

A BEREAVED PARENT'S WISH LIST

Bereaved parents share their thoughts and wishes about what has happened and how friends and family can support them.

- I wish my child hadn't died.
- Don't be afraid to speak my child's name. My child lived and was very important to me. I need to hear that my child was important to you too.
- You won't hurt me if I become emotional when you talk about my child. I cry because my child died. You have talked about my child, and you have allowed me to share my grief. I thank you for both.
- It hurts me when you remove my child's pictures, artwork, or other remembrances from your home.
- Don't shy away from me. I need you now more than ever.
- Allow me to talk about my child, even if it seems like it's too much. I need diversions, so I do want to hear about you; but I also want you to hear about me.
- Let me know about the times you think and pray for me.
- Tell me how my child's death has affected you.
- Don't expect my grief to be over in six months; my grief will never be over. I will forever live with the death of my child.
- Don't expect me to "not think about it" or to "be happy." Neither will happen for a very long time.
- My life has shattered. I know it is miserable for you to be around me when I'm feeling miserable. Please be as patient with me as I am with you.
- My expressions of grief are normal. Depression, anger, frustration, hopelessness, and overwhelming sadness are some of the many emotions to expect. So, please excuse me when I'm quiet and withdrawn or irritable and cranky.
- Taking things one hour at a time is all I can handle right now.
- Excuse me if I seem rude - it is not my intent. Sometimes the world around me goes too fast and I react. When I walk away, let me find a quiet place to spend time alone.
- I am not the same person I was before my child died, and I will never be that person again.
- I hope you never have to go through this experience.
- Reacting to death reminds people of their own death. Be aware of how this makes you feel about your immortality. Sometimes people don't acknowledge that and it leads to thoughtless or insensitive remarks that can really hurt.



Children's Hospital Colorado

Compiled by Diane Collins, The Compassionate Friends, Bay Area

