

Grief Support Groups

Here are some grief support groups near the six Forest Lawn locations that you may find helpful and useful in dealing with the loss of a child.

The Compassionate Friends

National Headquarters: 877-969-0010
(Support groups for child loss of any age from any cause)
Web Address: compassionatefriends.org

Verdugo Hills Chapter

626-289-8719
Meets 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Verdugo Hills Hospital, Glendale.

Verdugo Hills Chapter—Pregnancy &

Infant Loss Group - 626-289-8719
Meets 4th Thursday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Verdugo Hills Hospital, Glendale.
(This meeting is held separately from the above meeting)

Woodland Hills Chapter

818-788-9701
Meets 2nd Monday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at the Woodland Hills Kaiser Building, Ent. 5, Classroom C.

San Gabriel/Pomona Chapter

626-919-7206
Meets 1st Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Christ Lutheran Church, Chino.

Redlands Chapter - 800-717-0373

Meets 3rd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at First Congregational Church, Redlands.

Orange County Chapter

714-993-6708
Meets 3rd Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at Kaiser Hospital, Anaheim.

South Bay Chapter - 310-368-6845

Meets 1st Wednesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. at The Neighborhood Church, Palos Verdes Estates.

California SIDS Foundation

800-974-3752
Information regarding SIDS and SIDS related grief.

Survivors After Suicide

310-390-6612
Offers an eight-week support group held in four locations—the San Fernando Valley, San Gabriel, West Los Angeles and the South Bay—followed by a monthly drop-in group.

Parents of Murdered Children

626-221-5737
Web Address: capomc.com
Meets 2nd Tuesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at San Gabriel Union Church, San Gabriel.

562-508-2397

Meets 2nd Wednesday of each month at 7:30 p.m. at Zion Lutheran Church, Anaheim.

The Mourning Star Center

Palm Desert/VNA Hospice
760-773-6256

Both offer a variety of support groups for bereaved families and children. Call for dates and times.

Our House

310-475-0299

A bereavement center in Westwood and Woodland Hills. Groups for bereaved parents who have lost an adult or younger child. Call for dates and times.

Web Address: ourhouse-grief.org

For more help and information

Forest Lawn provides other resources to help you through the grief process.

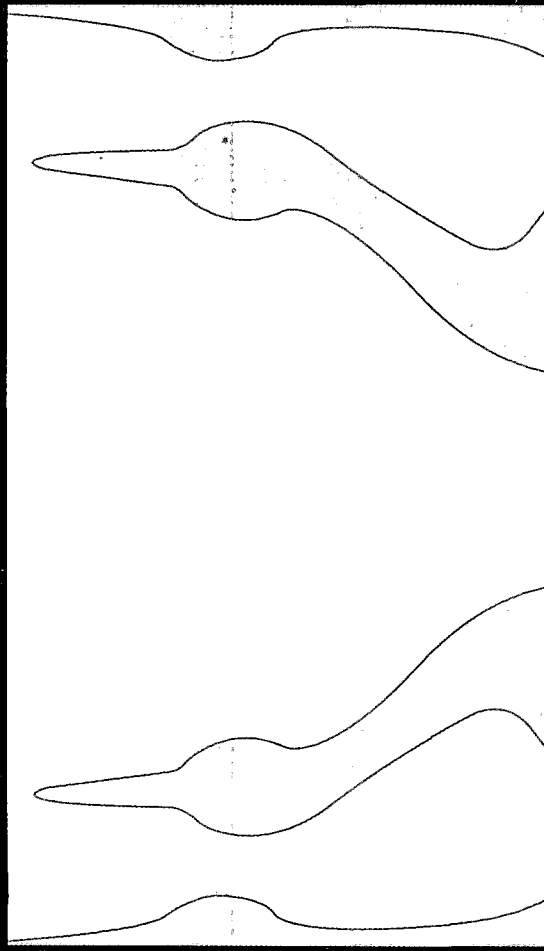
Our "Understanding Grief" seminars are designed to help those who have experienced the loss of a family member or friend. For seminar schedules and more information, call our Information Office at 1-800-204-3131 or log on to ForestLawn.com



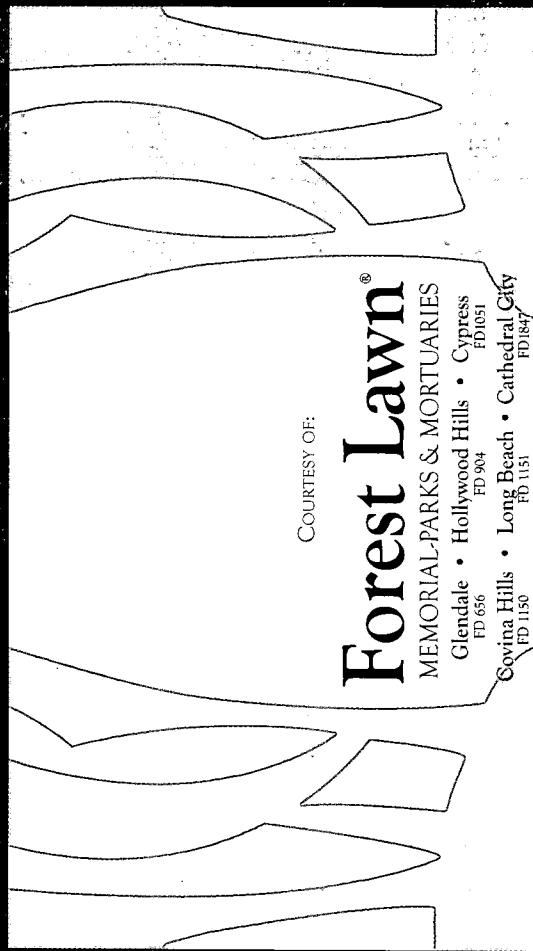
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When A Child Dies



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The loss of a child, regardless of their age, is perhaps the most difficult grief to bear. The normal grief reactions of anger, shock, guilt, disbelief, and sadness are magnified and extended when a child dies.

✦ **Grief does not come in stages.** Although the shock and numbness that immediately follows a death will recede, you may experience waves of anger, guilt, anxiety and sadness for months after the death of your child. Be patient with yourself and remember that grief lasts much longer than our culture expects.

✦ **Oftentimes bereaved parents feel** as if they should be “better” sooner. Sometimes this message comes from friends or family members and sometimes from the bereaved themselves. While you won’t always be in the same amount of pain that you experience immediately following the death, you have suffered a major loss and will miss the child who died for the rest of your life.

✦ **Everyone who knew the child,** including the parents, will grieve differently. Some family members will want to talk about their grief and the child who died. Other family members may have a more difficult time expressing themselves. It is important to recognize that everyone in the family is bereaved and that because of this you might not be able to rely on each other for comfort and support. Finding a safe place to express yourself outside of your immediate family, either with a friend, clergy person or in a grief group may help you.

✦ **Parents can be overwhelmed** with guilt after the loss of a child. Regardless if their child’s death was the result of an illness, accident, homicide, or suicide, it is not unusual for a parent to express the thought that they are somehow responsible. It is normal to have feelings of failure and thoughts of “if only...” Recognizing that these thoughts and feelings are irrational doesn’t mean that you are “going crazy.” These feelings are part of the ordinary grieving process. It is helpful to find someone who will simply listen to your expressions of guilty feelings, without trying to talk you out of them. Eventually, if they are expressed, they will resolve themselves.

✦ **Like grief, anger is not an emotion** that people are comfortable expressing. But, because the death of a child is so inherently unfair, anger is a normal response. It is important that you find ways to express your anger that do not hurt yourself or someone else. Physical activity, keeping a journal, and artwork might help. Grieving parents may try to smother their anger or other grief emotions with alcohol or drugs. Besides the potential danger of becoming chemically dependent, drugs and alcohol may further depress your mood and delay the resolution of your grief.

✦ **Expect to cry at unexpected times and places.** These “grief bursts” are natural although they may make you feel uncomfortable. Find a safe place to talk about your child; keeping his or her memory alive is part of your grief process. Know that you will never forget. When you have a day, or even an hour when you feel a bit “better” it is not because you are forgetting, but because you have allowed yourself to grieve. Be patient and find someone who will give you unconditional love and support when you need to talk.