# Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. Newsletter



Mother's Day, just those words, for some ladies is so difficult to hear. Maybe it's because you are struggling to become a mom, or you are a baby-loss mom only, or a baby-loss mom with other children.

Mother's Day is a bittersweet day for me, as I am sure it is for you. I am a mother of 4, two here with me, and two that have passed. I always feel a little guilty on Mother's Day. I celebrate being a Mom to my two teenagers, but in my mind, it's a really hard day. I "should" be celebrating with all 4 of my children. Thankfully, my husband quickly realized that I needed a little bit of "me" time on Mother's Day, to grieve. It might be just by being alone for a little while to write down some of my thoughts, or I need to take a little drive. These drives usually bring me to one of my favorite parks, Glen Falls in Williamsville. There is a bench that faces the waterfall, close to the parking area, but away from the busyness of the park. There I can pause, think and reflect on what being a mom means to me.

Last year, I felt so guilty, more than I normally had in past years. Let me explain. In the few weeks leading up to Mother's Day, I had met some new people. There are always the typical questions people ask, "What do you do? Do you have any kids? etc." I was having a rough few weeks. One person in particular sticks in my mind. She was a sweet older lady. She asked how many kids I had, after I had mentioned that my son worked at Wegmans. I really wasn't in the mood to get into a deeper conversation about infant loss and seeing her inevitable pitying smile. So I said, "just 2". How many times have we been there? It has been countless times for me, but sometimes it's just easier to tell people only about the living children. She, of course, then asked how old they were. When she heard that they were in high school, she was interested in if they had plans for their future. I was so relieved that I didn't

say "4" because then I would have felt obligated to share my story and that day, I just couldn't. Soon after, the kind lady and I parted ways. Then the guilt set in.

I felt horribly guilty. Guilty for only saying that I had 2 children. Guilty for not acknowledging our 2 babies in that moment. Guilty for not having the desire to share my story with a complete stranger and bring awareness to infant loss. Mostly guilty, though, for feeling like a failure as a Mother. It wasn't reasonable, the guilt that I was placing on myself. Just because I am a bereaved mother, does not mean that I have to tell every person I meet about my babies. I needed to get to a place where I allowed myself to keep their names and memory to myself.

I was recently talking with a friend on this subject. I had asked her about when people ask her how many children does she have, does she include her baby that passed? She said that she doesn't. Overall, it didn't matter her reasons. Maybe she didn't want to share, because it was too personal for her, or maybe it was still too difficult to talk about, or maybe she just decided it wasn't any one else's business. Whatever her reasons, that is what is best for her in her journey.

I needed to find out what is best for me. Was it to shout their names from a rooftop every chance I could? Was it to keep their names and memory close to my heart? Was it best for me to pick and choose when I shared their story?

I came to a startling realization for me, sitting and watching the waterfall at Glen Park, that day. Each day, I have a different "best for me". It's 100 percent okay if I only say "2" one day, and then "4" and share their story days later. There is no right way, or wrong way, to be on this journey. We should never be placing guilt on ourselves for days that we just can't bring ourselves to share their story. I never want my babies' stories to feel like an obligation that I need to share. I want their memory and their names to be remembered.

So to fellow Moms: never feel guilty for sharing or not sharing. Never feel obligated to share, when you are having a hard day or week. Give yourself some grace - you are the only one that knows what your "best for me" is each day. You are enough.



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forget-Jou-Vots

**Michael Anthony Anderson** Always, always in our Hearts! Love, Nana and Papa xxxooo We love you always! Love, Mommy, Daddy, & Mia Parents: Michael and Kelly Anderson

Lilya Raine Arena Hugs to the sky, baby! Mama, Daddy, and little sister, Willow love and miss you. Parents: Kelly and Michael Arena

Jivae Andrea Báez December 28, 2012 Our beautiful baby girl... we love and miss you every second of every day. Thank you for your sweet baby brother Jamari. All our love all our life. Love, Mommy and Daddy. Parents: Evelyn and Jarred Báez

Benjamin Matthew Brightman March 25, 2021 miss you more & more. We will never stop Mommy, Daddy, and Emma love you to the moon and back. "Sweet Dreams Little Man..." Parents: Kurtis and Carrie Brightman

Cecelia Rose Callea You are our shining moon and shooting star. Thank you for inspiring us and always watching Parents: LaRue and Leilan Jonathan over our family. You are so loved and so missed. Love, Mama, Papa, Thomas, and Matteo Parents: Tom and Mary Callea

Rily James Croce	March 8, 2010
Gabrielle Irene Croce	August 3, 2010
Baby Croce	December 9, 2013
Parents: Lena and Dan Croce	

Kayonna Marie Darrell **Kingston Antonio Darrell** We Love You Always! Not a day goes by that we don't think of you both! You both will forever be in our hearts!! We are sad that you both are not here with us, but it helps knowing that you have each other!! Love, Mommy, Daddy, Big Sisters Elana, Avianna and Savannah. Big Brother Brandon

#### Parents: Ashley Hunt and Wendell Darrell Jr Baby D March 11. 2013 Selah Grace Doring

We carry you in our hearts - Forever & Always,

Mommy, Daddy, Preston & Kendra Parents: Emily and Todd Doring

#### April 5, 2005 Reid Hamilton

We miss you more and more each day. We think about you every minute of every day. We know you are watching over us. We love you so very much. Love, Daddy, Mommy, Pierce, Rory, Burke, Reagan, Riley, and Seamus September 26, 2009 Parents: Molly and Andrew Hamilton

> John Paul Jerebko November 18, 1999 Our little angel! Love, Mom, Dad, Jakob & Jackson Parents: Peter and Lisa Jerebko

#### **Baby Boy Jonathan**

I think about you everyday. I wonder what you would look like, sound like. Then I look at your siblings & your nieces & nephews & I can just imagine you would look & sound just like ALL of them. Even though our Lives move on everyday, I thinking about you or Loving you or wondering what milestones you would be accomplishing. Forever Loved & sadly missed by, Mom, Dad, Big Sister's Krysten, Kaytlyn, Kamden, Big Brother December 16, 2018 Klyde, Nephews Kortlnd, Kreese, Delltoh, & Nieces Kenzley & Emileigh Blue

> Marina Kim August 3-4, 2005 **Ella Grace Kim** June 8, 2007 We love you and think of you often. Please watch over us... now and always. **10** Parents: Dawn and Mark Kim

013 Bud Charles Mott Theresa Marie Mott "Blueberry" Mott October 16, 2018 Baby Mott



April 27, 2021 Miss you with all of our hearts, Theresa, Bud, "Blueberry" and Baby Mott. God knows our pain and sadness. We know that someday, we will see you again. All our love ~ Daddy, Mommy & Allison Parents: Timothy and Beth Mott

#### Noah Navarrette

Feb. 12- Sept. 12 2021

Te amare para el resto de mi vida mi amor. Siempre. Parent: Alexa Mancilla

#### October 30, 2013 Michael James Quigley October 24, 1992

Miss you more and more! 'Til we meet again! Love, Mom Parent: Debi Zmuda

#### April 18, 2021 Jacob Wesley Scott

#### May 27, 2000 We love you and think of you everyday! Butterfly kisses, buddy! Love, Mom, Dad, Thomas, & Mandy Parents: Phillip and Christine Scott

**Steven James Serrano** March 16, 2006 Parent: Lisa Graziano

April 25, 2019

#### Nicholas Mark Weld

"You are my angel, my darling, my star, and my love will find you, wherever you are." Love, Mom, Dad, Benjamin, Amelia, and June 8. 2018 Jonathan Parents: Nate and Joanna Weld

> May 22, 2019 **Margie Faye Willis** Parents: Katie and Brandon Willis

#### Grace Lee Zimmer April 12, 2012

Until we meet again, fly sweet butterfly, fly! A moment in our arms, A lifetime in our hearts. Love, Mom, Dad, Hunter and Luke Parents: Donna and Russell Zimmer



Interested in submitting a memorial or announcing your Rainbow Baby?

Please email your baby's "Forget-You-Not" or Safe Arrival to Newsletter@wnypbn.org. Submissions are due by the 15th of the month prior to the issue month. Family and friends are encouraged to provide a submission.

As I write this, I am about to celebrate one twin's birthday and one twin's angelversary. This time of year, I always set aside time to look through the photos, videos, and other keepsakes from Nicholas's brief, but beautiful, life: hospital bracelets, books, journals, and other comfort items that are given to bereaved mothers before they leave the hospital with empty arms. I flip through the book I read to him before I said my final goodbye; the same book with his footprints stamped on the inside cover that I will one day give to my living children. I reread the cards I received during this time in my life, all of which I have saved. I gently unfold and take out his clothes and blanket, holding it up to my face, desperately wishing to experience his sweet baby smell.

etter from the By Joanna Weld

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It's amazing how looking at these items brings me back. Some things are clear in my mind, others I would give anything to remember. My body relives the trauma but struggles to remember how his warm skin felt against my cheek, the softness of his lips against mine, the weak grip of his tiny hand wrapped around my index finger. In some ways I can't believe it's been three years, in other ways it feels like I've been carrying the pain for decades.

> "THE CHANGING SEASONS OF GRIEF NEVER STOPS CYCLING, FORCING THE EMOTIONAL MIND TO RESETTLE TIME AND AGAIN."

> > - Janice Bell

anotherstrongwidow.com

Even if your memorial dates don't fall within these months, Spring can be especially difficult for those who are grieving. Instead of appreciating the new life and sunshine around us, it is a reminder of what we have left behind and the ways we feel stuck as the world moves forward. This season also brings Mother's Day and Father's Day, and all of the complicated feelings that come with trying to celebrate when all of your children aren't physically present. I hope you will find some comfort in the articles of this newsletter that address the complexity of trying to navigate this time of year.

#### **Q**"Three"

In the chaos of everyday life As I watch his twin grow up I long for One more mop of blond curly hair Sleepily stumbling downstairs too early in the morning. One more set of blue eyes Sparkling with mischief. One more pair of Hulk underwear Sprinting to make it to the bathroom on time. One more sudded-up toddler with wrinkled fingers Splashing most of the bath water on the floor. One more tiny body Snuggled against me for the bedtime story. One more Spiderman bike In the neighborhood procession. One more little boy Trying to keep up with his big brother And being adored by his big sister.

#### Instead

It's been three years of One less place setting at the table, One less pair of dirty fingerprints on the wall, One less kiss goodnight, One less mountain of laundry, One less preschool registration form, One less set of Christmas presents, Easter eggs, Birthday candles.

Three years ago I couldn't have imagined How I would make it to this day How putting one foot in front of the other Would lead me here, To a place where The tears hide behind my eyes less often, The perpetual sharp pain Has faded to a dull ache (most of the time). Three living children Keep me busy, tired, and loved, But the one who's missing Is never far from my thoughts.



There are a few changes to programming I want to highlight. Our virtual Tiniest Angels Support Group is now meeting twice a month. Starting in May, we will meet on the second and fourth Tuesdays of every month at 6pm. These groups are open to all parents, and all types of losses. The goal of the group is to provide support to parents who have experienced a perinatal loss.

We are also working on revamping our Parent Telephone Support Team (PTST). This team is a group of volunteers who experienced a loss at least one year ago. The volunteers are matched with families who are currently experiencing a loss. We do our best to match new losses with volunteers who had similar losses. We will be holding a meeting for new and current volunteers soon. If you are interested in volunteering, or want to get connected with a current volunteer for support, please reach out to me. My email is tara@wnypbn.org and my work cell is 716-461-5328.

As an agency, we are committed to providing support to our grieving families and continue to create and modify programming in order to achieve those goals. If you have any recommendations or questions, please feel free to reach out.

### Perinatal Loss and Grief: Coping, Hoping, and Healing Together Dr. Christina Hibbert

What is a family to do in times of perinatal loss and grief, to restore hope and to heal?

- First, know that your loss is real. It matters. And it is real and matters for your family members, too. Even if they feel or express their sense of loss in a different way, know that it matters to each of you.
- Know that grief is the body and mind's healthy response to perinatal loss, and grief work is necessary to move forward. You must grieve your losses, and your family members must as well. Help children, partners, and other family members understand their need to grieve and give permission for family members to talk about or work through grief openly.
- Remember it is normal for each of us to experience and work through grief in our own way. Try to respect your family member's methods of grieving, but also try to turn together and bridge the gaps.
- Grieve individually AND grieve together, when possible. Grieving individually is important to help you process and experience your own grief reactions. But turning together and grieving as a family is powerful and can protect and strengthen family relationships. Mark the loss with a memorial or creative project, talk about it, cry together, ask, "How are you feeling today" and listen. Families who can do these things will not only heal; they can and will grow stronger through perinatal loss and grief.

A few more things to remember about coping with and grieving Perinatal Loss...

- There is no set time frame for how long grief "should" last. However, actively working on grief in the ways described above or through counseling or other methods can help grief resolve more quickly.
- Honor special anniversaries and occasions. It helps process your grief to remember the people and things you have lost. Involve family, friends, and your children.
- As much as possible, turn toward your partner in times of perinatal grief. As we turn toward one another, instead of away, we offer one another the opportunity to grow as a couple, to heal, and to move on, together.
- Involve other adults if you feel unable to cope with parenting while you treat your grief. It can be tough for parents to maintain their parenting role in times of grief. If it gets to be too much, ask a family member or friend to step into a "parent" role for a while. This will give you time to heal yourself while insuring your other children are not left to cope alone.
- Seek grief counseling and support. Working with a grief counselor or perinatal loss support group can be incredibly powerful. It helps to have someone to guide you through and to remember you are not alone.

#### Healing from Perinatal Loss and Finding Hope Again

Through grief work, turning toward one another, and relying upon family, friends, and other supports in your time of need, you can, and will heal from this loss.

This doesn't mean you "get over it." You never "get over" the loss of a loved one, especially a child. But you do move on. You carry on. You heal. You grow. And you begin to feel that seed of hope sprouting once more in your soul. Hope for the future, hope for seeing your little one again in that bright day, hope for family growth and healing, and hope that everything we go through we can also choose to "grow" through (from my memoir, "This is How We Grow").

So, today and everyday, remember your child. Honor your child. Talk about your child. And for all who wish to support a family through perinatal loss, I say the same: Remember their child. Honor their child. Talk about their child. Use the child's name (if s/he has one). Remembering is healing. It is keeping them alive.

https://www.drchristinahibbert.com/perinatal-lossgrief-coping-hoping-healing-together-in-honor-ofpregnancy-infant-loss-remembrance-day/

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Senses And Memories: When Spring Triggers A Wave Of Grief by Kelly Cote

Grief is complicated. Even more complicated when your triggers are as subtle as the feeling of Spring emerging after a long Winter. My first Spring after the loss of my son, I was hit with a wave of grief. At first, I noticed a strange feeling as I sat alone in my office. Not really sure what this feeling was, I stopped and looked out my window.

Then it hit me, one year prior I was pregnant with my first child. One year prior I was living my "before" life. I had not known the devastating loss of a child. Living blissfully unaware of the nightmare that would ensue a few weeks later. It hit me like a ton of bricks.

# The faint uneasiness suddenly turned to a tidal wave that knocked me over.

How could it have been a year already? The last time I felt pure innocence, pure happiness was a year ago. It felt surreal. I was flooded with nostalgia.

I was instantly brought back to those memories. They played in my mind so vividly that I felt pure joy. At the same time, it seemed like I barely knew that woman. I felt that crushing feeling.

A lump formed in my throat with the realization that the woman in those memories was gone. She left with her beautiful son and would never return.

I then realized that the emergence of Spring reminds me of the days leading up to the death of my son. In this article, Dr. Jordan Gaines Lewis explains that our senses can evoke emotional memories, including those related to traumatic events.

So with the start of Spring, starts my tidal wave of grief. Even five years later, as the seasons start to change, so does my season of grief. Every Spring, I start to replay each memory of his short life and the trauma of the loss of the woman I was and the child I was planning to raise.

Although this is tough, I welcome it. It is his part of the year and will forever hold a special place in my heart. I hold on tight and immerse myself in the memories.

Clinging not only to the memory of my sweet boy but to the memory of the woman I lost when he died.

Each Spring I become painfully aware of how long it's been since I held him. I am also reminded of how much love for him I still hold in my heart. Knowing that Spring brings these grief triggers, I can prepare for them. Although painful, I allow myself to embrace them. I love him deeply and he is worth every ounce of pain.

Originally published on May 8th, 2018 for Still Standing Magazine, LLC https://stillstandingmag.com/2018/05/08/ senses-memories-triggers-wave-grief/

> In future newsletters, we would like to devote space to allow for contributions from bereaved families. If you are interested in sharing your story, poetry, or words of comfort, please email Newsletter@wnypbn.org.

## Virtual Support Group 2nd & 4th Tuesdays of each month

6:00pm To Register Visit: https://dibec.wufoo.com/forms/support\_proup-interest/ Of scan the OR code below! Share your story of loss and find support among other bereared parents For More Information Contact:

Tara Petty, LMSW tara@wnypbn.org

(716) 626-6363

#### **"Angels Need a Daddy, Too"** By Joanna Weld

I'm sorry I couldn't stay on earth, But God had another plan. I'm always with you Daddy, I'm still your little man.

I think about you all the time, Can you feel me next to you? This a reminder That angels need a Daddy, too.

I'm watching as you work so hard And care for the ones I love. I'm proud to call you Daddy, I cheer you on from up above.

Your strength is what I most admire, The dedication I clearly see, When you're tired, sad, or overwhelmed You can always talk to me.

When you're overcome with sorrow, Pay attention to my signs. Remember my peaceful baby face, Reread these simple lines.

Feel the love I'm always sending In my own angelic way. Remember you have one more child Wishing you a Happy Father's Day.

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This Mother's Day won't be easy for you, And your sorrow is not overlooked. I'm grieving alongside you And holding you tenderly in my heart.



"My child is always present in my heart and mind, but I don't get to share her enough. I am grateful each time someone helps me to bring her cherished memory into the world. Then I know she is remembered, and the love for her is alive and strong. I am so proud to be her mama." Shauna, Langley, British Columbia

ww.october15.ca

lather's low

cannot be measured solely by the footsteps that echo through his halls, but by those that will echo forever in his heart and walk unheard beside him everyday. -kp

Out of the Ashes / FB

cknowledgements

At our annual Board of Director's meeting, we had three long- standing Board Members submit their resignations:

Laura Reyda, bereaved mother of Andrew Laurent Reyda Dawn Both-Kim, bereaved mother of Marrina Kim and Ella Grace Kim Lisa Jerebko- bereaved mother of John Paul Jerebko

We would like to extend our gratitude for the many years of service these ladies have devoted to the Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. Your time on the Board and volunteering within WNYPBN has made a tremendous impact on the families that we serve, as well as the organization, so that it will to continue to grow to support more families. Thank you for your service. You have kept your babies memories alive and they will not be forgotten.

We welcome **Aaron Sypniewski**, CPA, bereaved father of Harper Sophia Sypniewski, to our Board of Directors. As a CPA, he has volunteered for many years to prepare and file the tax forms for our organization. We firmly believe that he will be a tremendous asset to the Board of Directors. Welcome Aaron!



We extend our condolences to the family and friends of Christina Whittel. \$745 was donated in her memory to the programs of WNYPBN.

Thank you to the family and friends of Poppy Grace Surdyke. \$750 was raised in honor of her first Angelversary .

Thank you to the people that have supported us through their Facebook Birthday Fundraisers: Mike Girling, Kelsey Skelton, Tom Ingalsbe, Adaia Marie, Nicole Campbell and Olivia Zawistowski .



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Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc.

## VIRTUAL MEAT RAFFLE

Friday. May 6th @ 7:00PM Facebook Live

> 12+ Rounds of Meat Raffles 3-4 Winners Each Round

Each ticket is valid for every draw, every round throughout the Raffle!

Meat/Prize Pickup: Saturday, May 7th 10:00 AM - 2:00 PM OLV School: 2760 South Park Ave, Lackawanna, NY

For more information or to purchase tickets, scan the QR code or visit www.WNYPBN.org Or call us at: 716.626.6363





Support WNYPBN by donating online through GIVE716 on July 14th-16th

> GIVE716 is hosted by Buffalo Bills Foundation and Buffalo Sabres Foundation

DATES

SAVE

the

WALK TO REMEMBER OCTOBER 9, 2022

ELEGANT EVENING TO Remember gala

NOVEMBER 4, 2022





Wilson Support Center 150 Bennett Road Cheektowaga, NY 14227 Phone: (716) 626-6363 Fax: (716) 626-6368

> Emily Doring Executive Director Emily@wnypbn.org

Tara Petty, LMSW Family Support Coordinator Tara@wnypbn.org

Cañada Baltimore Event Coordinator / Administrative Assistant Canada@wnypbn.org

Christine Scott Founder of the Wings of Love Memorial Fund Christine@wnypbn.org

#### **Our Mission**

The mission of the Western New York Perinatal Bereavement Network, Inc. is to assist the community in meeting the needs of people facing the pain of perinatal death. We promote standards of bereavement care intervention through educational support, community programs and referral services to bereaved parents. The WNYPBN supports an established standard of care following a perinatal loss, regardless of location of where the loss took place.

#### **Member Organizations**

Angels Gowns of Western New York, Inc., Baby's Sweet Beginning's Breast Feeding and Maternity Boutique (Lancaster), Brooks Memorial Hospital, Buffalo Prenatal-Perinatal Network, Inc., Catholic Health System (Mercy Hospital, Sister's Hospital, Mount St. Mary's Hospital), Mount St. Mary's Hospital of Lewiston, Hospice & Palliative Care Buffalo, Inc- Essential Care for Children, Kaleida Health (Oishei Children's Hospital, Millard Fillmore Suburban Hospital), Jones Memorial Hospital, Wilson Support System, Niagara Falls Memorial Hospital, Olean General Hospital, United Memorial Medical Center, UPMC Chatauqua, Wyoming County Community Health Center

#### **Board of Directors**

Jan Walkden, **President** Michael Anderson, **Treasurer** \*Open positions will be elected at the next Board Meeting

Dr. Lynn-Marie Aronica, Dr. Vivien Carrion, Amber Hultgren, Constance Perna, Terri Ryan, Kevin Ryan, Aaron Sypnewski, Rev. Richard Zajac, Dr. William Zorn

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WNYPBN, Inc.