“I had a child who died.” How simple these words are, yet how painful they are to say. The death of a child is the harshest blow life has to offer; it destroys our trust in the world at the most basic level. Grief is our total response to the death of a child; our body, mind, emotions and spirit all react to the loss. While many of us wish to stop the intense grief work we are doing, we find it impossible for many reasons.

First, grief is an act of love, not a lack of strength or faith. The more we loved our child, the greater will be our grief. The more integrated our lives were with the life of our child, the more we will miss his or her very presence. The intensity of our grief is often representative of the intensity of our love.

Second, grief is a necessary process that we must go through in order to maintain our wholeness and sanity. If we do not grieve, we will not heal. One of the earliest and hardest lessons we bereaved parents learn is that men and women grieve differently. Women, in general, grieve more openly than do men, and women on the whole, are more comfortable verbally expressing their feelings of loss. While segments of our culture dictate that it is more “manly” not to cry, we know this is not true. In fact, it has recently been found that tears of sadness contain an enzyme which inhibits the concentration of gastric acids, therefore, crying during times of stress will actually decrease the incidence of gastric ulcers many of us develop as a result of our loss.

Grief work also helps us to complete unfinished business with our child and close the past relationship that we had. We will never “get over” the loss of our child, nor would we ever really want to. We are who we are partly because of our relationship to that child. Our lives will always be influenced by our son or daughter, but most of us will eventually learn to live a meaningful life, despite our tragedy. Our child will always be with us in spirit and in love and we often feel a need to hold on to tangible items, such as toys or clothes, to maintain that feeling of closeness. But, intense grief work allows us to let go of the relationship we had and create a new relationship with our child. Our remembrances, love and feelings of oneness with our child can never be destroyed. I cannot see or touch my Philip, but I vividly remember him. I have completed earthly mothering, but I still have an intense mother-child relationship with my son.

Grief over the death of a child is the hardest work that most of us will ever do. While we all wish for the pain to stop, we need to remember that we grieve intensely because we loved intensely. It is unrealistic to expect the grief to ever totally go away, because the love we have for our child will never go away.

Our grief is an act of love and is nothing for which we should be ashamed.
Connect with us!

Check out our newly designed website and new Facebook page:

www.sidsresources.org


Note that our old Facebook page will be closed soon– we want all of our "friends" to "like" the new page! Thanks!

Internet Support Group for SIDS families

Are you a member of Facebook? If so, you can join other parents at the SIDS Resources’ Support Group on Facebook. Contact Sara Tamburrino at stamburrino@sidsresources.org and let her know you are interested in joining...she’ll add you to the group. This is a place where you can leave messages, receive and/or offer support from other parents who have also been through the experience of a baby dying either of SIDS, SUDI or other sudden unexpected causes of death. If you have questions, please contact Sara at the e-mail above or at 573-364-5900.

This newsletter is made possible by a generous grant from the Employee Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis.
Loss of a Child
In memory of Trenton Scott Barker

“The pain of the loss of a child never subsides, but I have found a lot of peace with prayer”

God, I’ve lost a little piece of heaven today Lord, you have called my child home. I’m angry, scared and mad at you today Lord, I feel very little of your presence in my soul. I’m going to bow my head now Lord and break down a little bit and cry. The small part of my soul that feels your presence knows the truth somehow Lord and realizes my child has gone home. Someday, I will enter the Kingdom of Heaven and I too will be home and I will see my child that day Lord, I know that deep down in my soul.

Amen,
Scotty Barker

Alike but Unlike
written by Dennis Klass
St. Louis, MO

We are alike, at the same time we are very unlike. Our stories are different, our solutions are different, our ways of handling grief are different; but we are alike in that we all hurt to the depths of our capacity to hurt, we experience many of the grief symptoms alike, and we are alike in our need for help. While we cannot give each other definite answers or take away each other’s pain, we can help each other by simply being there and listening to each other.

Reprinted from the Bereaved Parents USA Newsletter, St. Louis Chapter  www.bpusastl.org

Monthly Infant Loss Groups
Listed below are regular meeting times in each region. Meeting dates and times are subject to change. Please call to confirm time and location. Family members and friends are encouraged and welcome to attend.

Eastern Region
St. Louis

3rd Monday of the month at 7pm
SiDS Resources’ office
1120 S. 6th Street
St. Louis, MO 63104
Call Lori at 314-822-2323 or 1-800-421-3511

Western Region
Kansas City

4th Wednesday of the month at 6pm
Call Donna at 816-569-6956 for group location

South Central/SWest Region– Springfield area

Call Sara at 573-364-5900

If you want to connect with others who have experienced the sudden death of a baby, please consider joining our Yahoo group. This internet support group is open only to families involved with SIDS Resources– no one else has access to this discussion board. You may share something about your child, your experience, or ask questions. Please email Sara at stamburrino@sidsresources.org and request to participate in the Yahoo group.

Bi-Monthly Update March/April 2012
SIDS Resources' staff respects the right to privacy of each individual/family served. No confidential information is shared with any other entity unless it is de-identified. Information that might be shared with another public health organization may include: number of deaths annually, percentage of deaths with a specific risk factor, etc. All information is shared in categorical terms and not linked to any specific case. This information is shared for the purpose of knowing how to direct public health risk reduction messages. Phone call content and support group content is kept confidential.

SIDS Resources' may also share information for the purposes of epidemiological research in order to find trends in the numbers. Again, this information will be de-identified. Information shared may include: age categories of infants at the time of death, how many deaths occurred at home or child care, etc. No specific information about any situation is ever shared by SIDS Resources without the permission of the baby's family.

Parents and family members are encouraged to share contact information with other families at support group. Sharing this information is optional for each family member.

Donations made to SIDS Resources in memory or in honor of a loved one may be listed in E newsletters, based upon the assumption of implied/inherent consent to honor or memorialize the loved one. If you want a donation to remain anonymous, it should be designated as such.

**Anything you’d like to Share?**

**We’d love to hear from you...**

Send us your personal story and we'll include it in a future update. Remember to include your name, your baby's name, birthdate, angel date, and a photo if you'd like.

We would also like to hear about any NEWS in your lives. Please let us know how we can spread your word. Contact us at 1-800-421-3511 or email Lori at lbehrens@sidsresources.org

Let us know....subsequent baby news, new job, a special event, anything you'd like to share. Thank you!
Regional Activities

for SIDS Resources’ event information, visit www.sidsresources.org

Eastern Region
St. Louis

Sat. May 19th, 2012
Strides for SIDS
Carondelet Park, St. Louis, MO
email Lori at lbehrens@sidsresources.org for more information

Western Region
Kansas City

Sun. May 20th, 2012
Tee it Up for SIDS Golf Tournament
Swope Memorial Golf Course, Kansas City, MO

South Central/SWest Region – Springfield

Please contact Sara Tamburrino if you have any event ideas or want to schedule a SIDS training– 573-364-5900 or stamburrino@sidsresources.org

Walter Knoll Florist’s Lend a Hand program
If you order flowers from Walter Knoll, you may choose SIDS Resources as your charity of choice! $2.00 of your order will be donated to us. Details at www.wkf.com

North Central
Jefferson City/Columbia

Sat. July 28th, 2012
Divine Run
Kansas Speedway, Kansas City, KS
Questions? email Melissa at mmmerriam@sidsresources.org

All event details can be found on our newly designed website! www.sidsresources.org
Click on the event banners on the home page for details.
March/April 2012 Bi-Monthly Update

We hope you benefit from receiving this update...

Please let us know your suggestions and ways we can continue to improve our services. If you would like to add a family member or friend to this mailing, please contact us. If for any reason you would like to be removed from this mailing, please call 1-800-421-3511 or email Lori at lbehrens@sidsresources.org

To access support services for bereaved families, or to schedule a SIDS training for professional and community groups, please call 1-800-421-3511 or contact your regional SIDS Resources’ office.

www.sidsresources.org

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