their friend or loved one, the opposite is actually true. Talking about the child and even sharing a memory you have can help validate the pain bereaved parents are going through. This will also help keep the child's memory alive, continue their legacy, and help bereaved parents know that they're not alone because someone else remembers their child.

Listen to a bereaved parent

When a death occurs, there are often endless offers of support given to the grieving from friends and family members. A month or two after the funeral, however, those same offers of support wind down. Though they were initially offered shoulders to cry on along with casseroles and offers of help right after their child's death, several months or even years into the grieving process those offers to listen and be present get swallowed up in the business of life.

One of the best things you can do for a grieving parent is to listen to them. Let them tell you how much they miss their child. Listen while they bring up memories of times past or cry as they share how old their child would be. Let them share what they think their child would be doing, what they might look like, or what they miss the most about them. As a friend, you can support a bereaved parent in a special way just by being present and listening.

Spend time with a bereaved parent

This is a little different than the previous encouragement to lend a listening ear. While all grieving parents will need some time away from their daily life and social activities, there will come a time when they need that social life back again. Invite a friend or loved one who lost a child to small group settings with mutual friends. Ask them out to coffee with just you. Encourage them to do something they enjoyed before by having them join you in the activity.

They may say no several times, but keep the offers coming. Provide opportunities for them to spend time with people they love when they're ready. Don't be discouraged if they turn you down. Providing opportunities to spend time with you will be much needed when they're ready to say "yes."

Share articles, information, and personal stories on social media

Because Bereaved Parents Awareness Month is relatively unknown, it's important to be part of the solution in getting the word out. Social media is a great way to do this. You can share articles about grief and parenting, information about how grief changes you, blogs of parents who journal their grief journey after losing a child, and information about Bereaved Parents Awareness Month. Use the power of social media to create buzz and awareness around this important month and those it represents.

Supporting Bereaved Parents

The loss of a child is one of the hardest things for any parent to experience, and support is critical to help them through the years of heartache, pain, and grief. Whether you understand because you've lost a child or you're friends with someone who has, showing support to those in the bereaved parents community can go a long way.

Losing a Sibling: A Different Kind of Grief



A child's loss of a parent or a parent's loss of a child leads to immeasurable grief over generational loss. Loss of a sibling creates a particular kind of "horizontal" grief in which shared histories and futures are fractured, creating uncertainties and insecurities that are often unacknowledged or misunderstood. As a result, surviving siblings may suffer from long-term depression. Because of this, surviving siblings are often called "forgotten mourners."

When an adult loses a sibling, especially one who lives far away, the surviving sibling is often left to mourn alone with much of the support directed towards the grieving spouse, children and parents. When a senior citizen loses a sibling, there is often a lack of good support as society accepts death easier when it comes at an older age. But sibling loss is painful at any age. A senior who has lost a sibling is likely revisiting feelings of other losses including parents, spouses and friends, and likely has fewer family members to offer comfort and support.

Common Feelings for Adult Survivors of Sibling

- Survivor guilt. Surviving siblings can suffer from feelings of failure to protect their sibling, or failure to be supportive of the sibling in life. Fear. A surviving sibling may become fearful of the end of life and have anxiety of how their own families will manage without them.
- Guilt over a rocky childhood. Siblings commonly outgrow childhood rivalries, but guilt over past tensions can surface even when the adult sibling relationship has been strong.
- Anger. A surviving sibling may feel stress or even anger over roles that he is now expected to fulfill such as caring for the nieces, nephews or aging parents.
- Distress. The decisions at time of death often fall onto surviving siblings who must agree on arrangements such as burial or cremation, whole body donation, organ donation, and memorial services. While Science Care whole body donation provides free cremation, transportation and filing of the death certificate, surviving siblings are often accountable for the financial burden of other types of arrangements.

Getting over the loss, or allowing yourself not to

Siblings are always connected in the shared memories, in family discussions, and in memorials. Journaling or sharing your thoughts with others you do not know can also help healing. Remembering your sibling does not have to be sorrowful. Laugh at the memory of the time your sister tried to pierce your ears, or when your brother tried to teach you how to ride a bike.

Society often encourages bereaved individuals to feel guilty for grieving too long. There is no magic technique that will make the grief go away. There is no defined right way to grieve length of time that one is expected to move on.

Moving on with your life does not have to mean forgetting your lost loved one. In fact, allowing yourself to hold your grief in a special place in your heart can help you to be okay to move on with your life.

There are many ways to create a living memorial by turning grief into something positive, including continuing charitable work your sibling did, establishing a fund in honor of your sibling, and being a good listener for another person going through a similar loss. Remember your sibling by pursuing the happiness your sibling would want you to have.



In this edition of **Resources & Support**, we are showcasing a few resources for those who have lost their child, sibling or grandchild who were in the military (either active duty or a veteran) or who worked in law enforcement.

BOOKS & BLOGS:

Healing Your Grieving Heart After a Military Death: 100 Practical Ideas for Family and Friends ~ by Alan D. Wolfelt & Bonnie Carroll

WEBSITES:

<https://www.americasgoldstarfamilies.org/>

<https://www.concernsofpolicesurvivors.org/handsonprograms>

<https://www.taps.org/>

<https://www.mhanational.org/bereavement-and-grief-military-families-and-communities>

Officer Down Memorial Page-<https://www.odmp.org/>

https://www.vetcenter.va.gov/Bereavement_Counseling.asp

PODCASTS:

<https://www.officerdownmemorialpodcast.com/>

FOR FALLEN FIREFIGHTERS-<https://www.everyonegoeshome.com/resources/podcasts/>

♥ LOVE GIFTS ♥

Love gifts can be made in memory of your child, sibling or grandchild in any amount. Donations received are used for our annual Candle Lighting Program each December, for sending our monthly newsletter via US mail and for community outreach. We are here to reach out to other bereaved families who may not be aware we are here to lend our support after the death of a child. Please send your tax-deductible donation to the PO Box below.

In loving memory of ALL our beloved children

If you wish to make a Love Gift Donation

Please fill out the information below and send with a check to:

**The Compassionate Friends
Modesto Area Chapter
PO Box 578713
Modesto, CA 95357**

Child, Sibling or Grandchild _____

Date of Birth _____ / _____ Date of Passing _____ / _____

Donation amount _____

Your Name _____

Telephone _____ Your email address _____

Your address _____ City _____ Zip _____

Would you like your gift listed in our monthly newsletter in memory of your child, grandchild or sibling?

The amount will remain anonymous Yes ___ No ___

The Compassionate Friends is a 501 (c) (3) non-profit organization. Donations are tax deductible.

Check out our closed Facebook page, *The Modesto Area of TCF*. Make a request to join the page and an Administrator will approve your request.

Join us on our Instagram account page. You can find us at – *modestoriverbankarea_tcf*.

Our Steering Committee wants to provide the best possible support to each of our TCF Chapter members and friends. Please contact a member of the Steering Committee with any concerns you have or any ideas about how our Chapter can be of support to you and others. We're also available if you'd like to talk about your child or some aspect of the challenges of your bereavement journey. You can reach us by email at: tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com or by phone at 209-622-6786 or on Facebook.

OUR CHAPTER PHONE TREE

If you are struggling and need to talk, we are here for you. We have set up a phone tree and someone is available day or night. You can call or text us at (209)622-6786 and one of the Steering Committee will get back to you as soon as possible. You may also reach someone through the email address, tcfmodestoriverbank@gmail.com, or on our private Facebook page, which you can find by searching for *The Modesto-Riverbank Area Chapter of TCF*.

If you would like to be a part of our phone tree and be available for other members, please contact us through one of the above mentioned methods and we will add your name and number to our list.



Please remember to send in your child's photo so that it can be added to the new TCF Modesto-Riverbank website. Send photos to: scasity@comcast.net

Visit our website for information and to stay up to date on chapter events.

www.modestoriverbanktcf.org

Support our chapter by using Amazon Smile

An infographic with a blue background and white text, titled "How to turn on AmazonSmile in the mobile app". It lists three steps: 1. Join AmazonSmile, 2. Get the app, and 3. Turn on AmazonSmile. Each step includes brief instructions on how to proceed.

How to turn on AmazonSmile in the mobile app

- 1**
Join AmazonSmile
If you are not already an AmazonSmile member, sign up on your web browser. Simply select your favorite charity to start generating donations, at no cost to you.
- 2**
Get the app
Download or update to the latest version of the Amazon Shopping app on your phone. You can find it in the App Store for iOS or Google Play for Android.
- 3**
Turn on AmazonSmile
Open the app and find 'Settings' in the main menu (≡). Tap on 'AmazonSmile' and follow the on-screen instructions to turn on AmazonSmile on your phone.

smile.amazon.com

(click on the link above for further information).

AmazonSmile is a simple way for you to support your favorite charitable organization every time you shop, at no cost to you. When you shop at smile.amazon.com, you'll find the exact same low prices, vast selection and convenient shopping experience as Amazon.com, with the added benefit that Amazon will donate 0.5% of your eligible purchases to the charitable organization of your choice. You can choose from over one million organizations to support.