

Angel Whispers

SPRING, 2015

Angel Whispers

Newsletter is a resource for parents who have lost a baby during pregnancy or shortly after birth.

Meetings are held in Sherwood Park and Fort Saskatchewan.

For meeting information, or to receive our newsletter or a special care package, please call 780.998.5595, ext. 225.

You can also reach us by email at angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca or visit our website at www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers.



www.familiesfirstsociety.ca

Hello to all of our Angel Whispers Families,

I always look forward to writing our Spring newsletter, as I know the timing of the newsletter falls in line with the arrival of spring and the renewed sense of hope for warmth, sunshine and the longer days that accompany spring and summer. Gone are the dark, cold and dreary days of winter.

The spring newsletter is the perfect newsletter to focus on the topic of hope and the importance of holding onto hope as you grieve. For a newly bereaved family, hope may be something that seems intangible. However as time passes on your grief journey it is hope that can carry you through while softening the intense emotions of grief. We often hear the cliché that “time heals all wounds”; it’s not time itself that heals, it’s what you do with the time that will allow your heart to heal. Healing does not mean that you get over your loss, that would be unimaginable. Instead healing means that you eventually learn to integrate the loss into your life and find your “new normal”. That new normal means that you find happiness while allowing yourself to laugh and smile again and feel hope for the future.

I’ve always looked at HOPE as Hold On Pain Ends, and even though the pain may not end, it certainly does soften and become more manageable. I can honestly say that it was hope that got me through the darkest days of my grief after the loss of my angels, Loren and Brooklynn and the loss of my mom. It’s through my experiences that I found my passion to provide support, hope and healing to other families that have been devastated by the loss of their precious babies. It was through hope that Angel Whispers was created; myself and two other moms shared the same philosophy for providing hope and healing to other families, companioning and walking

alongside them in their grief.

I have been fortunate to take my death and grief studies certification through Dr. Alan Wolfelt, a world renowned grief expert who has companioned thousands of people as they grieve in his career as a grief counsellor and educator. In Dr. Wolfelt’s book, *Understanding Your Grief: Ten Essential Touchstones for Finding Hope and Healing Your Heart*, he describes ten touchstones that are essential physical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual actions for one to take to help themselves heal.

The ten touchstones are:

- Open to the presence of your loss.
- Dispel misconceptions about grief.
- Embrace the uniqueness of your grief.
- Explore your feelings of loss.
- Recognize you are not crazy.
- Understand the six needs of mourning.
- Nurture yourself.
- Reach out for help.
- Seek reconciliation, not resolution.
- Appreciate your transformation.

The six needs of mourning that Dr. Wolfelt shares are:

- Accept the reality of the death.
- Let yourself feel the pain of the loss.
- Remember the person who died.
- Develop a new self-identity.
- Search for meaning.
- Let others help you – now and always.

Continued on page 2



Hope may look different to each of you. In this newsletter, we share how many of our Angel Whispers families define hope. For some families hope means finding the courage to try again, for others that hope means finding the courage to accept that their future may not involve a rainbow baby. It's important to honour your individual journey and respect other's journeys while understanding that no two journeys are identical.

Hope allows you to open your heart to a future filled with love, laughter and happiness. You will always miss your precious baby; grief will continue to be a lifelong journey, and you may experience "grief bursts" for many years to come. Hope is about finding a balance between grief and joy. A significant component of your grief journey is grieving the hopes, plans and dreams for the future that involved your precious baby, that future will now look different. Know that you will not be alone in your journey and that with time the intensity of your grief will soften. Hold onto hope knowing that you will not always feel as overwhelmed by sadness and despair.

For those of you whose future may not involve a rainbow baby either by choice or because of infertility, please know that it is not having a rainbow baby that provides healing. Don't allow others to make you feel as though that a rainbow baby will heal you, that is not the case. There is no magical cure for grief and there is no deadline to your grief. It is by allowing yourself to grieve and mourn and by seeking the support from others that you will find healing. If you find that the emotions aren't softening as you actively grieve and mourn, if you are still feeling intense sadness, anger or depression years after your loss, it may be necessary to seek additional supports through a grief counsellor.

I wish that I could wave a magic wand and take all your pain away. However the one thing I know to be true and which was so brilliantly addressed in the movie "Fault in our Stars", pain demands to be felt. As much as it hurts and there are days you

wish you could avoid the pain, you must take the time to feel the pain and grieve. There is no way to the other side of grief except through, you can't go around, over or under it. Some people are successful in busying themselves enough to avoid it for a while, however eventually grief will catch up to you and demand to be felt. Grief is the price we pay for love, there is no greater love than the love a parent feels for their child and therefore there is no greater pain than the grief a parent experiences after the loss of a child.

I may not have a magic wand, however what I do have to offer is hope, hope that pain will soften. It's been 16 and 12 years respectively since we lost our babies Loren and Brooklynn, hope has brought me to where I am today. My wish for you is that hope will provide you comfort on your journey and the promise of a future of peace and discovery as you find your new normal. Thank you for opening your heart and allowing Angel Whispers to walk alongside you on your grief journey.

May spring bring you moments of love, laughter and cherished memories!

With love and understanding,

Lori-Ann

Lori-Ann Huot

Program Coordinator

Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program

(780)998-5595 ext. 225

angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca



Grief is not neat or predictable

Grief keeps us unbalanced

Grief strips us of our innocence and trust in our world

Grief takes our identity, we begin to question who we are without our loved one

Grief makes us feel small and fragile more vulnerable than we were before.

Grief creates fear and longing.

Grief consumes us making it difficult to think about anything else.

Grief is a forever companion.

Grief shows us the very darkest part of life.

Grief also allows us to see the brightest part of life.

When we are ready and open to it grief allows us to see love, hope and peace in a whole new way.

We will love more intensely.

Seek hope more earnestly.

Share peace more abundantly.

We can be more than what Grief tries to make us.

~Tanya Lord~

Wishing our angel

Heaven-Leigh

a Happy 5th Birthday in heaven -

March 23,

2015.

Happy 5th Bday!!

Love always,

Mom, Dad,

Eilithyia and Baby Bro

Healing Your Grieving Heart After Miscarriage

By: Dr. Alan Wolfelt

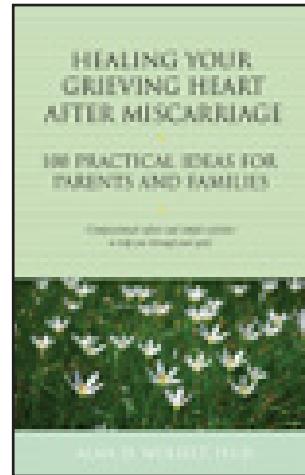
I have been very fortunate to have been given the opportunity to take my Death and Grief Studies Certification through Dr. Alan Wolfelt at his Centre for Loss and Life Transition in Fort Collins, Colorado. A few years ago, Dr. Wolfelt asked for my thoughts on a book he was writing on stillbirth – *Healing your Grieving Heart after Stillbirth*. He acknowledges Angel Whispers in his book as a resource for families.

Dr. Wolfelt approached me last year asking for my input on a book he was writing on miscarriage – *Healing your Grieving Heart after Miscarriage*. It was a tremendous privilege for me to

be asked to share my experiences and to share what I felt was important to be included in his new book. I am incredibly honoured to be acknowledged and thanked in his introduction to this much needed resource for families. Dr. Wolfelt has a wonderful way of connecting and compassionately supporting grieving families.

I recommend this book to anyone who has been touched by the loss of a baby due to miscarriage.

Lori-Ann Huot



About Dr. Alan Wolfelt - Author, educator, and grief counselor

Dr. Alan Wolfelt is known across North America for his inspirational teaching gifts. His

compassionate messages about healing in grief—based on his own personal losses as well as his experience supporting children, teens, adults, and families over the last three decades—speak not only to the intellect but to the hearts of all who hear him. Perhaps best known for his model of “companioning” versus “treating” mourners, Dr. Wolfelt is committed to helping people mourn well so they can live well and love well.

Founder and Director of the Center for Loss and Life Transition, Dr. Wolfelt presents numerous educational workshops each year for hospices, hospitals, schools, universities, funeral homes, community groups, and a variety of other organizations. He also teaches the 4-day trainings described on this website in beautiful Fort Collins, Colorado.

Dr. Wolfelt is a popular media resource who regularly provides his expertise to many top-tier television shows, newspapers, and magazines. Recipient of the Association for Death Education and Counseling’s Death Educator Award, Dr. Wolfelt is also a faculty member of the University of Colorado Medical School’s Department of Family Medicine.

“Mourning in our culture isn’t always easy. Normal thoughts and feelings connected to loss are typically seen as unnecessary and even shameful. Instead of encouraging mourners to express themselves, our culture’s unstated rules would have them avoid their hurt and ‘be strong.’

“But grief is not a disease. Instead, it is the normal, healthy process of embracing the mystery of the death of someone loved. If mourners see themselves as active participants in their healing, they will experience a renewed sense of meaning and purpose in life.”

To learn more about Dr. Wolfelt and his Centre for Loss and his extensive Resource Library, visit <http://www.centerforloss.com/>

The miscarriage of a hoped-for child is a shattering loss. Those who had already begun to feel attached to the baby will naturally grieve – particularly the mother and father, but also any siblings this baby would have had, extended family, and friends. The loss may ripple across many lives in many ways.

This compassionate guide contains 100 practical ideas to help those affected by the tragedy of miscarriage. Some of the ideas teach about the principles of grief and mourning. Others offer practical, action-oriented tips for coping with the natural difficulties of this loss, such as communication between partners, explaining the loss to others, reconciling anger and guilt, trying again, and many others.

If you are grieving in the aftermath of a miscarriage or ectopic pregnancy, this compassionate book will help you heal.

Thank you!

- to Strathcona Family and Community Services for allowing us use of their meeting space.
- to Betty Dean for helping with our newsletter!
- to all our Angel Whispers volunteers!
- to Jennifer King from King's Quilting Queen - Jennifer handcrafts beautiful baby quilts and donates them to Angel Whispers to be given to Angel Whispers families after the birth of their Rainbow Babies - for more information on Jennifer's quilting, please visit her website - <http://www.kingsquiltingqueen.com/>
- to Kelly Monaghan for beautifully designing memory boxes for our Angel Whispers families.
- to all the families who donate to cover the costs for our care packages, birth certificate keepsakes and memory boxes.
- to Barb Bundt for the donation in memory of baby Emma.
- to Liane McCorriston for the donations in memory of Sophie Monaghan and Grace Fleming.

Hearts of Blue®

Hearts of Blue, our employee-run charity, was originally planned as a one-time 50th anniversary event in 1998. It was



so well received, however, that it became an ongoing part of Alberta Blue Cross's community involvement. Today, Hearts of Blue is a registered charity operated by our employees and funded through both employee and corporate donations.

Members of Hearts of Blue provide help where needed by volunteering their time and donating items such as food, clothing and furniture to dozens of organizations across the province.

Thank you to the Alberta Blue Cross Hearts of Blue Team for the generous donation of Angel Wings and Resources for our care packages!

EmPowering Communities encourages employee volunteerism and recognizes the valuable gifts of time, skill and knowledge that employees give to the community.



Employees and their families who volunteer a combined minimum of 35 hours in a calendar year can apply for a \$500 grant to be donated by Capital Power to a non-profit or charitable community service organization of the employee's choice.

Thank you to one of our Angel Whispers daddies, Roy Seida, an employee of Capital Power Corporation for choosing Angel Whispers as his charity of choice for the generous EmPowering Communities grant in memory of Roy and Jennifer's son, Simon!

Angel Whispers receives some funding from the Ed Stelmach Foundation. We also rely on grants, fundraisers, and donations from generous individuals to sustain our services to grieving families. Thank you for your continued support!

Upcoming Fundraising Opportunities:

- **2nd Annual Angel Whispers Pub Night Fundraiser and Silent Auction**

Date: Friday March 27th, 2015

Time: 7:30pm

Location: Average Joe's Sports Bar
240, 390 Baseline Rd. Sherwood Park

Tickets: \$10 each (includes a FREE drink)

For information, tickets or to donate a silent auction item, contact Lori-Ann at (780)998-5595 ext. 225 or angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca

- **6th Annual Madison Memorial Golf Tournament**

Benefiting the Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program

Friday September 18th, 2015

Northern Bear Golf Course, Sherwood Park

More information will be announced soon!

Visit - www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com

- **Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program**

7:30 p.m. March 27, 2015

Average Joe's, Sherwood Park



From a Dad...

This column will be a regular feature in our newsletters, contributed by Dads in our Baby Loss Support Programs.

Please contact Lori-Ann at (780)998-5595 ext. 225 or angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca if you wish to contribute.

The “Family Tree”

by: **Rene Huot**

As a man, a father, a provider, a protector, most of the time we are forced by society to be the alpha. From the time we were small our fathers told us to “suck it up” to “fight back”, as we grow up carrying these stigmas we lose the ability to be sensitive, to cry, to open up.

After the loss of my first daughter Loren, my wife and I had very different methods of grieving. My wife was very open with her grief, there were many tears, many days of depression and an overall sense of sadness. I on the other hand was feeling the same way, however due to my upbringing, I internalized the grief. I would cry in private, not allowing my wife to see. In my mind this would make me look weak and after all I was the “alpha” remember. I was sad, I was depressed but couldn’t let that show. I had to be strong for when my wife was down, after all having both of us down at the same time would help no one, especially the 2 year old daughter we had at home.

It took time but eventually I was able to be there for my family 100%. I attribute this to the analogy of a tree, a family tree. You see as parents we

are the roots of the tree, the foundation of the family, if this structure is not strong the tree cannot grow and flourish. Once the roots (parents) are healthy and strong our bodies have the ability to prosper. This is when we start to integrate our losses into our lives, we start to enjoy and do more things for our families, making memories. This is the stage where the base of the tree gets stronger and grows.

The branches of the tree are our children and the memories we create together as families. Those branches grow as our families grow and have families of their own. Grandchildren make up the leaves, they are fragile but eventually will grow into branches.

The evolution of the tree starts from a solid base, the roots. Without the roots a tree will not grow. Make communication with your partner a priority, accept that men and women will grieve differently, hold onto hope knowing that with time the intensity of grief does soften.

And finally take care of yourself and each other and your family tree will blossom.

*Hope gently whispers
To the broken heart that still beats
To the rhythm of love and
Memories
Forever missing
Forever changed*

~Tanya Lord~

Am I Not A Mother?

by Gail Fasolo

Am I not a mother

On this Mother's Day?

I had a baby, but she's gone.

Death took her away.

Hopes and dreams have vanished

a happy time turned cold.

My motherhood-where is it now?

Gone? Or put on hold?

Am I not a mother

even though my child died?

Does anyone know my heartbreak

or the anguish felt inside?

*Special gifts and flowers
but who'll remember me?*

*As I stand and shed some tears
at your graveside where I'll be.*

*Mother's Day-so painful
but I will make it through.*

*Yes, I am a mother!
but God takes care of you.*

*In Memory of Christina
stillborn February 5, 1991*

Fund Raiser for

**Angel Whispers
Baby Loss Support
Program**

**7:30 p.m. March 27,
2015**

Angel Whispers

**Average Joe's,
Sherwood Park**

What does HOPE look like to you? from our Angel Whispers families

"Hope is what you discover when you find a group of people who understand, who 'get it'. Hope is what you discover when you realize that the bad days are normal and that every day won't always be a bad day. Hope is what you discover when you find a safe place to share your story and when other people say your baby's name. Hope is what you discover when you are finally able to cry and grieve and fall apart. Hope is what you discover when you put the pieces back together and realize that your new normal is livable and that the only expectations that matter are your own. Hope is being able to look into Aiden's eyes and give him my whole heart and not feel guilty for loving him as much as I do. Hope is finding peace with being Sophie's mom while also being Aiden's mom...."

"Wishing to see that rainbow after the storm..."

"Singing in the midst of a storm." Reminds me of a beautiful poem by Emily Dickinson..."

Hope

By: Emily Dickinson

Hope is the thing with feathers
That perches in the soul,
And sings the tune--without the
words,
And never stops at all,
And sweetest in the gale is heard;
And sore must be the storm
That could abash the little bird
That kept so many warm.
I've heard it in the chilliest land,
And on the strangest sea;
Yet, never, in extremity,
It asked a crumb of me.

"Hope is finding the purpose to live. To discover the new you. Though our hearts and dreams were broken, our lives still has a beautiful meaning."

"To me 'Hope' was that tiny sniggle inside me that made me feel that

despite everything that happened, and kept on happening, it would turn out ok in the end. That what was meant to be, will be, and it will be alright."

"Hope is discovering that life can still be good after having my heart broken."

"Hope is knowing that there is someone right next to me that has walked with me in my journey....knowing that I am not alone."

"Hope is having "confident expectation" - having assurance when the future seems uncertain. Love stems from hope and it also produces joy and peace."

"HOPE is looking at a full moon on a clear night. It lets me know that the light is on in heaven."

"Since our son Logan passed away before being born, it has become difficult to define the word "hope". I had many hopes and ideas for the future before things changed. Now its a word that makes me draw a blank when I'm asked what it means to me. I know I hope that family and friends will want to talk about Logan and memories of my pregnancy with me. I know I hope Logan's father and I keep working hard on our relationship because we love each other and overcoming these events can be difficult for couples to understand each other. And I hope that maybe one day we may decide to have another child and that we might see a little bit of Logan through them."

Thank you to the Angel Whispers families who shared their definition of HOPE!

Rainbow Baby Birth Announcements

William Hue Sutankayo Smale

Born on December 20, 2014 weighing 7lbs 9oz to loving parents Lynn Sutankayo and Billy Smale. Hue's big sister Annie is celebrating with the angels!

Felix Gracen Fleming

Born on January 6, 2015 weighing 8lbs 3oz to proud parents Carol-Anne and Curtis Fleming and big sister Hannah. Felix's sister Grace is smiling down from heaven!

Averie Quinn Bucher-Tejada

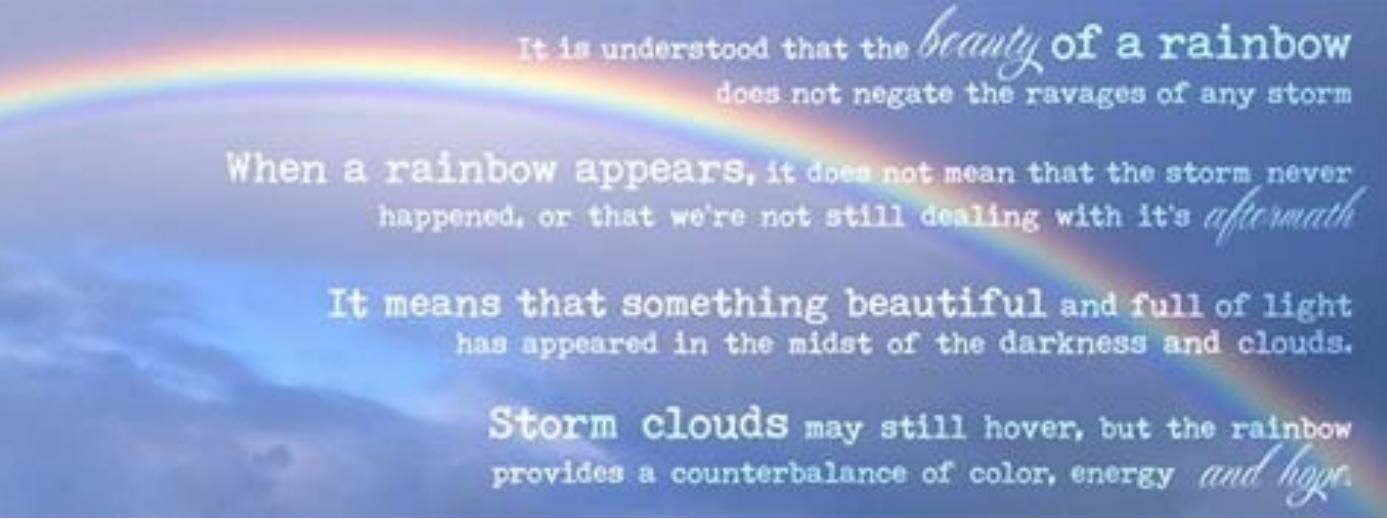
Born on February 10, 2015 weighing 6lbs 8oz to excited parents Bonnie Bucher Tejada and Vince Tejada. Averie has an angel watching over her and celebrating her safe arrival!

Rebecca Marie Fung

Born on February 11, 2015 weighing 8lbs 3oz to loving parents Danielle and David Fung. Rebecca's big brother Jackson is in heaven celebrating his baby sister's much anticipated birth!

Arthur Elliot Seida

Born on March 10, 2015 weighing 11lbs 1oz to loving parents Jennifer and Roy Seida and excited big sisters Emmeline and Madeleine! Arthur has several angels watching over him including his big brother Simon who is celebrating with the angels!



It is understood that the *beauty* of a rainbow
does not negate the ravages of any storm

When a rainbow appears, it does not mean that the storm never happened, or that we're not still dealing with its *aftermath*

It means that something beautiful and full of light has appeared in the midst of the darkness and clouds.

Storm clouds may still hover, but the rainbow provides a counterbalance of color, energy *and hope*.

You are invited to join us...

at the Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program's
5th Annual Rainbow Baby Reunion

Date: Sunday May 3rd, 2015

Time: 1-3pm

Location: FCSS Office

401 Festival Lane, Sherwood Park

RSVP: Lori-Ann @ (780)998-5595 ext 225

This is an opportunity to celebrate the Rainbow babies that have been born to our Angel Whispers families over the years while honouring and remember our precious babies that we hold in our hearts instead of our arms.

You are welcome to join us for an afternoon of sharing memories, honouring our angels and celebrating our Rainbows. Families welcome!

Calling Daddy From Heaven

Author Unknown

*I'm calling you Daddy, from Heaven
Because we are apart,
But the phone won't ring on earth today;
In heaven we call heart to heart.*

*I just want to say, "I love you,"
And I think of you each day.
I hear you say you love me
Each time you kneel to pray.*

*Sometimes I watch you working
At a job you do so well.
I tell all my friends in Heaven,
"That's my Daddy, and ain't he swell!"*

*I'm working on a project
To send you as a gift,
And when you finally see it,
Your spirits will really lift.*

*I'm painting lots of colors
All across the sky,
And after rain you'll see them
And know we never die.*

*I'll also paint some flowers
And send them down to you.
They'll look so fresh and pretty
In the early morning dew.*

*But best of all, I'll take some notes
Of all the things I love,
So you can read my journals
When you meet me here above.*

*Your name will cover pages
Of my moments to be shared;
You'll see how much you've meant to me
And how very much I cared.*

*Then, I'll have story time with Jesus
And he'll tell me stories of you.
I'll listen with a smile
Of all the things you do.*

*He'll tell me of your kindness
And the smile upon your face,
The way you make the world
A really nicer place.*

*Of all the things I ever do,
This will be the best;*

*I'll ask the Lord to Bless you,
My very own request.
And tonight when you are resting
From the day you've spent so well,
I'll whisper in your ears
All I have to tell.*

*And as I hold you through the night,
This is what I'll say,*

*"I'm proud to call you Daddy
on this special Father's Day."
Love, Your Little Angel*

Donations

AngelWhispers accepts donations. A \$10 donation will sponsor a care package for an Angel Whispers family.

*Donations can be made through the CanadaHelps website -
www.canadahelps.org*

Find us under Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society, find Angel Whispers under Fund Designation.

Dear Friends

We are planning a Silent Auction Pub Night at Average Joes in Sherwood Park on Friday March 27th. All proceeds from the event will support the Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program, a program of the Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society.

Angel Whispers provides supports and services to families who are grieving the loss of a baby during pregnancy or after birth. Angel Whispers provides confidential support including: support group meetings, one on one support, care packages, memory boxes and keepsakes as well as other resources for families. The program allows grieving families to connect with others on their grief journey so that they need not walk their journey alone, providing a safe place to share and grieve the loss of their precious babies.

It is with a grateful heart that we invite you to help us support the program and allow it to continue the vital work it does with grieving families, assisting Angel Whispers in maintaining the lifeline that it creates for so many. You can do this by donating items to the silent auction that will be held on the night of the event. In addition to silent auction items, monetary donations will also be gratefully accepted. Tax receipts



can be provided for monetary or item donations valued at over \$20; if you require a tax receipt, please let us know.

Tickets for the event are \$10 each and include one drink. Please feel free to spread word of the event, tell your friends and family and encourage them to do the same. For more information, to purchase tickets or to make a donation, please contact Lori Ann Huot, Program Coordinator at (780) 998 5595 ext 225 or by email angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca.

Thank you for your support in assisting Angel Whispers to continue to provide hope and healing to grieving families both in our community and beyond. For more information on the program, visit the Angel Whispers website – www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers.

Sincerely,

Lori-Ann

Lori-Ann Huot

Program Coordinator

Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program
(780)998-5595 ext. 225

angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca

Upcoming Meetings:

Baby Loss Support Group - for families who have lost a baby during pregnancy or after birth. Meetings are held on the first Sunday of each month from 7-9 p.m. in Sherwood Park at the FCSS offices at 2001 Sherwood Drive. April 12, 2015; May 3, 2015 and June 7, 2015

Subsequent Pregnancy Support Group - for families who are trying to conceive or expecting again after experiencing a previous loss. Contact Lori-Ann for meeting location. April 19, 2015 and June 14, 2015

Healing Hands Workshop - an opportunity to remember your baby through healing activities such as scrapbooking, card making and other crafts. From 1-3 p.m. April 18, 2015; May 23, 2015 and June 20, 2015 at the FCSS offices in Sherwood Park.

Parenting after Loss Group Meetings
Parenting after Loss Group Meetings will now change to **Rainbow Baby Play Dates** - the first play date will be announced soon!

For all meetings and workshops please contact Lori-Ann to register (780) 998-5595 ext. 225.

*The hope in Grief
It is found day by day
As you realize that
Love Lives Forever
And
Will always Walk
hand in hand
With the Pain*

~Tanya Lord~

Visit us on Facebook!

Facebook is a fast and easy way for us to send out meeting reminders and notifications about our healing hands workshops, as well as what is new in our community.

You are also able to make a donation to our program in memory of your baby through facebook.

Please visit:

www.causes.com/angelwhispers
or <http://www.facebook.com/lorian-nangelwhispers>

Find our Angel Whispers Facebook Page at <https://www.facebook.com/angelwhispersbabyllosssupport>



SAVE THE DATE...
6th ANNUAL MADISON MEMORIAL
GOLF TOURNAMENT
~an opportunity to golf in memory of your baby~
Friday, September 18, 2015

Details to be announced in the Summer Newsletter!

*All proceeds will go directly to Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program
For updated information on the Madison Memorial or to get information on sponsorship
& donation opportunities, please visit www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com*

ABOUT MADISON

Madison Louise Kondro was born on June 7th, 1999. For loving first-time parents Blair and Melissa Kondro, this was both an incredibly joyous day, as well as the saddest day of their lives. Unfortunately, Maddie was born with a critical heart defect. She lived for only 5 ½ hours before she passed away peacefully in her parents' arms. Maddie's mommy is cofounder of Angel Whispers, and both Blair and Melissa are avid golfers. So to celebrate Maddie's 10th birthday they began hosting an annual golf tournament at the beautiful Goose Hummock Golf Resort! All proceeds from this event will fund the programs of Angel Whispers, under the umbrella of Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society.



In Memory of our Newly Discovered Angels

Baby White November 27, 2008	Nolan Bradley Stenson October 23-25, 2014
Baby White July, 2011	Keziah McKenzie Vandervies December 16, 2014
Jaylen Ann Garcia 2013	Emmanuel Pio Foronda June 13, 2014 - December 21, 2014
Logan Jamaison Alexander Laye May 21, 2014	Skylar Ramona Reed December 31, 2014
Baby White July 2014	Bailey VanHill January 6, 2015
Baby White September 23, 2014	Baby Dehart January 22, 2015
Tristan Carter Burke October 11, 2014	Baby White February 25, 2015

*All angels can be found on our website at:
www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers*

Please call or email us if you would like to submit your baby's name to be remembered. If we have forgotten to remember your baby on this page, or have misspelled your angel's name, please let us know.

Sunburn

by: Sherrell Knapton

One day I was listening to my music when the song by Ed Sheeran called 'Sunburn' came on and the chorus got my attention. The song is about loss of a relationship but for some reason it just hit me and I had to replay the song.

He compares the hurt to a sunburn. When I heard that I thought that is exactly how I feel with the loss of Harleigh. I pictured it as me finding out I was pregnant and being pregnant as the beautiful day that you spend out in the sun and enjoying every minute in the sun.

The news of her being sick and then learning that we would lose her that was the night when the sunburn is stinging and hurts all over your body.

The loss is the pain you feel as it blisters. Then comes the healing... the pain slowly goes away and your skin changes, which I feel is the change in me as time goes on. You're forever changed, much like your skin after a sunburn. There are still the scars from the blisters and your skin is now brown instead of white. You're changed as in the loss of your child, you are changed. It doesn't go away but it changes you.

As time goes by it becomes softer and less painful. In time you heal but will never be the same person you were before your loss and resulting sunburn.

Pilgrims BriarPatch Centre for Grieving Families

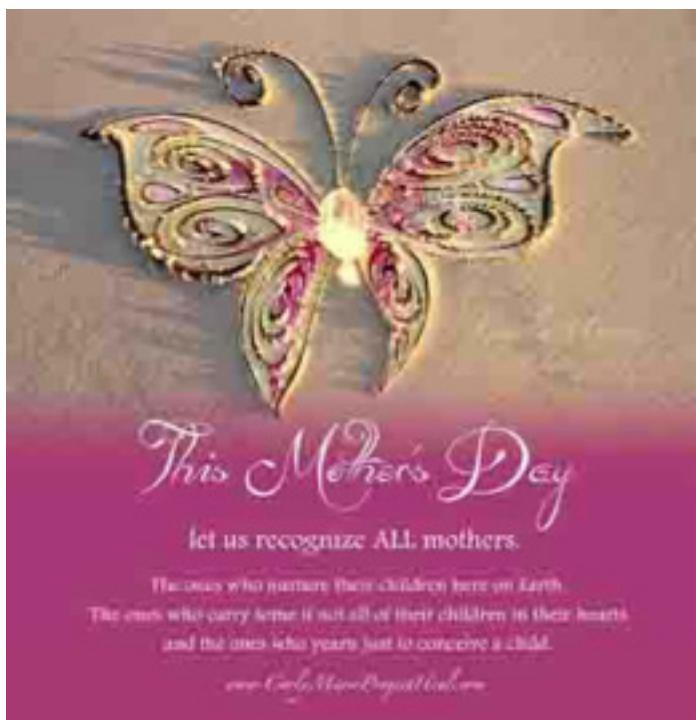
- Expressive Arts for Children ages 5 to 12 years old who have experienced the death of someone they love. We offer art, music, play, puppetry and drama for our youngest mourners to explore their unique grief journey in a safe and compassionate setting. Our parent/guardian group meets concurrently for other family members.
- Expressive Arts for Teens ages 13 to 18 years old who have experienced the death of someone they love. We offer art, music, writing and movement for our youth to explore their unique grief journey in a safe and supportive environment. A parent/guardian group meets concurrently for other family members.



For more information on these children's grief programs, contact Cheryl Salter-Roberts - cherylsr@pilgrimshospice.com or 780.413.9801 ext. #302

International Bereaved Mother's Day

Sunday May 3, 2015



This is what the creator of International Bereaved Mother's Day had to say about this special day...

"This day was created to get people to start talking about the real meaning of Mother's Day. Do you know who started it? Anna Jarvis founded the traditional Mother's Day to honour her mother who experienced the death of 7 of her children and somehow through the years it has turned into a commercialized mess that card companies make millions of dollars from, but the worst thing is that bereaved mothers are completely forgotten. This special day was created in 2010 to honour and celebrate the mothers who carry some if not all of their children in their hearts rather than their arms. In our modern day society, mothers who are grieving the death of their babies and children are usually forgotten. The traditional Mother's Day has proven to be an emotionally difficult day for so many mothers around the world. Just because your baby died does not mean that you are not a mother anymore. You are your baby's mother forever and people need to start recognizing this fact."

International Bereaved Father's Day will be celebrated on Sunday September 27, 2015 to honour and celebrate fathers who carry their babies in their hearts instead of their arms.

Healing Opportunities

Yoga for Grief Support:

Yoga specifically designed for people who have suffered the death of a loved one.

Classes involve yoga postures, breathing and meditation along with educational and supportive topics related to bereavement support. Guided by Sandy Ayre, and Occupational Therapist and Certified Yoga Instructor. For more information and upcoming class dates, please visit - www.yogaforgriefsupport.com

5th Annual Rainbow Baby Reunion

Sunday May 3th, 2015 1-3pm

This is an opportunity to remember our Angels and celebrate our Rainbow Babies. Moms, Dads, children and Rainbow babies are encouraged to join us for this celebration!

FCSS offices - 401 Festival Lane, Sherwood Park
Please come through the library entrance and proceed to the second floor.

For more information or to register, please call Lori-Ann at (780)998-5595 ext. 225

Spring Memorial Service

Sunday May 31st, 2015 - 1pm

Every spring the funeral homes, hospitals, cemeteries and support groups in the Edmonton area collaborate to hold a special memorial service for families who have lost a baby.

This year's service will be held at Evergreen Funeral Home, 16102 Fort Road Edmonton - there will be graveside service to follow.

If you are unable to attend but would like your baby acknowledged, please call Lori-Ann at (780)998-5595 ext. 225.

2nd Annual Angel Whispers Picnic and Balloon Release

Information and Date to be announced in the summer newsletter!

6th Annual Madison Memorial Golf Tournament

Friday September 18th, 2015

Northern Bear Golf Course, Sherwood Park
More information will be announced soon!
Visit - www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com

A Mother's Day Wish From Heaven

Dear Mr. Hallmark

*I'm writing you from heaven,
and though it must appear*

*A rather strange idea, I see everything from here
I just popped in to visit your stores to find a card*

*A card of love for my mother,
As this day for her is hard*

*There must be some mistake I thought,
Every card you could imagine
Except I could not find a card
From a child who lives in heaven.*

*She is still a mother too, no matter where I reside
I had to leave, she understands
But oh the tears she's cried.*

*I thought that if I wrote you
That you would come to know
That though I live in heaven now
I still love my mother so.*

*She talks with me, and dreams with me;
We still share laughter too
Memories our way of speaking now
Would you see what you could do?
My mother carries me in her heart
Her tears she hides from sight.
She writes poems to honor me
Sometimes far into the night
She plants flowers in my garden
there my living memory dwells
She writes to other grieving parents
Trying to ease their pain as well.*

*So you see Mr. Hallmark,
Though I no longer live on earth
I must find a way to remind her of her wondrous worth
She needs to be honored and remembered too
Just as the children of earth will do*

*Thank you Mr. Hallmark, I know you'll do your best
I have done all I can do; to you I'll leave the rest.
Find a way to tell her how much she means to me
Until I can do it for myself
When she joins me in eternity.*

By Jody Seilheimer



Angel Whispers

Angel Whispers was created by three moms in the Edmonton area who experienced the loss of their babies: one shortly after birth, one through miscarriage, and one through still birth.

It is a program of Families First Society of Fort Saskatchewan, a non-profit charity funded primarily through individual donations.

Donations, in memory of your baby, are acknowledged in our newsletter at your request. Charitable donation receipts are issued upon request.

Angel Whispers provides:

- baby loss support group
- Healing Hands groups
- subsequent pregnancy support group
- resource lending library
- quarterly newsletter
- special care packages
- Memory Box program
- one-on-one and email support
- birthcertificate keepsakes

Angel Whispers Care Packages

Angel Whispers sends out care packages to grieving families. Each package includes a special momento and strategies for coping. Birth Certificate keepsakes are also available.

If you would like to receive or send a care package, please call us or email angelwhispers@familiesfirstsociety.ca,

Baby Loss Group

For families who have lost a baby during pregnancy or after birth. Meetings are held on the first Sunday of each month from 7-9 p.m. in Sherwood Park at the Family and Community Services offices at 2001 Sherwood Drive.

April 12, 2015, May 3, 2015 and June 7, 2015

Subsequent Pregnancy Support Group

For families who are trying to conceive or expecting again after experiencing a previous loss. Contact Lori-Ann for meeting location.

April 19, 2015 and June 14, 2015

Families First Society is a non profit organization established in 1996. We are directed by a volunteer board and work in partnership with many community agencies to offer a variety of programs and services. Our programs promote positive parenting and early childhood development.

Families First Society offers parent education, programs for young children to learn and play, and family support services, as well as information and referral to other programs and services in the community.

Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society (main office)

10302A – 99 Avenue T8L 1Y2
or Box 3285 T8L 2T3
Fort Saskatchewan, AB
Parent Link Centre

Phone: 780-998-5595

Fax: 780-998-5503

For meeting information, or to receive our newsletter or a special care package, please call 780.998.5595, ext. 225.

Angel Whispers is a non-denominational program. However we honor and respect the individual beliefs of our families.