



The Compassionate  
Friends Australia



Supporting parents,  
siblings and grandparents,  
after the death of a child  
at any age

## Normal grief reactions...

We are unprepared for the reality of grief. Not knowing what is 'normal' can cause further anxiety. Below are some typical reactions.



Remember that whatever you are feeling is normal for you and that's OK.

## Helpful hints for supporting grieving people

- ✓ **Offer practical support**...such as meals, shopping, gardening, errands, looking after siblings etc. Don't wait to be asked and be mindful that bereaved families may still need this support in the early years.
- ✓ **Don't judge**...there is no right or wrong way to grieve. Don't say 'you should...' or 'you shouldn't...' Simply listening is far more helpful.
- ✓ **Accept a wide variety of emotions**...such as sadness, anger, confusion, fear, guilt or relief. You cannot make someone feel worse or 'remind' them of their grief. They are living with it every day.
- ✓ **Say the name of their loved one**...listen and allow the grieving person to talk.
- ✓ **Avoid clichés**...such as 'At least you have other children', 'It was meant to be' or 'They're in a better place'. Well meaning statements like these are unhelpful and often hurtful.
- ✓ **Don't assume**...people who are grieving aren't necessarily showing it. Ask how they are feeling/coping/managing with genuine concern.
- ✓ **You can't fix it**...no one can take away the pain and sadness but knowing that people care, is comforting and healing.



As one of the largest mutual self-help bereavement organisations in the world, our members understand the true pain that comes with the death of a child, sibling or grandchild and this understanding comes from their own experience.

We offer friendship and reach out to parents, siblings and grandparents, to support them in their grief and trauma following the death of a child at any age and from any cause.



*“The Compassionate Friends is about transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope.*

*With the shedding of tears, healing comes. And the newly bereaved get to see people who have survived and are learning to live and love again.”*

Simon Stephens,  
founder of  
The Compassionate Friends



## About us

Every member of The Compassionate Friends has experienced the devastating death of a child in their family.

We provide a haven to share memories of your child, brother, sister or grandchild, both sad and happy, as often as you need, without judgement or a lack of understanding.

The Compassionate Friends provides a peaceful haven for people to come and grieve their loved one and connect with others who share the painful journey that comes when a child dies.

It is a place where you will receive a warm welcome, a gentle hug and the opportunity to talk about your child, sibling or grandchild without judgement or interruption.

**Contact can be made in a variety of ways, such as:**

- Drop-in centres to talk over a cuppa
- 24-hour grief support number
- Support groups
- Email
- Online

Whatever contact option works best, you will always be talking to someone who has lived through the death of a child in the family.

**Some of the services we offer include:**

- 24-hour grief support via the phone
- Support and social groups
- Workshops to support the healing process
- Library of grief resources
- Special memorial events
- Newsletter with contributions from members.

### National

 [tcfa.org.au](http://tcfa.org.au)

 229 Canterbury Road, Canterbury VIC 3126

### New South Wales

 [tcfnsw.org.au](http://tcfnsw.org.au)

 [admin@tcfnsw.org.au](mailto:admin@tcfnsw.org.au)

 603/109 Pitt Street, Sydney NSW 2000

### Queensland

 [compassionatefriendsqld.org.au](http://compassionatefriendsqld.org.au)

 [admin@tcfqld.org.au](mailto:admin@tcfqld.org.au)

 44 Newdegate Street, Greenslopes QLD 4120

### South Australia

 [compassionatefriendssa.org.au](http://compassionatefriendssa.org.au)

### Victoria

 [tcfv.org.au](http://tcfv.org.au)

 [support@tcfv.org.au](mailto:support@tcfv.org.au)

### Western Australia

 [info@compassionatefriendswa.org.au](mailto:info@compassionatefriendswa.org.au)

 [tcfmandurah@bigpond.com](mailto:tcfmandurah@bigpond.com)

### New South Wales support

Phone: 02 9290 2355

Freecall: 1800 671 621

**24/7**  
grief support  
**1300 064 068**

