

# Angel Whispers

SUMMER, 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,

Summer has arrived for us here in our part of the world...I feel like I've blinked and this year is already half over. In many ways that is how I have felt regarding our grief journey...that time has passed in the blink of an eye. It has been almost 17 years since we lost Loren and 12 years since we lost Brooklynn. I know early on after our losses that it felt like time was moving so slowly, almost suspended. I can reflect back now knowing that that is what I needed at the time, I needed life to slow down so that I could focus on myself and my husband and our needs. It can be difficult to imagine a future without your little one, the grief can be overwhelming and time can be something hard to comprehend. In the beginning of one's grief journey, time passes one breath at a time, then one hour at a time, slowly it moves into one day at a time, then a week and month at a time. Time in the first year or two can be incredibly difficult as you pass milestones and holidays that can make the grief more intense. Those are times that you had planned for with your precious baby as part of the hopes, plans and dreams for the future that you had made. Hold onto hope knowing that with time the intensity of the emotions you feel will soften.

Among several of the clichés I heard from family and friends after our losses, one of them was "time heals all wounds". In a sense I have to disagree with that. I don't think that is time itself that heals all wounds, I believe that it is what you do with the time that can help to heal your heart. I want to ensure that I clarify that healing does not mean that you "get over" your loss, it's not emotionally possible for one to get over a loss so devastating. The loss of a child forever alters one's life and future. Wikipedia defines healing as: In psychol-

ogy, healing is the process by which issues are resolved to the degree that the client is able to lead a normal or fulfilling existence without being overwhelmed. Now the word "normal" in that definition is certainly up to individual interpretation. It would be impossible to expect a bereaved parent to return to their "normal" before the loss of their child, rather grief involves a journey towards discovering what we define as a "new normal". I recently read an article which defined healing instead as "transcending suffering", which resonated with me. I do believe that our babies would not want us to live a life of suffering as a result of their loss, instead I know that they want us to enjoy life and find happiness again while honouring their memory.

So what is it one can do with that time to help to heal? It's imperative that you allow yourself to not only grieve but to mourn, there is a difference. Grieving is the internal response to grief, it's the emotions we feel inside. Mourning however is externalizing your grief, grief turned inside out. That can be done in many ways: allow tears to freely flow, talking about your baby and your experience with loss, journaling, scrapbooking, finding a support group to share with others that understand, plan a memorial service, plan a fundraiser in memory of your baby and donate the funds to your favourite charity, and finding meaningful ways to honour

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your little one. It's through ways such as those suggested that your heart will begin to heal. For me, co-founding and now coordinating the Angel Whispers program has given me the opportunity to share with others and find healing in my journey. Angel Whispers has also allowed me to find meaning in our losses. Without the loss of our girls, Loren and Brooklynn this would not be a path I would be following in my life. I truly believe that Angel Whispers is a gift that my girls gave me. Together with my dear friend and co-founder Melissa Kondro, our angels have shown us our life's passion and ensured that we share our experiences with others in order to help other families devastated by the loss of their babies.

This newsletter is filled with stories from some of our Angel Whispers families sharing how they have chosen to honour their little ones and how time has healed them. You will find information on the 6th Annual Madison Memorial Golf Tournament, planned by Melissa and her husband Blair in memory of the precious baby girl Madison, who would have been 16 this year. Angel Whispers is honoured to be the beneficiary of the Madison Memorial Golf Tournament. Thanks to Melissa and Blair's generosity, Angel Whispers continues the important work of making a difference in the lives of grieving families. As many of you know, Angel Whispers is currently a non-funded program, we rely heavily on fundraisers and individual donations to sustain our services.

With time, the intensity of the emotions you feel early on in your grief journey will soften. That's the best I'm able to describe it. The pain and devastation never fully disappear, instead the emotions will soften, allowing your heart to heal so that you may find that "new normal" filled with hope and happiness. And through that journey you will evolve, much like the story of the Dragonfly that is shared in this newsletter. Thank you for allowing Angel Whispers to be a part of the time you spend in your grief journey. May your time spent through the summer be filled with moments of joy and laughter and opportunities to honour the memory of your sweet baby.

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 a disorder, a disease or 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, unspokengrief.com*

## 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. July 5, August 9 and September 13

**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. July 12, August 16 and September 20

**Healing Hands Workshop** - We do not meet through the summer months. The next workshop is scheduled for Saturday September 19.

**Rainbow Connection** - previously known as **Rainbow Baby Play Dates**

Angel Whispers Rainbow Families host get together in their homes several times per year as an opportunity for families who have had rainbow babies to stay connected and share their experiences in parenting a rainbow baby while honoring and remembering their angel babies. Stay tuned to our website and Facebook for upcoming dates!

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

Lori-Ann shared her story in a recent guest blog post at:

**Wanted Chosen Planned - Alexis Marie Chute**

<http://wantedchosenplanned.com/index.php/archives/1669>

# Jody & Ken's Family Tree

*Shared at the Annual Baby Loss Memorial  
In memory of their babies – Willow & Keziah*

*by Jody and Ken Vandervies*

We are blessed to be here today, and Ken and I feel very honored that we were asked to speak to all of you.

We have agreed to do this for 3 reasons the first of course being to honour our own children, secondly we vowed that as a result of losing our children we would do something positive as a result of their short lives, and through our journey we have seen a need to educate the world about pregnancy loss, early infant loss, and the death of a child or children, and number 3 we have realized that people who lose children are often not supported very well, or are not able to find the help and support they need.

We had much difficulty deciding what to speak about and how to deliver this message with content that was meaningful to each of you, that you may be helped, or at least feel supported on a difficult day like today. We really wanted to speak about grief, our journey, our children, and our family tree.

Trees are symbolic in our life because we love the outdoors, nature, and the beauty and comfort of trees. We also are both part of someone's family tree, and now together we have begun our own family tree, but most importantly after the loss of our first child, she ended up being named by Ken after my favorite tree, which was never her intended or chosen name, but suited her perfectly. A few short weeks after the loss of our daughter I had a dream that she was crying and insisted we plant two trees, and not just one, as we planned to plant a tree at our farm in her memory.

At the time I struggled with why she wanted two trees to be planted, or why I would dream this at all?

After our second baby died, I knew why we needed two trees, and it seemed necessary to name him after a tree as well, but we also wanted to

incorporate our faith in his name.

We hope you can find meaning in trees from our story.

And we hope that when you see a cassia/Keziah tree with its bright yellow flowers you think of our son and your own child or children, and that when you see a weeping Willow, you think back to this story of our precious Willow, and that you weep for your child or children, and that you allow the tears to flow, as tears are very healing, and tears are the words our heart cannot express.

*Perhaps the most  
important tree is  
the family tree.*

Trees are amazingly beautiful to some of us—they are the perfect picturesque back drop for many special occasions, like graduations, weddings, and family portraits.

They are the warmth in the hearth of a fireplace on a cold winter's night. They are the crackle in a campfire when we roast just one more hot dog, or marshmallow.

Our homes are built from them.

They provide shade on a hot summer's day.

They shelter us from many terrible storms.

Trees add vitality to our life and they are good for the very air we breathe.

Perhaps it can be said however that the most important tree is one that doesn't grow in a forest, your backyard, garden, or in your community, but is rather the family tree.

The family tree can be made of blood relatives, or those chosen to be part of our lives.

We all start life the same- with a biological mother and biological father, and from there our family tree begins, and expands someone else's.

Our family trees are all different, no two are the same.

When we come together as 2 partners we begin a new family tree, and add to it when we start our own family by having a child or children.

Sometimes our family tree tragically gets altered by the loss of a child or children.

Sadly the death of a child or children is not understood by many, and it seems that only those of us that have experienced this horrible heartache are the ones who understand.

Through the loss of a child or children we all have a similarity by being grief stricken and having the need to mourn, but our path and grief is all very different.

What do you say to a parent when the unspeakable happens? Any words or personal experience seems so insufficient.

We don't sometimes even know what to say to each other, so how can others know what to say to us?

We want you to know that we all grieve very differently.

Men and women, Moms, and Dads go through and show grief stages very differently. You must remember that this is okay. Be gentle with one another. Be sure to talk about how you feel and accept that you are different in your emotions and at displaying them. There is no right or wrong way to grieve.

Don't let others expectations or advice tell you how to grieve.

Do not put timelines on your grief, and remember this will be a life long journey for all of us.

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You may need to ask for help, you may not be able to do it alone, or with the help of a partner.

In fact I would encourage you all to seek help.

Ken and I have been very blessed to find Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Group here in Edmonton, and for us they are the right choice, but please find the group that is right for you, whether it be face to face, on line, talking to a friend, or a coworker, or a family member.

Talk about your anger and your sadness, or any feelings you have, and deal with your grief because you can never bypass grief, you may temporarily but not forever.

The best but for us the most difficult thing you can do to help yourself on this journey, is to talk about it. Tell your story.

This may take you some time to be able to do.

We have wondered if it is a bit too soon for us to tell our story in such a public realm, but we are doing our best to get through it, and know we will be better off for it once we are done. And we thought we should take our own advice and that of the professionals and share our story with others—and ALL OF YOU.

Our story is one of fertility struggles, and then being so excited to find out we were expecting!

Sadly, our precious daughter was born too soon on March 18, 2014.

Later that year we were elated to find out we had conceived again. Again, tragedy struck, and we had some difficulties with our pregnancy, and our special son Keziah was born before he was ready to be on earth.

We are a couple with no living children, and we still hope and pray this will change.

Regardless of what happens our family tree will forever have missing branches.

We also know that all of you sitting before us have a family tree with missing branches, and for that and to all of you we are truly sorry.

We would encourage all of you

that each time you see a tree, you take a moment to remember the missing branches on your family tree, and ours, and everyone's that have endured such a devastating death.

Think of how you may be a support to someone else.

Together we can weather this storm, it will be a lifelong journey, and we will never forget what happened, but our story will get easier to tell with time

Let's all join hands, and give a little squeeze to each neighbour showing our support of one another.

The Lord gave and the Lord has taken away.

Willow and Keziah we will see you in heaven, until then we will carry you in our hearts.

Thank you for this opportunity, God bless you all!

## The Dragonfly

Once, in a little pond, in the muddy water under the lily pads, there lived a little water beetle in a community of water beetles. They lived a simple and comfortable life in the pond with few disturbances and interruptions.

Once in a while, sadness would come to the community when one of their fellow beetles would climb the stem of a lily pad and would never be seen again. They knew when this happened; their friend was dead, gone forever.

Then, one day, one little water beetle felt an irresistible urge to climb up that stem. However, he was determined that he would not leave forever. He would come back and tell his friends what he had found at the top.

When he reached the top and climbed out of the water onto the surface of the lily pad, he was so tired, and the sun felt so warm, that he decided he must take a nap. As he slept, his body changed and when he woke up, he had turned into a beautiful blue-tailed dragonfly with broad wings and a slender body designed for flying.

So, fly he did! And, as he soared he saw the beauty of a whole new world and a far superior way of life to what he had never known existed.

Then he remembered his beetle friends and how they were thinking by now he was dead. He wanted to go back to tell them, and explain to them that he was now more alive than he had ever been before. His life had been fulfilled rather than ended.

But, his new body would not go down into the water. He could not get back to tell his friends the good news. Then he understood that their time would come, when they, too, would know what he now knew. So, he raised his wings and flew off into his joyous new life!

~Author Unknown~



# What Love Never Leaves Behind

I remember my first night when I came back home from the hospital after my daughter was stillborn—empty-handed and no longer pregnant. I couldn't shake the intense feeling of guilt that I had left my child behind. This guilt made it so hard to breathe and cloaked my life with a darkness that I couldn't shake. When I woke up the next morning I would encounter my first betrayal in the grieving process:

Time.

Though time had remained frozen for me, it still moved everything else forward. The hands of the clock still ticked onward, the sun set every day, and the Earth kept on rotating. Like my child's unexpected death, time was now another aspect in life that I was an unwilling participant of. As if losing my child weren't enough, I now had to deal with new experiences, new milestones—all without my child. I couldn't eat, travel, watch TV or be with friends. After all, my daughter wasn't here to experience any of those things, so why should I get to? Every new sunrise was a reminder of my child who wasn't here to experience it and because of so my guilt absolutely consumed me.

No matter what I did, there was time, pulling me by the legs, dragging me along, and forcing me to move forward. To move on.

I didn't know it then, but time was in the throes of becoming one of my greatest teachers.

Time was teaching me that no matter how tragic my circumstances were, that the hours were going to keep moving forward, and it was so that I wouldn't always be stuck in the vines of great despair. Yes, there was immense unhappiness right then, but there was always a chance of immea-

asurable happiness ahead too. I wouldn't know if that would hold true unless I moved forward—unless I move forward with time.

As fearful as I was of this change, I took the leap. And when I found myself further and further away from when a time when my daughter was once alive, I realized something powerful.

I had not left her behind anywhere, instead she was right here with me. She was always with me.

Time did not take her away.

That is when my thoughts began to shift and the guilt began to shed. It was the realization that my relationship with my child did not end with her death. My love and longing for her surpasses everything—life, death, distance and even time.

Time may continually move forward, but love never leaves anyone behind. For as long as I love my daughter, she will always exist here with me, in the present—immune from the laws of physics.

Every new experience I take on, every new day I wake up to, she remains with me. Time can never take that away. Now that I find myself miles down this road called life, I have discovered that I am in possession of something that defies the natural order of things; I am in possession of a love that knows no boundaries—A love that can endure, even after time moves forward.

Time taught me that too.

*By Malka Ahmed  
from 'Still Standing Magazine'  
March 23, 2015  
<http://stillstandingmag.com/>*



# Upcoming Fundraising Opportunities:

## 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 can be found in this newsletter or visit - [www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com](http://www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com)

Angel Whispers is a non-funded program, we rely heavily on fundraisers and individual donations to sustain our services to grieving families. If you are interested in fundraising for the Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program or in making a donation, please contact Lori-Ann Huot, Program Coordinator at (780)998-5595 ext. 225.

Thank you for your support!

*Grief changes us  
The pain sculpts us  
into someone who  
understands more deeply  
hurts more often  
appreciates more quickly  
cries more easily  
hopes more desperately  
loves more openly*

*~ Tanya Lord,  
The Grief Toolbox  
<http://thegrieftoolbox.com>*

# Grace's Tree

by Carol-Anne Fleming

We were in the process of moving when we learned Grace wasn't thriving in my womb. It was October 2013 when we found out we were expecting our 2nd child. We were excited for our family to grow.

After the chaos of Christmas and the New Year had passed, we began the process of listing our home, to move into something bigger to accommodate our expanding family. Our house had officially hit the market on Friday Jan 31st, the same day as our mid pregnancy routine ultrasound. Curtis came home early that day, to go with me to the appointment. I bought pink and blue party supplies on our way to the clinic, for the gender reveal party I planned on hosting later that evening.

During the ultrasound, I noticed the tech had trouble getting our baby to move into the position she needed. I figured the baby was sleepy, and didn't think much more of it. When she finished the exam, she told us she needed to talk with the radiologist on site, and he would probably want to talk to us. At that point, we began to suspect something wasn't right with our baby.

The radiologist came into the exam room, and explained to us the symptoms our baby, a girl, was experiencing. He wasn't able to diagnose her, but he directed us to see my family doctor the following Monday, for a referral to a specialist. My stomach became so knotted. I felt helpless, having to wait until Monday before any further testing could be done. I felt some comfort though, because surely if our baby's life was threatened, we would have been sent straight to the hospital. We called off the gender reveal party, and invited our close family members over to help comfort us and keep our mind off of our worry.

Over the weekend I would go back and forth from feeling hopeful, to feeling completely broken. I wasn't feeling our baby girl move much, but all along I had thought it was due to an anterior placenta. Monday morning

finally came. I remember sitting in the waiting room of my family doctor's office with my husband, when I began to feel lots of kicks and movement. My spirits quickly rose, and I became more confident that things would be okay. We were sent home to wait for a call to see a perinatologist at the high risk clinic.

That day was the last time I remember feeling Grace move. Unaware of how grim her future would be, we accepted an offer on our house that evening.

Wednesday morning came, and we made our way to the high risk clinic, where we were expecting some answers, direction, and most importantly, a plan for treatment or whatever was needed for our unborn child. That was not what happened. We were told that day, that our baby girl had passed away.

*My heart began  
sinking that moment,  
as my brain processed  
what was being said.*

My heart began sinking that moment, when my brain processed what was being said. I kept expecting the sinking feeling to end, to hit "rock bottom", but it didn't. It felt like I was falling, and falling, with no end to the ruthless reality that had become our life, nothing to grasp, no end, just falling. It's been 16 months since that day, and there are days when I have my bearings, but there are also days when I feel like I'm still falling.

We went onto to find a house to move into. I struggled a lot with that decision. After all, we were only moving because our family was growing. Those dreams and plans had come to an abrupt, cold end. I thought Grace would want us to continue on our journey of moving, to have something

to look forward to in our future. We knew we would eventually try to have another baby, and it just felt right to continue with our plans to move.

The night before moving day came on a beautiful warm April evening. And it came heavy, full of regret and guilt. How could we leave the only place Grace had ever lived? We were choosing to close a chapter of our lives, the chapter, and only chapter, where Grace had existed.

I would come to learn in the following weeks and months that our sweet girl would prove to exist in every moment, of every chapter to follow. Leaving that house behind was terrifying, but feeling Grace in my heart as strong as ever, in our new home, was comforting beyond measure. We quickly established an area on our fireplace mantel, dedicated to Grace. I wanted to also commemorate her somehow in our new home though, and in May of last year, while my parents were visiting from Newfoundland, we held a Tree Planting Ceremony in memory of Grace.

Surrounded by family, we each helped plant her tree, and with it we buried a box of letters written to her from each one of us. I gave out forget-me-nots, to be planted in her memory, beautiful keepsake cards with prints of her hands and feet, and puzzle charms engraved with "Grace our missing piece". It was a beautiful day of healing and acknowledgement of her life. Grace's tree blooms the purest of white flowers every spring. The flowers stay for about two weeks before they drop, and leaves grow, and change color about 3 times throughout the year. It is something we can look forward to watching grow in Grace's absence.

We will always remember the beautiful beginning of the tree's life at our new home, surrounded by the love of family. It represents Grace, here, at our new home, a tangible and physical reminder that Grace will always be

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with us, no matter where we go. I feel her constantly. I allow myself to look at my 3 year old daughter, and imagine glimpses of Grace. I see and feel Grace every time I look into the eyes of our rainbow baby, who we welcomed into our arms January 2015. Together we are whole, me, my husband, and the presence of all our children, Hannah and Felix in our arms, and Grace, forever safe in our hearts.

*“A butterfly lights beside us  
like a sunbeam  
And for a brief moment its  
glory and beauty  
belong to our world*

*But then it flies again  
And though we wish it could  
have stayed...  
We feel lucky to have seen it.”*

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## A Moment in Time

by Debbie Dickinson

Time passes,  
But not the love I have for you  
Nor the ache inside of me  
Because you are not.

You were with us for as long as God allowed.  
You were real. You existed. And you counted.

You were with us only a short time,  
But it was time enough to grow to love you,  
For you to make a difference in our lives.

You could not stay  
But thoughts of you will forever remain  
as does the love this day  
tempered by the pain.

# Rainbow Baby Birth Announcements

*Ronan Jean Gillis*

*Born on April 24, 2015 weighing 6lbs 14oz to excited parents*

*Lise and Seumas Gillis.*

*Ronan has an angel watching over him celebrating his safe arrival!*

*Jack Terence Harburn*

*Born on May 1, 2015 weighing 7lbs 13oz to proud parents*

*Christie and Terence Harburn and excited big sister Kenzie!*

*Jack has a big brother watching over him from heaven,  
celebrating with the angels!*

*Elijah Lei-Vaughn Hachac*

*Born on May 20th, 2015 weighing 6lbs to loving parents*

*Nica and Romeo Hachac and thrilled big sister Eilithya.*

*Elijah has several angels in heaven celebrating his safe arrival!*

*Griffin Oak Kershaw*

*Born on May 27th, 2015 weighing 7lbs 14oz to excited parents*

*Theresa and Grant Kershaw and proud big brother Jasper.*

*Griffin's big brother Titus is smiling down from heaven!*

*Evelyn Budziszyn*

*Born on June 19, 2015 weighing 8lbs 7oz to loving parents*

*Cheryl & Simon Budziszyn and excited big sister Arianna!*

*Evelyn's sister Emily is celebrating with the angels!*

## Little Champion Run & Walk

### In Memory of Nolan Bradley Stenson

The Little Champion Run & Walk is a fundraising run benefiting the Stollery Children's Hospital Foundation in memory of Nolan Bradley Stenson. Nolan passed away after a short 35 hour life on October 25, 2014. His family was deeply touched by the care and attention given to him by the staff at the Stollery Children's Hospital. This 2 km or 5 km fundraising run/walk is to help ensure that other children like Nolan continue to get the amazing care that is available there.



October 24, 2015

Benefiting Stollery Children's Hospital  
Foundation

[www.littlechamprun.com](http://www.littlechamprun.com)

6<sup>th</sup>  
Annual



# MADISON MEMORIAL GOLF TOURNAMENT

Friday September 18, 2015

Shotgun start at 9:00 am

Registration open until Sept. 4, 2015

Continental Breakfast

Dinner, Silent Auction, Hole Prizes, Draws

Northern Bear Golf Club

51055 Range Road 222, Sherwood Park, AB

Register at [www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com](http://www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com)

or call 780-952-1835 for more information.



*Madison Louise Kondro was born on June 7, 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. Maddie was born with a heart defect and lived for only 5<sup>1/2</sup> hours before she passed away peacefully in her parents arms.*

*Maddie's mommy, Melissa is co-founder of "Angel Whispers". Angel Whispers, a baby loss support program for families who have lost a baby during pregnancy or after birth.*

*Both Melissa and Blair are avid golfers so what better way to celebrate Maddie's life and raise funds for a wonderful cause? All proceeds from this event will fund the programs of Angel Whispers, under the umbrella of Fort Saskatchewan Families First Society.*

All proceeds will go directly to the  
Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program

[www.familiesfirstsociety.ca](http://www.familiesfirstsociety.ca)  
Phone 780-998-5595



[www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com](http://www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com)  
Blair & Melissa Kondro at 780-952-1835



# 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.

For families seeking additional support please see:

<http://www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers/support>

## 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](http://www.canadahelps.org)*

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



### Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program

"How very softly you tiptoed into our world, almost silently, only a moment you stayed.

But what an imprint your footsteps have left upon our hearts."

- Dorothy Ferguson

Dear Friends;

*Our silent auction pub night fund raiser for the Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program was a huge success! The total amount raised was \$5000, every penny of which will make a difference in the lives of Angel Whispers families.*

*It is with a grateful heart that we thank you for helping us support Angel Whispers. By honouring our angels and supporting this event you have helped the program to continue the vital work it does with grieving families and in maintaining the lifeline that it creates for so many.*

*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](http://www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers).*

Sincerely,

Lori-Ann Huot

Program Coordinator  
Angel Whispers Baby Loss Support Program

# In Memory of our Newly Discovered Angels

Jedi Castro  
January 27, 2013 - August 2, 2013

Happy Pearce  
February 1, 2015

Baby Mac Dooley-MacGregor  
February 4, 2015

Aria Hope Grigsby  
March 23, 2015

Isabelle Joy Anderson  
April 7, 2015

Isaiah John Steinraths  
April 13-22, 2015

Baby Gauvreau  
2015

Ireland Mae Nault  
May 29, 2015

Baby Angel Ted Mcgrath  
May 29, 2015

Ever Elliott Cochrane  
September 12, 2014

Charlie Everitt  
November 14, 2014

*All angels can be found on our  
website at:  
[www.angelwhispers.ca/angelwhispers](http://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 mis-  
spelled your angel's name, please  
let us know.*

# Thank You!

- to Serena and Shawn Ewasiuk for the donation made in memory of their son Atticus
- to Ken and Jody Vandervies for the donation made in memory of their angels Willow and Keziah
- to Lynette and Chris Gibbons for the donation made in memory of their daughter Anna
- to Rob and France Dean for the donation
- to the Fort Saskatchewan Hospital for the donation made to Angel Whispers from funds raised from the "Be Seen in Jeans" fundraiser
- to everyone who donated silent auction items for our Pub Night Fundraiser and Silent Auction
- to everyone who attended our 2nd Annual Pub Night Fundraiser and Silent Auction helping to make it a huge success!
- 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.

## *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!

*The reality is that you will grieve forever. You will not 'get over' the loss of a loved one; you will learn to live with it. You will heal and you will rebuild yourself around the loss you have suffered. You will be whole again, but you will never be the same. Nor should you be the same, nor would you want to.*

*~ Elizabeth Kubler-Ross and John Kessler*

# 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, an Occupational Therapist and Certified Yoga Instructor. For more information and upcoming class dates, please visit - [www.yogaforgriefsupport.com](http://www.yogaforgriefsupport.com)

## 6th Annual Madison Memorial Golf Tournament

Friday September 18th, 2015  
Northern Bear Golf Course, Sherwood Park  
For more information or to register, Visit - [www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com](http://www.madisonmemorialgolftournament.com)

## Baby Steps Memorial Walk

For anyone touched by the loss of a precious baby, during pregnancy or anytime after birth. The 3rd Annual Baby Steps Memorial Walk to Remember will take place in both Sherwood Park, Alberta and Edmonton, Alberta for 2015.

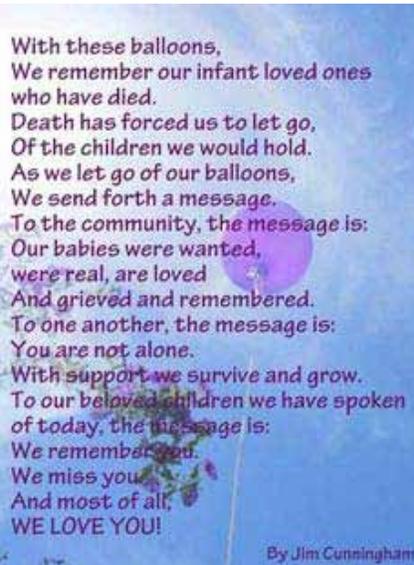
- Sherwood Park - Sunday August 30, 2015
- Edmonton - Sunday October 4, 2015

For more information or to register, visit the Baby Steps website: [www.babystepswalk.com](http://www.babystepswalk.com).



## 2nd Annual Angel Whispers potluck Picnic and Balloon Release

The tentative date is set for Sunday July 26th from noon - 2pm at Broadmoor Lake Park in Sherwood Park (weather permitting). Stay tuned to Facebook and our website for more information to be announced soon!



# Time Will Ease The Hurt

*Bruce B. Wilmer*

The sadness of the present days  
Is locked and set in time,  
And now moving to the future  
Is a slow and painful climb.

But all the feelings that are now  
So vivid and so real  
Can't hold their fresh intensity  
As time begins to heal.

No wound so deep will ever go  
Entirely away;  
Yet every hurt becomes  
A little less from day to day.

Nothing can erase the painful  
Imprints on your mind;  
But there are softer memories  
That time will let you find.

Though your heart won't let the  
sadness  
Simply slide away,  
The echoes will diminish  
Even though the memories stay.

## 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.

Find our Angel Whispers Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/angelwhispersbabylosssupport>

Add the Angel Whispers Program Coordinator, Lori-Ann, on facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/angelwhispersbabylosssupport>



**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*

**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 memento 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](mailto: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.

July 5, August 9 and September 13

### 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.

July 12, August 16 and September 20

*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.*