

A Living Faith

(author unknown)

I've dreamed many dreams that never came true.
I've seen them vanish at dawn.
But I've realized enough of my dreams, thank God,
to make me want to dream on.

I've prayed many prayers when no answer came,
though I waited patiently and long.
But answers have come to enough of my prayers,
to make me keep trusting on.

I've sown many seeds that fell by the way,
for the birds to feed upon.
But I've held enough golden sheaves in my hand,
to keep me sowing on.

I've drained the cup of disappointment and pain,
and gone many days without song.
But I've sipped enough nectar from the roses of life,
to make me want to live on.

I haven't accomplished every goal in my life,
as the years have come and gone.
But I've experienced enough success in my work,
to make me want to work on.



Notes From Open Arms



Community Health Network offers a support group every 3rd Thursday of each month from 7 to 9 pm. You may join us in the Professional Building Conference Room A located at 7250 Clearvista Pkwy. Please contact Joni Cutshaw at (317) 621-5275 with any questions or additional needs. Call us or email us if you no longer want to receive a newsletter.

This newsletter is a support group in print offering resources, articles, stories and poems from caregivers, grief educators, authors and most importantly, from the community.

Inside you will find information that has been requested by your peers and information that others would like to share. If you have any questions, comments or news to share, we encourage you to do so.

Please contact the editor, Joni Cutshaw at jcutshaw@eCommunity.com or (317) 621-5275.

Indianapolis Pregnancy Loss Support Groups

Reservations are not required. There is no fee.

Community Health Network, North Campus
7250 Clearvista Parkway
Professional Building Conference Room A
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
3rd Thursday of every month
Contact: Joni Cutshaw at (317) 621-5275

St. Vincent Hospital, North West Campus
New Hope, 8450 N. Payne Road
7:00 to 10:00 p.m.
First Thursday of every month
Contact: Sharon Mason or
Cathy Carroll
at (317) 415-7494



St. Francis Hospital, South Campus
3145 E. Thomson Road
Carson Square Community Relations Room
7:00 to 9:00 p.m.
Second Tuesday of every month
Contact: Marcia Jenkins at (317) 865-5199

Heart Prints Support Group
An invitation has been extended to all bereaved parents to join a bereavement support group called "Heart Prints" at Holy Spirit at Geist Church. The group meets every last Tuesday of every month at 7pm. For more information, please call Kristy at (317) 823-5603 or Sandy at (317) 570-2397.

Maternity Services/Open Arms
7150 Clearvista Drive
Indianapolis, IN 46256

Community Health Network

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Open Arms

FALL 2008

Nana Will See You in Heaven

By: Sharon Worley

As I anticipated the birth of my fifth grandchild, I did so with much prayer and some anxiety. After three miscarriages and two live births, my daughter was expecting again. The doctors were proactive with her personal care to try to catch any problems early on. In her eighth month, both she and the baby were doing well. The ultrasounds all showed a small baby but active with a good heartbeat. Beth was now going for checkups every two weeks. On the morning of August 15, 2007, she and her husband, Greg, went in for the routine checkup. I kept Noah and Audrey (the excited big brother and sister) while they went to the appointment. I had gone with Beth several times before, so I knew about how long the visits would take. When they had not returned or called when I thought they should, I became a little concerned but thought that maybe they had gone to get something to eat or do some shopping. I had tried to call her on her cell phone several times. When she finally answered, the news was not good. The only words she could say were, "Mom, they can't find the baby's heartbeat!" Beth asked me not to alarm the children but I could not hold back my emotions. I prayed that there was a mistake and that the baby was okay.

The next step was for Beth to be admitted into the hospital to be induced. As I was there with her in the delivery room, I asked God for a miracle and still hoped for a live birth. "If I could take your place, I would," I told my daughter.

The time finally came that the precious little baby boy was born into this world. God had answered my prayer but not in the way that I had hoped. Joel Thomas Engle was stillborn at 12:34 PM on Thursday, August 16, 2007 weighing 2 pounds 4 ounces and 12 1/4 inches long. We finally had the answer to what had happened to this baby we so wanted. He had become tangled up in his umbilical cord and strangled.

One year later, we are still wondering and asking God why he took our baby from us. We would have given him all the love, care, attention, and guidance he would have needed. We may never know the answer but we do know that Joel Thomas is in Heaven and we will one day see him again.

Our thoughts and prayers go out to the countless numbers of mothers, fathers, grandparents and families who have gone through and will go through this trial.

Our Sweet Little Boy

By Beth Engle

In loving memory of Joel Thomas Engle
Born/Passed on August 16, 2007

We love you so much,
Our sweet little boy,
You definitely are our pride and our joy.

You're God's little angel,
You're safe in His arms,
Away from the world
and all of it's harm.

God took you to Heaven,
We may never know why,
But He'll open our eyes
in the sweet by and by.

I think of you daily,
You're always in my heart.
I'll love you forever, we will never part.

So, we'll meet you in Heaven,
My sweet little boy,
Daddy's pride and Mommy's joy.

Love, Mommy

SEPT. 7

When Grandparents Grieve - National Grandparents Day

By Joni Cutshaw, RN
Community Health Network Open Arms Coordinator

When you have experienced the loss of a grandchild to miscarriage, stillbirth or newborn death, your grief may be compounded because you hurt for your adult child as well. You may experience some of the same feelings your son or daughter is expressing. These may include shock, disbelief, anger and sadness. Your son or daughter may not realize you are also grieving, or you may feel you can not let your feelings out because you want to be strong for your family. The loss of a grandchild may resurface feelings from pregnancy losses you may have experienced. You may have feelings of "it should have been me". The death may feel out of order in the life cycle.

You may feel you want to take a major lead in your adult child's activities of daily life. You may avoid potential hard feelings if you have open conversations with them and find out what would be most helpful in their life. Be cautious about moving baby items or putting away nursery items. This can be very hurtful for the parents after the death of their baby.

Many older adults dream about being a grandparent some day. Old toys and children's books may have been put away for that someday grandchild, and now your heart is broken. Feelings may move from sadness and anger, to hopelessness, emptiness or lack of interest which may make concentrating on life hard. It may help to find someone you trust, and spend time with them talking about your feelings. Journaling, artwork, exercise, and gardening are other great ways to get feelings out.

Your son or daughter will need time and love to work through their grief. You may have a difficult journey ahead of you to walk with your son or daughter. It may feel foreign to you to take pictures and spend time looking at them and other memory items. Many parents have taught the hospital team that this is very helpful. Try to respect your son or daughter's feelings and allow them to talk. Try to participate in rituals and memorials your family plans. Your son or daughter may need to take one or two years maybe longer to work through the grief process. But, if your son or daughter does not seem to be making some progress and is having more good moments than bad after about three months, you may need to suggest they call their doctor.

When other pregnancies come into the family this may be an especially hard time for your son or daughter. Remember to keep room in your heart for the baby who has died. Parents often worry they themselves may forget the baby. You can be a safe haven for them to remember their baby.

Don't forget to take care of yourself so you can be there for your family by eating a well balanced diet, exercising, and getting a good night's sleep.

Staying In Touch

By Joni Cutshaw, RN
Community Health Network Open Arms Coordinator

As I prepare for Support Group each month there is such anticipation in my heart. Who will be there, and how have their lives changed since I last spent time with them? Time in research and writing a power point is where my energy is placed hoping to have something to offer the wonderful people who have come into my life because of tragedy in their life. I know there is no magic formula that will make it all better or even ease the pain. That is the hardest part for a nurse who lives to serve, to make things better and to ease pain.

What an honor it is for me when grieving families allow me into such a sacred place. I am a stranger when we first meet. I am immediately moved to want to be part of the family's life when I see the depth of loss on the parents' faces. I have held the tiniest of miracles in my hand. What a privilege to bathe and care for these beautiful babies. It is difficult for some family members to understand why we work so hard to create memories in the hospital. After fifteen years of working with families who have experienced a pregnancy loss, I have witnessed how the memories help with the mending of hearts. Walking along side families during this very difficult time and spending time with them in their grief is the best we can offer.

If you have experienced a miscarriage, stillbirth or newborn death, Community Health Network expresses our deepest sympathy. Our hope is that the Open Arms newsletter, Christmas Memorial, Walk to Remember, Support Group, eCommunity.com/openarms and Memorial Service provide connections for families, gives an opportunity to express feelings and creates memories. If staying in touch with us or other families is important to you please take advantage of our opportunities.

• **The Walk to Remember** is October 4th at St. Francis Beech Grove. This is a beautiful family time of remembering. The air is usually crisp with an autumn feel. A flower to take home for planting is provided. Bring blankets or lawn chairs to sit on at the park as we read your baby's name. You may want to put a special message on the balloon you release.

• **Our Christmas Memorial** is Thursday, December 4th at Ellenberger United Church of Christ.

• Please consider coming to at least one **Open Arms Support Group** to see if it might benefit you. Support Group is on the third Thursday of each month.

• You can keep in contact with other families who have experienced a pregnancy loss on our **bereavement blog** from our website www.ecommunity.com/openarms.

• If you have **poems or stories** you would like to share with other families through the Open Arms newsletter, please let us know jcutshaw@ecommunity.com.



Babylove Moments Jewelry features the unique and precious footprints of your child, presented in the form of solid fourteen karat gold pendants, charms, cufflinks, and tie tacs. Each and every piece of Babylove Moments Jewelry is handmade by local Indiana artist Christine Timberlake, who considers it an honor and privilege to create unique and lasting pieces of wearable art, inspired by the beautiful footprints of each precious child. To learn more about Babylove Moments, please visit www.buybabylove.com.

Open Arms PLAN FOR SURVIVAL

How can I help my body heal when I am grieving?

- Eat a balanced diet
- Get a good night's sleep
- Try to keep a routine
- Exercise is great
- Avoid alcohol and drugs as an escape
- Find someone to talk to
- Take a good multivitamin with folic acid
- Watch caffeine intake
- Relaxation exercises

Things to think about while I am grieving

- Prepare for due date
- Prepare for anniversary of birth date
- Holidays: Mothers Day, Fathers Day may be tough days
- Celebrate the way you want. Maybe cut down on what you do.
- Next time of menstruation may be hard
- Grief work can take 1-2 years or more
- If good days aren't coming more often after 3 months or so, professional help may be needed

Things I can do to help when coping with grief

- Keep a journal
- Write a letter to the baby
- Bible study and meditation
- Take a long bath
- Aromatherapy/Massage Therapy
- Yard work/cutting grass/pulling weeds
- Know the waves of grief may be triggered when they are not expected
- Let others do for you
- Grow on as a new person
- Art therapy
- Music
- Read what other parents have written
- Find meaningful rituals

Families sometimes feel that they will not survive the loss of their baby. A friend once asked the Dalai Lama a question. Her question was, "What is the fastest way to inner peace." He thought for some time and said, "Eat well....Get good rest...And do good work." This is great advice.

Open Arms Open Chat

Bulletin Board of news to know and share!

October is National Perinatal Bereavement Month!

October 19th Burial of Miscarriage Ashes

Community Health Network offers a graveside ceremony and burial of ashes for families who have experienced a pregnancy loss prior to 20 weeks and who wish to come together to honor their baby's memory during a communal burial. These services are held at Washington Park Cemetery. Flanner and Buchanan Funeral Centers donate their services for cremation, holding of ashes, the gravesite and services for the graveside ceremony. There is no charge for this service. For more information please call (317) 621-5275.

Walk to Remember October 4th

St. Francis Hospital in Beech Grove, 1600 Albany Street at 11:00. Come early to write a message on your balloon or buy a T-shirt if you would like. Some families bring a blanket or chair to sit on while their baby's name is read.

Share Your Story

We are looking for stories or poems that you have created in memory of your baby to print in the newsletter. It is the hope of Open Arms that this newsletter becomes the voice of the community. As a community, we would like to hear of your "safe arrivals." Please contact us with your news so that we can celebrate with you and your new baby. If you have news to share, comments or resources that you have found helpful, please contact Joni at jcutshaw@ecommunity.com or at (317) 621-5275.

Book Review and Online Resources

Mothers in Sympathy and Support - Miss - www.missfoundation.org
Support for the whole family!

Subsequent Pregnancy after a Loss-SPALS - www.spals.com
A discussion list for persons considering a subsequent pregnancy after a loss

Compassionate Friends
www.compassionatefriends.org
Support for families that have lost a child at any age

Support for Grandparents: Alliance of Grandparents, A Support in Tragedy (AGAST)
www.agast.org

Heart Works: A Father's Grief; Peterson, J.

Forgotten Tears A Grandmothers Journey

Through Grief, by Nina Bennett

Grieving Grandparents
by Sherokee Isle and Lori Leininger

Men and Grief, Carol Standacher

Aromatherapy: Clinical Aromatherapy can be used to promote wellbeing and relive anxiety, emotional stress, and aid coping with grief through the use of essential oils. If you would like to learn more about our clinical aromatherapy services, please contact Pam Conrad, RN, clinical aromatherapist at Wellspring Pharmacy, located in the gallery of Community Hospital North. Pam can be reached at (317) 621-9006, or at pconrad@ecommunity.com.

Books and resources available online at www.ecommunity.com/openarms.



Community Health Network Foundation is proud to provide financial support for Open Arms. The Foundation is the not-for-profit philanthropic organization of Community Health Network. Proceeds support programs and services that benefit patients, families and employees of the network, while ensuring the exceptional experience. The foundation's philanthropic efforts, scholarship programs and promotion of healthy lifestyles inspire a culture of philanthropy throughout central Indiana. For more information about the foundation, or ways you can get involved, call 317-355-5261 or visit ecommunity.com/foundation.