

A special THANKS to Melissa at Landmark Business Park for discounting our rent so that we can continue meeting at our current location!



www.TylerTCF.org

Thanks to Skillern's Business Systems for printing our newsletter!

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1604 Grande Blvd., Tyler, TX 75703
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Please join us at 900 S. Broadway Ave. Tyler, TX 75701.
We hope to see you at our next meeting!

We need not walk alone.



Tyler, Texas 75711
P.O. Box 9714

THE COMPASSIONATE FRIENDS



The Compassionate Friends

Supporting Family After a Child Dies



We need not walk alone.

Volume 22, Issue 2

Tyler, Texas

February 2021

Monthly Group Meeting
Tyler Area Meeting
900 S. Broadway Ave.
Tyler, TX 75701
3rd Monday of the month, 6:30 p.m.
Find us on Facebook @TylerTCF

Contact

Phone: (903) 422-0358
www.TylerTCF.org • info@TylerTCF.org
P.O. Box 9714 • Tyler, TX 75711

Chapter Leader: Heather Ogg;
Secretary: Trish Mann Taylor;
Newsletter/Website: Mary Lingle; Tyler
Meeting Facilitator: Heather Ogg

Steering Committee: Cheri Zucca, Janet Majors, Trisha Mann Taylor, Barbara Barton, Carol Johnson, Heather Ogg, Kim Cathey, Mary Lingle

Joan & Bill Campbell, Regional Coordinators: (972) 935-0673
TCF National: (877) 969-0010
www.compassionatefriends.org

The Meeting Agenda

6:30 p.m. - Meeting will begin with announcement of birthdays and anniversaries and reading of the Credo. We will then have open discussion.
8:00 p.m. - Meeting will close by recognizing our childrens' names. Feel free to visit after the meeting or check out books from our library.

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Important Notice Regarding Meeting Location:

Due to the weather, we won't have a February meeting.

Starting in February 2021, we will no longer be meeting at the location in Flint. Instead, we plan to meet at the Children's Park facilities at 900 S. Broadway Ave. in Tyler. Please consider donating towards the cost of the facility, in memory of your child. Also, donations to help with the rental of a climate-controlled storage room would be helpful so that we can afford to keep our supplies, decorations and more.

Thought from a Parent Who Lost an Older Child

Perhaps I had my child longer than you had yours, but thirty-eight years does not seem long. Perhaps there are more memories to hold in my heart, but I know yours are just as dear to you as mine are to me, even if your memories are memories of only one or two days. Your dreams for your child are gone. So are mine. Never did I imagine that I would have to deal with my child's death instead of him having to deal with mine. In thirty-eight years there was time to give me a legacy of three grandchildren. This is a very special blessing and one that I do not take for granted. My mission is to sustain the relationship with my three granddaughters who now live three thousand miles away from me.

My child died from a terminal illness that is not one of the "acceptable" diseases. My child died of alcohol and drug addiction. The tools for remission of this disease are placed in the hands of the person who has the disease. Even with the help of four treatment centers, the recovery was not to be. One day at a time, my recovery is taking place. The pain, after two and one half years, has gone to a place where it can be tolerated.

My story and my age may be different from yours, but the bottom line is the same: my child has gone to a place where I cannot go, and I miss him so much. The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one-day-at-a-time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life.

Helen Godwin, TCF, Orange Park, Jacksonville, FL

**Find us on Facebook at:
Facebook.com/TylerTCF**

The mission of The Compassionate Friends is to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive.



We need not walk alone.

"As we advance in life it becomes more and more difficult, but in fighting the difficulties the inmost strength of the heart is developed." —*Vincent Van Gogh*

Welcome

We extend a warm welcome to those who attended their first TCF meeting last month.

We deeply regret the circumstances that brought you to our TCF Chapter. The Compassionate Friends is a mutual assistance, not-for-profit, self-help organization that offers support and understanding to families who have experienced the death of a child. You are cordially invited to attend our monthly meeting (held the third Monday of the month). The meeting is open to everyone and free of charge. You are free to talk, cry or to sit in silence; we respect the individuality of mourning. Comments shared in the meetings remain confidential.

Our chapter is operated entirely by volunteers dedicated to furthering the work of TCF. Your voluntary, tax deductible donations honor your loved one(s) in a meaningful way by enabling us to print and mail this newsletter and meet other expenses involved in reaching out to other grieving families (100% of funds are used for this outreach). Donations, along with the name of the person being honored, may be sent to:

The Compassionate Friends of Tyler
P.O. Box 9714
Tyler, Texas 75711

To Our New Members

Coming to your first meeting is the hardest thing to do. But, you have nothing to lose and much to gain. Try not to judge your first meeting as to whether or not TCF will work for you. The second, third or fourth meeting might be the time you will find the right person—or just the right words spoken that will help you in your grief work.

To Our Old Members

We need your encouragement and support. You are the string that ties our group together and the glue that makes it stick. Each meeting we have new parents. Think back—what would it have been like for you if there had not been any "oldies" to welcome you, share your grief and encourage you? It was from them you heard, "Your pain will not always be this bad; it really does get softer."

Grief Resources

Note: Some resources are based on individual opinion and experience and are not officially endorsed by the organization. The hope is that you may find a grief resource helpful to you and your family. We will continue to build on our resources column. Please let us know of any of your personal recommendations. Thank you.

Compassionate Friends (International Website) compassionatefriends.org
Also offers grief support for **siblings & grandparents**

The Childrens Park: www.childrensparktyler.org
Glory Babies meets the third Tuesday of every month at 6:30 p.m. at Alison house next to The Children's Park of Tyler: www.glorybabies.com

GriefShare: www.griefshare.org

Smith County Victim Services Division
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs/counties/smith.html

The Hospice of East Texas: www.hospiceofeasttexas.org

Victim Services Division - Texas Department of Criminal Justice - Online Resource Directory
www.tdcj.state.tx.us/divisions/vs

Survivors of Suicide: www.allianceofhope.org

Samaritan Counseling of Tyler: www.scctyler.org

Tyler Counseling & Assessment, LLP: www.tyler-counseling.com

Angel Layettes brings comfort to families grieving over the loss of an infant from miscarriage, stillbirth or death shortly after birth, and honor and dignity to the memory of the precious baby. Angel Layettes provides without charge custom designed burial layettes and keepsakes. angellayettes.org • 903-534-5212

University of Texas at Tyler Psychology and Counseling and Training Clinic: 903-593-2348

The Cope Foundation: www.copefoundation.org

Grief Camps for Kids: www.moyerfoundation.org/programs

WINGS was established through Hospice of East Texas in 1993 to help children navigate the grieving process. WINGS, "a comprehensive bereavement program that provides both emotional support and grief education," offers a camp (Camp G – grieve, grow and go forward) twice a year. For more information or to register for a grief support program, contact the Hospice of East Texas Bereavement Department at 903-266-3400 (Extension 127) or call 1-800-777-9860.

Group Meetings for Survivors of Trauma and Survivors of Suicide Loss, sponsored by Michael's House of Hope at the New Life Worship Center, 18535 Hwy. 69 S., Tyler, room 620. Call Dr. Timothy M. Roddam at 903-681-3161 for more information. Survivors of Trauma meets the second Thursday of each month from 6-7 p.m.



We're on Facebook! Search for The Compassionate Friends of Tyler and Like our page.



We need not walk alone.

"We can endure much more than we think we can; all human experience testifies to that. All we need to do is learn not to be afraid of pain. Grit your teeth and let it hurt. Don't deny it, don't be overwhelmed by it. It will not last forever. One day, the pain will be gone and you will still be there." —*Harold Kushner*

The Sign

As a little boy Jody loved to pick Black-eyed Susans. He'd pick those wild flowers and bring them to me with such love and pride in presentation. The last bunch he picked for me was on my birthday before his death, August 4, 1976.

The Black-eyed Susan is an independent wild flower that cannot be forced to grow out of season. The growing period for these wild flowers is the middle of June to the middle of August. But there, the first of September in the year of my son's death, in the center of Jody's grave, was a single perfectly formed Black-eyed Susan. It stood with strength and reassurance. It was all alone in the still, unsettled dirt covering the grave. There was not even a blade of grass or a single weed around.

I wept with mixed emotions of intense loss and love, feeling both distance and closeness, sadness and sudden relief. I saw it as a sign from my darling Jody. It spoke to me words from my dead child. "Do not cry. Do not despair. I love you and never intended for you to suffer so much. Please forgive me, and please be happy with the rest of your life. Please believe that I'm okay and at peace."







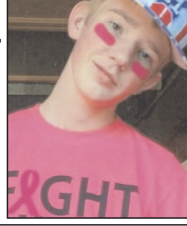


Whether it was a sign from Jody or from God, perhaps a bird dropped a Black-eyed Susan seed on the fresh grave, it brought me relief. I felt that my son wasn't so far away, and that his spirit would always be with me.

If nothing more, it helped me to begin to think of Jody there at the gravesite. He was dead, and I began to accept that. I started to realize that I would never again see his form as I had known it. But his spirit would be close and would guide me. I would not forget him and what we shared. He would always be special. What we gave to one another, what we had meant to each other, would not die or diminish with the passage of years, and it has not.

Each year since Jody's death, a single Black-eyed Swan has grown on his grave. It is a comfort and a joy. It is a remarkable phenomenon that now makes me smile rather than cry. Joey was a kid who never forgot my birthday, and never outgrew giving his mom flowers. I choose to believe he still hasn't. There are many mysteries in life and death that can't be explained, and I think shouldn't be, just accepted.

Susan White-Bowden, "From a Healing Heart"

Thanks for your donations and continued support of TCF of Tyler.

<p>In loving memory of Sarah Thompson by Carol Thompson</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Burke Lewis by Martha Lewis</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Alex by Robert & Trisha Taylor</p> 
<p>In loving memory of Chris O'Leary by Mary O'Leary Walsh</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Leah Zucca by Jim & Cheri Zucca</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Chad Cavazos by Dale Cavazos</p> 
<p>In loving memory of Tanner Douglas by Heather Ogg & Zach Reed</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Christopher Loper by Tina Loper</p> 	<p>In loving memory of Andy Terrell by David & Teresa Terrell</p> 





We need not walk alone.

"We must embrace pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." —Kenji Miyazawa

February Birthdays



Justin Clakley



Michelle "Missy" Green



Craig Howell



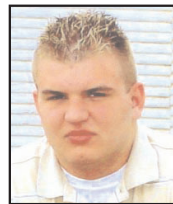
Jayson La'Drake Austin



Dylan Corey



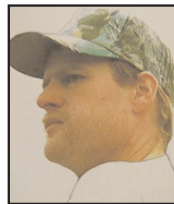
Colleen Herriage



Caleb Scott Jones



Shane McDade



Jason Brown



Christopher Bullock



Walter Dale "Skipper" Winningham



Kody Maner



Sean Smith



Mary Jennifer Stone



Alexandria Conway



Justin Goodman



Chasen Sean Shirley



Cynthia Harper



John Andy Terrell



Cheryl Heerdt



Robert Ryan White



Ty Foster Mabry



Jeremiah Barker



T.J. Anderson



Ijuan Deshaun Simms



Candice Lingle



Karen Lowe



Scarlet Lynne Smith



James Arthur Jenkins



Roger Lee Rush



David Matthew (Matt) Morris



Natalie Whitehead



Steve Short



James Snyman



Kayla Denise Wager



Caleb Cecil Luther

Continued on next page.



We need not walk alone.

"Grief is not a disorder, a disease or a sign of weakness. It is an emotional, physical and spiritual necessity, the price you pay for love. The only cure for grief is to grieve." —Earl Grollman

Burke Lewis

**In loving memory
of Burke**

by Martha Lewis



Thanks to Martha Lewis for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.

Sarah Thompson

**In loving memory
of Sarah**

by Carol Thompson



Thanks to Carol Thompson for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.





We need not walk alone.

"With the passing of years, I have learned that if I can hang on for just a little longer, these emotions—strong as they are—will pass and I can live again with the longing hidden deep inside my breast." —*Shirley Muller*

February Anniversaries



Josh Chambers



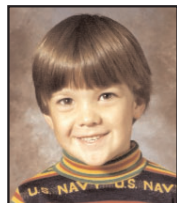
Austin Dixon



Lori Campbell



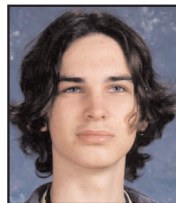
Cheryl Heerd



Richard Heerd



Jackie Heerd



Ryszard Spakovsky



Tiffany Johnston



Darell Bolton



Andrea Young



Austin Arvizo



Brandon Krpec



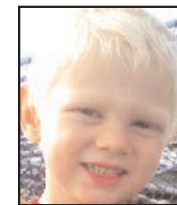
Michael Schmidt



James Brady Langston



Jasmine Dezereah Pruitt



Chance Aaron Chandler



Roger Lee Rush



Carly Smith



John Wallace



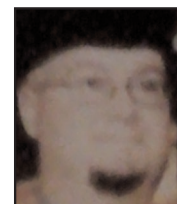
Adam Thomas Pritchard



Jayson La'Drake Austin



Karrie Voyles



Craig Howell



Kammon Gebo



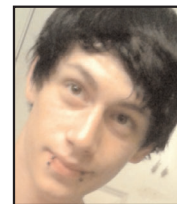
Joel Tucker



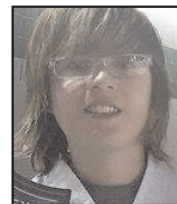
Shelby Williams



Lucy Beerline



Kaleb Mize



Luciano Tessaro



Knox Knight



Trevor Benson



Miles McBrayer



Devin Williams

Please share your stories, poems or love messages for inclusion in our newsletter.

Continued on next page.



We need not walk alone.

"The pain of grief is still there, but I am living life one-day-at-a-time, enriched because my son came through my body into my life." —*Helen Godwin*

The Valentines of Yesterday

In my lifetime I have received many Valentines. Parents, grandparents, aunts, uncles, school friends, boyfriends, good friends, acquaintances and my husband have showered me over the years with lovely Valentines which I have so appreciated.

The tradition of declaring friendship and love on Valentine's Day is a very fond memory. However, the sweetest Valentines I have ever received are from my son. From the first days in nursery school when my son made a hand plaque and a drawing on construction paper to the final Valentine in 2002, I have cherished these gifts of love from my only child. I have kept every Valentine my son ever made for me or bought for me. I have every Valentine gift he ever gave me. These are the treasures that remind me how special a parent's love truly is.

There is no love to compare with the unconditional love we give our children. I think my son knew that nobody in the world would love him as much as his mother did. Yet, he also knew that he would love his children in just this same way. This unconditional parent's love that we give our children is the most precious love in life. It is always our hope that they, too, will find the joy of this love with their children.

When our child dies, we cling to our unconditional love as we feel the anguish of a final separation on this earthly plane and a tsunami of betrayal as the devastation of this incomprehensible loss sweeps over us. The pain is real. It is physical, emotional, psychological and forever embedded on our psyche. Yet, without that unconditional love, there would be no pain. Who among us would trade the most infinitely rewarding love and the subsequent pain of loss for a life of lukewarm relationships?

And so, as Valentine's Day once again comes into my life, I will look back at this love, at the good times, the wonderful hand-made childhood Valentine cards and gifts and the carefully selected cards of adulthood that my son gave to me. His words, his love, his appreciation for all that we had shared as mother and child will be reflected in these treasures. There will be tears, certainly, but these are tempered with the many wonderful, sweet memories of my son and his life. It is these sweet memories which sustain me, give me hope, and bring me gratitude for all that was given to me.

My son is forever in my heart. He is with me every day and every night, and especially, he is with me on Valentine's Day.

Annette Mennen Baldwin, TCF, Katy, TX

Imagine

Imagine for a moment a mobile; all the shapes are of different weights and design. But they hang together harmoniously; each catching the sunlight and creating a melodious rhythm in the wind. Now snip one of the pieces; there is chaos, each of the remaining pieces smash into one another, and what was a melodious sound is now a clanging almost wailing in the wind. When a child is snatched by death from a family the results are the same, multiplied innumerable times.

Stephan Barrett

The Bumpy Road

The other day I sat alone and realized my heart was not as heavy. Oh, there are still times when I miss my child desperately, but I seem to rebound sooner now.

Then the phone rang—another mother called to lean on me. She must have known that I was ready. I listened, she shared and oh how I felt for her. When we said good-bye, I sat again but not as alone this time. New strength and pride came in knowing I had lent a helping hand.

My child's death has taught me so much new, a lot I wished I had never known. But since I do now know what others face, perhaps the bumpy road I've traveled can be made a little smoother for another.

A Bereaved Mother





We need not walk alone.

"We must embrace pain and burn it as fuel for our journey." —Kenji Miyazawa



We need not walk alone.

"Just for today, I will allow myself to be happy, for I know that I am not deserting him by living on. Just for today, I will accept that I did not die when my child did. My life did go on and I am the only one who can make that life worthwhile once more." —Vicki Tushingham

Alex Conway

In loving memory
of Alex

by Robert & Trisha
Taylor



Thanks to Robert & Trisha Taylor for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.

Leah Zucca

In loving memory
of Leah

by Jim & Cheri Zucca



Thanks to Jim & Cheri Zucca for your generous donation.

Newsletter or rent sponsorship is \$75. Contact us if you'd like to be a sponsor in memory of your loved one.

February Birthdays Cont.



Aceyn Richards



Candace Beggs



Justin McIntyre



Jessica Spence



Timothy Andrew Wild



LaDerrius Darden



Andrew Edwin
Carpenter

Thank you for your generous donations to TCF of Tyler. These 'love gifts' allow us to provide our local chapter with special events, rent, the TCF Newsletter, our website and more!

Dear Compassionate Friends,

I wrote this letter for my co-workers and posted it in the office where everyone would see it because I found that although everybody had been extremely kind and generous during Laurie's last brief illness, some of them didn't seem to know how to deal with me or what to say after she died. The idea for the letter and some of its contents are from a book on grief work by Bob Deits, [Life After Loss: A Personal Guide Dealing With Death, Divorce, Job Change and Relocation.](#)

Marcia Davis, TCF Contra Costa County, CA

Dear friends and co-workers:

I want to thank all of you for your kindness and support during the last few months. I have experienced a loss that is devastating to me. It will take time, perhaps years, for me to work through the grief I am having because of the loss of my daughter, Laurie.

Although Laurie was our oldest child, she was the child of my third pregnancy, so she was very much wanted by the time I gave birth to her. She was also the child who was most like me, both in appearance and personality. Perhaps because of this, I actually feel I have lost a part of myself. I would gladly have given my life in exchange for hers, had I had that option.

I will cry more than usual for some time. My tears are not a sign of weakness or a lack of hope or faith. They are symbols of the depth of my loss and, I am told, a sign that I am recovering.

I find that I become angry without there seeming to be a reason for it. My emotions are all heightened by the stress of grief. Please be forgiving if I seem irrational or unfriendly at times. I need your understanding and your friendship more than anything else. If you don't know what to say, just touch me or give me a hug to let me know you care.

Do not be afraid to mention Laurie's name, She is gone from this life but she will never be gone from my memory or my heart. And please don't hesitate to call me; it is reassuring to hear from supportive friends.

If you, by chance, have had an experience of loss that seems anything like mine, please share it with me. You will not make me feel worse. And if I get emotional or tear up, you are not making me cry, I am crying inside all the time anyway! This loss is the worst thing that could happen to me. But, I will get through it somehow and I will live again. I will not always feel as I do now, I will laugh again.

Your concern is a gift I will always treasure.

Sincerely, Marcia





We need not walk alone.

“Happiness is a butterfly, which, when pursued, is always just beyond your grasp, but which, if you will sit down quietly, may alight upon you.”
—Nathaniel Hawthorne

Searching for Oneself

By Joyce Rupp

Good Shepherd, who finds the lost one,
the “me” I know has disappeared.

Will I ever recover the person I have been?

Will I ever find and feel good about myself again?

Will I discover who I am and who I am becoming?

Protect me in this great vulnerability.

Assure me that I will come home to myself,

Even though “my self” may be different.

Silence my impatience. Calm my worry.

Restore my joy. Solace my distress.

Help me to befriend my new self

With tender hope and welcoming love.

*Submitted by Lisa Schoonover, TCF, Tyler, TX
in memory of Jake*

All My Love – For Mom, Dad and My Sisters

I'm so sad to be leaving, and I know you're sad too.
As I let go let me give one last gift to help you.

Dry your tears help your hearts heal, if not all, at least
some.

This small gift, a returning favor for all that you've done.

Close your eyes for a moment, see my smile, feel my hugs.
Hear me whisper my secret, how you've filled me with love.

Keep this moment, as I will, forever locked in our hearts;
to bring out when sadness and tears want to start.

This small gift, much more precious than all the others you
gave, is a return for your love with which I was made.

All the tears that have fallen, from family and friends,
I've collected and mixed with my own.

To this I have added all my love, my laughter, my smiles,
and made up a medicine to ease heartache awhile.

So when time brings on sadness, close your eyes see me
there. Feel my gift in your heart, and know I'm still here.

I was made of your love, and in your love I remain.

Daniel Fraga

Promise of a Rose

When winter comes into our lives with its uncertain sound,
to strip us of our warmth and joy, our petals on the ground,
we may be tempted to give up, to fold beneath life's storm.
We may be tempted to forsake the hope which keeps us
warm.

But, we must learn to stand up tall, to always face the sun,
and patiently wait for the day when winter's work is done.

For winter winds will cease to howl; the snows will melt
away. Then we shall see the beauty of another summer's
day.

We will have renewed our strength when summer's wind
first blows, for God will whisper one again the promise of a
rose.

Glenda Fulton Davis

My Grief is Like a River

My grief is like a river, I have to let it flow, but I myself
determine just where the banks will go.

Some days the current takes me in waves of guilt and pain,
but there are always quiet pools where I can rest again.

I crash on rocks of anger, my faith seems faint indeed, but
there are other swimmers who know that what I need.

There are loving hands to hold me when the waters are too
swift, and someone kind to listen when I just seem to drift.

Grief's river is a process of relinquishing the past;
swimming in hope's channels, I'll reach the shore at last.

Cynthia G Kelly

**Thank you for your generous donations
to TCF of Tyler. These 'love gifts' allow
us to provide our local chapter with
special events, rent, the TCF
Newsletter, our website and more!**



We need not walk alone.

“We quickly find there are no words to describe the experience of losing a child.
For those who have not lost a child, no explanation will do. For those who have,
no explanation is necessary.” —Mary Lingle

Newsletter Submissions

TCF Tyler welcomes all submissions to our newsletter. Send
articles, poetry, love messages and scanned photos to: The
Compassionate Friends of Tyler, P.O. Box 9714, Tyler, Texas
75711. Or e-mail text and photos to: info@TylerTCF.org; We
reserve the right to edit for space and/or content.

Deadline for submissions is the 5th of each month. TCF
Chapters may copy articles from this publication provided
credit is given to the author and the original source.

Errors and Omissions: We try very hard to be sure that all of
the names and dates of our children are correct. If you see
an error in the newsletter, please contact TCF at
903-422-0358. We want to get it right and will correct the
information for future use. Thanks very much.

Email Addresses: If we do not have your email address or
it has changed, please email it to info@tylertcf.org so that
we may email you announcements and updates about
TCF of Tyler.

**Sign up for email notifications of
events and to be notified when the
newsletter is posted online at:
www.tylertcf.org**

Donations Appreciated!

**Please consider making a donation to
your local TCF group, which serves East
Texas. Donations help pay for meeting
location fees, electric, mailing and paper
cost of our newsletter, bank fee, P.O. Box
fee, office supplies and more.**

**We are thankful that Skillern's Business
Systems has printed our newsletter at no
cost for years. If you need office automa-
tion solutions, please contact them and tell
them TCF sent you. Visit them online at
www.skillerns.com, or call 903-561-5591.**

Announcements

**Meeting Info: The NEW meeting location is 900 S.
Broadway Ave., Tyler, TX 75701.** Our meeting is held on the
third Monday of the month at 6:30 p.m. For more information,
please call 903-422-0358.

Steering Committee Meeting: If you are interested in par-
ticipating in our chapter by serving on the steering commit-
tee, please plan to attend a steering committee meeting.
Anyone who would like to become more involved in TCF and
serve on the steering committee is welcome to come! Email
us at info@tylertcf.org to get involved!

News from National: Compassionate Friends National
offers webinars for the public on grief related topics.
Upcoming public webinars will include Death of a Child By
Suicide, Pregnancy and Infant Loss, The Death of a Special
Needs Child and How Can I Help When A Child Dies? Check
out www.compassionatefriends.org for dates and times.

TCF Quilt Announcement!

We are compiling names and photos for our 7th
quilt! Please mail your \$30 donation for a square,
child's name, and make sure we have a quality
picture of your child that will show up well. Let us
know quickly as we anticipate the list of 30 will fill
up fast. You can mail your donation to TCF Tyler
PO Box 9714 Tyler Texas 75711, please note on
your check what it is for. Photos or questions can
be emailed to info@TylerTCF.org.



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