

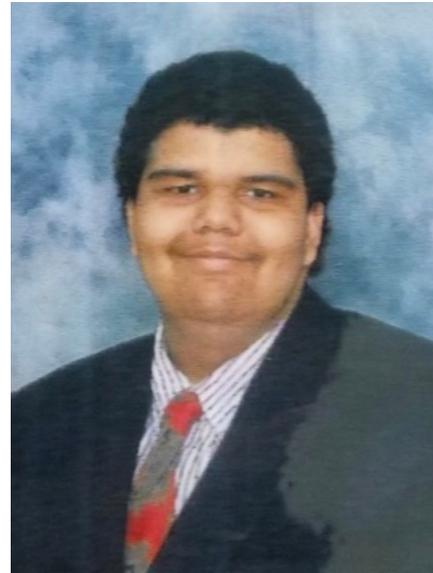


## In Loving Memory: Tyler Williams

Tyler A. Williams was born September 29, 1993, and passed away on June 11, 2011. Tyler was the joy and love of my life; and he brought happiness to all he met. He had a smile and sense of humor that lifted those around him.

My son had ADD and Asperger's; however, you wouldn't know it by his actions. He was so special in my eyes, and when we were out together people would ask if that was Tyler with me. He'd say, "How do they know me?" I told him that I would show his picture to everyone and talk about him all the time. I'm so blessed to have had the greatest child in the world. I remember all the times I rushed home from work just to see him before he went to bed. He had a beautiful God-given gift of voice. The first time I heard him sing brought tears to my eyes. He also loved Transformers and graphic design. I taught him how to cook and iron his clothes. His teachers would comment about how nice he always looked in school.

Like any father, I didn't want my son to worry about me. I was his strength, his protector. Tyler knew something was wrong with me because I coughed all the time. I had congestive heart failure, but did not tell him. After all, he had enough to deal with being a teenager. After Tyler passed away my heart continually got weaker, I was hospitalized, and the doctors told me I could not leave the hospital. I spent 435 days in the hospital waiting for a new heart. The day I was told I would have a heart, the first thing I did was to thank God and Tyler for giving me the strength to get through the good and bad times spent waiting. The tables



have turned; he is now my strength, my protector.

When Tyler passed away, I was so broken up. I knew I needed help, but didn't know where to turn. I thought that going back to

work would help, but it didn't. I sat at my desk and cried all the time. Online, I discovered an organization called The Compassionate Friends. I contacted the co-chair, Lucille, and she invited me to a meeting. The first meeting I attended, Lucille sat with me before it began and explained the organization and its mission.

When the meeting started, a beautiful rock with butterflies was passed to each person and it gave the opportunity to talk about their lost child. It had only been two weeks since I had lost Tyler, and I cried through the whole time trying to express my grief. This group is the best thing that has ever happened to me since losing Tyler. Everyone understood exactly what I was going through because they have been there, and that made such a difference. The love and support given is comforting. At The Compassionate Friends, I have made great friends, and I look forward to going to each meeting.

With Love,  
Larry Williams



## In Memory of Our Children

*As long as we live, our children too shall live, for they are part of us in our memories. We lovingly remember the following children on Their Anniversary.*

### August

Joseph Allard  
Patrick Avitabile  
Donald Anthony Capasso  
Matthew A. Cardillo  
Cara Lynne Ciccone  
Cody Johns Craynock  
Gabriella Bella DiPalma

David W. Greenwood  
Thomas P. Kenney  
Jason G. Naylor  
Lauren Rose Norwood  
Matthew Perry  
Nicholas Pizetoski  
Amy Prada

Melissa Rourke  
Angela Rose Sbardella  
Ethan Simpson  
Matthew A. Viegas  
Jonathan Blake Waxler  
Jackson Weintraub

### September

Jason David Bates  
Leonidas Ashton Caruso  
Peter Collins  
Madelyn Getter  
Amando Gomes

Arianna Davis Griffin  
Matthew Marandola  
Emily Otrando  
Joseph A. Pari  
Marc Daniel Pinzon

Hayley Sanford  
Daniel Erik Schuster  
Brent Douglas Sheldon

### October

Sebastian Cocco-Babcock  
Eric Boyd  
Anthony Stephen Casale

Brian Lang  
Tamara Suzanne Meyer  
Wendy Smith

Sam Oliver Stein  
Justin Wilks

 **The Compassionate Friends**  
Greater Providence Area Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

Winter 2016

**In Loving Memory:**  
Natalie Joy

On March 18, 2007, my life was suddenly shattered. My heart was forever broken. I woke up that morning to find my sweet baby daughter, Natalie, had passed away in her sleep. Suddenly I was living every parent's worst nightmare. Natalie was only 19 months old. She was a happy and healthy little girl with a pure heart that was full of love and sweetness.

This year will mark the 9th year since we lost Natalie. And even though life has gone on and I have become "used to" her absence, a part of me still cannot truly believe she is really gone. I remember how it felt different during that first year. How little things like finding the basement door open would cause my heart to leap out of my chest and I'd think, "we need to keep it closed or Natalie could fall down the stairs!" I no longer have that thought when the basement door is open because I am used to her being gone. And sometimes that makes me mad because I don't want to ever be used to it. Because it never should have happened. Because to be used to it would somehow make it OK, and it's not OK. It never will be.

Shortly after Natalie died, I found out about two organizations that help people who have lost a child: The Compassionate Friends and the SUDC Foundation. SUDC stands for "sudden unexpected death in childhood," which is basically like SIDS only for children over the age of 12 months. Like TCE, SUDC provides support services to families. They also have a research component with the ultimate goal of finding a way to prevent these mysterious deaths.

After we got the Rhode Island Medical Examiner's report, which took about 7 months, I wasn't satisfied with their findings. The cause of death was listed as "acute bronchitis and bronchiolitis." Even the ME said she wasn't confident about it, but she "had to put down something." At this point, I applied to the SUDC Research Project to get a second opinion. It took 4 years, but we finally got an answer in 2011. Natalie's death was found to be a case of SUDC.

Like SIDS, SUDC is a diagnosis of exclusion. It basically means they don't know. There is no reason why Natalie, a happy, healthy little girl, just stopped breathing and quietly died in her sleep. No reason. No reason.



If you are interested in sponsoring a newsletter, please contact Lucille at (401) 231-9229.

## Sponsor a Newsletter

We are pleased to offer our members the opportunity to sponsor a newsletter. We will feature your child's story and photo on the front page of our newsletter when you make a donation. This offers members another way to share their child with our group, as well as to help offset the cost of producing and mailing our newsletter. We are offering up to two sponsorships per newsletter. Your story can be any length up to 500 words and can include 1-3 photos. **If you would like to see your child featured in a future issue, please contact Lucille at 401-231-9229 or [lcvalliere49@gmail.com](mailto:lcvalliere49@gmail.com).**

## Birthday Remembrances

*We celebrate the day they were born and hold them in our hearts forever.*



### August

Mary Elaine Ackaway

Nathaniel Robert Asselin

Christopher Robert Boone

Brandi Lyn Burgess

David Allan DeAlmeida

Robert Desmet

Gabriella Bella DiPalma

Dale Marie Erickson

Christopher Mark Leahey

Tamara Suzanne Meyer

Jason Alan Smith

Joshua Spinelli

Jeffrey Swanson

John Taglione

Matthew A. Viegas

Justin Wilks

### September

James Avitabile

Michael Beirne

Christine Marie Bernier

Stephanie Lynn Blum

David D. DeMoura

Traci L. DeMoura

Brian Lang

Daniel M. Malo

Matthew Marandola

Jordan M. Neves

Nathan Parker

Matthew Perry

Joan Elizabeth Plante

Jamie Rappaneau

Tyler Anthony Williams

### October

Cody Johns Craynock

Arianna Davis Griffin

Rebecca C. Hopkins

Kameron Montanino

Kevin Munroe

Amy Prada

Marissa Salabert

Rose Block Shatz

Ethan Simpson

Alfred "A.D." Silvia, III

Wendy Smith

Kyla Vinacco



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

## To the parents of the child who should be starting kindergarten: They can join my classroom

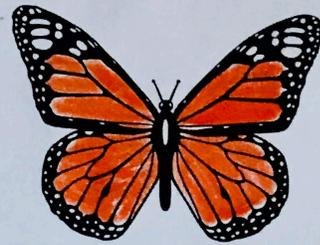
Summer is winding down and I'm gearing up for a new school year. Yesterday, I sat down to finish my mailing for my new kindergarten students. I worked my way through the list, personalizing each letter with my student's name (I feel like it adds a little extra love when you put pen to paper for someone) and daydreaming about the year ahead. Then, I thought of them; the children who should be coming to kindergarten. I imagined the families who should be receiving letters from new teachers, but instead, they are receiving yet another dose of heartbreak at the milestone their child did not reach. So, I have decided that, for this year, they can join my classroom. I will be their teacher. Here is their welcome letter.

—by Rachel Whalen

<https://anunexpectedfamilyouting.wordpress.com/>

Dear Friend,

Welcome to Kindergarten! My name is Mrs. Whalen and I will be your teacher. I am looking forward to holding space for you in my classroom this year. Even though you can't physically attend, I will feel your presence in my classroom every day.



Kindergarten is an exciting place and how I wish you could experience it with me! I want to teach you all about letters, the sounds they make, and how to make words. I wish you could be next to me as we learn lots about numbers, plants, and animals. I'll be thinking of you when we learn about life cycles and watch as our classroom caterpillars become beautiful butterflies. I just know you would have so much studying the work of famous artists, making scientific discoveries, and learning so many other wonderful things.

I know how much your families wish you were here to share the joys of Kindergarten with them. They want to walk you to your new classroom, help you hang up your backpack, and hear all about your day. Please know that no matter how full our classroom is, you will always be missed.

So, on the first day of school, please make sure you send a little extra love to the ones who are missing you. They will be doing the same for you. I am so honored to have you as part of my classroom and to hold space for you in what should be your year in Kindergarten.

Love,

*Mrs. Whalen* ❤️

## TCF Providence Chapter Updates

### Volunteers Needed and Welcome Aboard!

We are still looking for volunteers to help our Chapter in the capacity of **Newsletter Editor** and **Photographer**.

We are pleased to welcome **Lisa DiPalma, Bella's Mom**, to the Steering Committee for our Chapter.

Please contact **Lucille at 401-231-9229 or lcvalliere49@gmail.com** if you are interested in learning more about the Steering Committee and either of these rewarding positions. Thank you for helping to ensure the future success of our Chapter!

### Need Help Solving TCF Remembrance Garden Watering Situation

We are looking for solutions to the problem of watering the TCF Remembrance Garden in an efficient and cost-effective manner. Currently, we pay a considerable amount of money to have water hauled in. We are hoping to install a sprinkler system, but have had no luck finding a way to get this done, either through the Providence Water Department or National Grid. **If you know anyone who might be able to help with this important project, please contact Lucille at 401-231-9229 or lcvalliere49@gmail.com.**



## Autumn

In the fall  
When amber leaves are shed,  
Softly—silently  
Like tears that wait to flow,  
I watch and grieve.  
My heart beats sadly in the fall;  
'Tis then I miss you most of all.

*Lily de Lauder*  
*TCF Van Nuys, CA*



## Autumn Tears

We look back on September and we realize that somehow we made it through those dreaded first days of school. Whether it was the anticipation or the actual days that were the worst, we survived. We used our faith, our support systems or just plain hard work and made it over yet another hurdle. We watched small children heading for their first day of kindergarten, listened to excited teenagers talk of high school and heard stories of children leaving home to attend post-secondary school. Somehow we rode the waves of grief and found ourselves ashore again.

As these waves subside new ones will build as we head into the holidays that speak of, and to, children. Halloween will soon approach and for some, painful memories. Thanksgiving arrives to exemplify family and togetherness and Christmas looms ahead. These special days are forever reminders of our loss—the costumes we'll never sew, the empty chair at turkey dinner, the fun and magic we'll never share with someone we love. Forever reminders that our child has died.

To survive when these events and anniversary days come around let's find time to think of the good memories we have—the announcement of our long awaited pregnancy at Thanksgiving dinner, the look of excitement on our son's first Halloween night, the vision of our daughter helping prepare the turkey dinner. These holidays will always be reminders that our child died. Let us also make them reminders that our child lived! They left us memories more precious than any others to hold and celebrate!

—Penny Young  
TCF Powell River, British Columbia

## Love Gift Donation

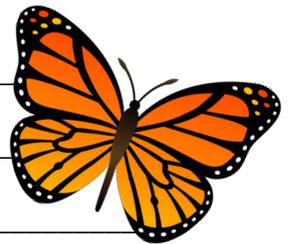
Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ ZIP \_\_\_\_\_

In Loving Memory Of \_\_\_\_\_

Love Gift \$ \_\_\_\_\_ Message \_\_\_\_\_



I would like my Love Gift to go toward (please check one):

General Chapter expenses

Upkeep of our Remembrance Garden

Your tax-deductible donation provides help for those who are grieving. General Chapter expenses helps defray the cost for the newsletter, postage, and other Chapter expenses. Upkeep of our Remembrance Garden goes toward lawn care and garden maintenance. Your donation is greatly appreciated and will be acknowledged in this newsletter. Please make your check payable to: **TCF Greater Providence Chapter.**

Please send donations to:      Co-Leader Lucille Valliere  
10 Dail Drive  
North Providence, RI 02911



**The  
Compassionate  
Friends**  
Greater Providence Area Chapter  
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

10 Dail Drive  
North Providence, RI 02911  
tcfprovidence.com



## Upcoming Events

Our regular support group meetings take place on the second Monday of each month. All meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. at the Central Congregational Church, 296 Angell St., Providence, RI.

- **September 10**
- **October 8**
- **November 12**

**September 2 at 1:00 p.m.** — Garden Dedication of 37 new names on our stone walkway, TCF Remembrance Garden, Waterplace Park in downtown Providence

**December 9 at 6:00 p.m.** — Annual Worldwide Candle Lighting Ceremony

