



Pregnancy and Newborn Loss
Grief Support Group

The Circle of Healing..
Grief begins at the Beginning..
Caregivers begin the
Process of Healing..
SHARE Atlanta Continues It



770.928.9603
www.shareatlanta.org
Est. 1984

Grief after a Pregnancy or Newborn Loss - SHARE Atlanta's Outreach... **"Permission to Grieve"**

- Grief begins at the beginning. It begins as soon as we know the baby will die or has died.
- By presenting grief *material* and encouraging grief *activity* (acknowledging and, when possible, "parenting" their baby) - we give parents "permission to grieve."

Generally, society, which includes the parents and most of those around them, dismisses pregnancy and newborn loss and encourages moving-on. This reduces the significance of the loss in the eyes of the parents thus lessening their ability to openly grieve. They feel pain, but deny it because everyone else does. This fact tied to the impact of initial shock, may cause the parents to respond in a manner that is not consistent with what is thought as "normal" grief reactions. They may not cry or express sadness. But, grief has begun.

Embracing Parenthood

The process of grief and healing can begin when the caregiver embraces their *parenthood* with mementos and affirmation toward their baby. *SHARE Atlanta's materials given with our 4 Bs' baby blankets and buntings*, further validate that their baby is special. Our Survival Kit reassures them that their feelings of grief are normal after their baby dies. Our packets demonstrate that a baby's death is significant. A group was formed by parents who have experienced this type of loss. It makes the parents immediately aware that they are *not alone* in their pain, confusion, and subsequent grief.

By sharing our materials, the caregiver gives the *option* and the *responsibility* of seeking grief support to the parents. Then, the opportunity for support is available to the parents at any point along their grief journey. Even if they choose to initially discard the materials, they know there is a group to connect to. If no material is given, this particular path of grieving may be closed to them. Statements from parents such as: "...after *many* telephone calls I was *finally* given your group's name and number." should not happen.

Together, SHARE Atlanta and caregivers can provide hope through ongoing support that starts *at the beginning* of the parent's journey. Opening doors is a positive healing mechanism—one that we can mutually provide. Marcia McGinnis, President of SHARE Atlanta

SHARE Atlanta's Programs - reach over 400 parents quarterly...

- Survival Kits (English and Spanish) - initial contact with SHARE Atlanta.
- Parent Packet - parent requests by phone or email. Details our group ie. directions to meetings, programs etc..
- Groups (men/women; women; subsequent pregnancy group— with topics & booklets each month)
- Outreach Programs (March Of Dimes - from 04-'11 SHARE Atlanta has raised over \$300,000 & 20 awards- Nationally placed Top Family Team 6 times. We "Walk to Remember" our babies; donations to Foster Care Shelter; memorial tree for local hospitals; 5 Bs-Blankets & outfits for babies in hospitals)
- Memorial bricks in our Angel Garden - (\$20 Keepsake; \$25 garden brick)
- Special Services and Workshops: Memorials and Candlelightings, authors, caregivers.
- Mini-Newsletters - online as needed
- Written materials - Survival Kits, Parent Packet, Grief booklets and brochures
- Website with Forums; Links to medical and grief support,
- Advocacy and Awareness for medical and emotional support and research. Brochures, Awareness Pins, Inservices, October Pregnancy & Infant Loss Awareness, NIH's Stillbirth Study, March Of Dimes' March for Babies, Local Media PR, Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth Law in GA



Devon & Nikhol
Memorial 2006



Advocacy and Awareness

We work to strengthen the *connections* between bereaved parents and the community.
More entries <http://www.shareatlanta.org/legacy/shareatlpograms.htm>



Official Signing for the CBRS
Rep. Millar, Tammy & Chris Campbell, Gov. Perdue, Erin & Sara Grace Dickerson, Sen. Weber, Marcia McGinnis

- **Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth**, CBRS: 5.2008
- **“Circle of Healing”** (M. McGinnis) **Workshop –10 times:** 08-'11-Kennestone; Windy Hill Developmental Center -health professionals from the state. CAPPAs Texas Doula Convention 2008. TX Doula Conference by SA's Mary Beth Nance. '07-'08 Given at grief workshops..hospitals & church groups.
- **March of Dimes' Nationally Placed Top Ten Family Team:** 2005-10
- **Emory Stillbirth Study**, 10.05 & 4.07. Presented materials & mission. Gave 4Bs packets for Study's parents.
- **Southern Regional Hospital**, 9.06 “What to do/say and not to do/say” “Parent Grief”
- **Grief, Grieving and Grief Support Conference**, 4. 06. Partnered with Healthy Mothers; Healthy Babies & others to plan program. “Grief after the Loss of a Child” Program funded by Morehouse Medical College.
- **CDC**, Spring 06. Provided materials and information. 6 SA members talked with representatives from CDC
- **Stephen's Ministry-”SA & Healing:** 11.05-Norcross 1st UMC; “SA and Healing”; 8.08—Northbrook UMC
- **Rockdale County Hospital**, '04: “Parent Grief and SHARE Atlanta.”
- **Cascade Methodist Church**, '02-3 “Working Through Grief” by SA's Robin Cash
- **The Compassionate Friends**, '89. “Grief and Healing”
- **Prospective counselors**, '95. Dept of Mental Health and Human Resources/Georgia State. “Grief after the Loss of a Child”- "Presentation was undoubtedly the high-point of the class."
- **"Shattered Dreams" workshop**, '95. Joy & Marvin Johnson at Georgia Baptist.
- **Hospitals & Organizations:** Inservices since 1985: 18 hospitals-some several times. Many use our materials. Eastside ~ Cobb ~ Kennestone ~ Crawford Long ~ Atlanta Children's Hos. ~ Gwinnett ~ N. Fulton ~ Northside ~ Piedmont. ~ RBA & Southeastern

SHARE Atlanta mom



Sakina on radio 98.5 FM
Suzi Marsh 03
“How SHARE Atlanta Helps”

Examples of our Television, Radio and Newspaper Outreach - members in italics

- **People to People (Channel 2) with Dorsey:** 3.10 *McGinnis, Greer, Verbanac*; 10.97 *Karen Gipson & Jennifer Greer*
- **PSA for March of Dimes/SA:** 3.10 *Marcia McGinnis*
- **Atlanta Journal-Constitution, “Notice Validates Stillborn’s Humanity”** by Helena Oliviero: Article about Certificate of Birth Resulting in Stillbirth—SA's Erin Dickerson and Marcia McGinnis. 7.08
- **Times Georgian, “Maternity patient finds way to mend a broken heart”:** *Heather Haney* 12.5.2008
- **Atlanta Journal-Constitution, “Remembering Small Souls”** by Helena Oliviero: Miscarriage, loss, medical & emotional support. Dr. Toledo interview stated support of SHARE Atlanta. *The Keens, Jennifer Greer and Marcia McGinnis*. Picture of angel and bricks. 10.03
- **11 Alive Community Service Award:** *Marcia McGinnis* awarded the *Community Service Award & American Institute for Public Service Jefferson Award*. Wes Sarginson. 4.01
- **Cable News Network: Parenting Today-** Pat Etheridge *SA members* shared about grief, mementos & sub. preg. 3.97
- **Channel 2: Health Special**, “Infertility, Miscarriage and Support Groups” by Diana Davis: *SHARE Atlanta parents* '94
- **TBS: Between the Lines:** *Marcia McGinnis* was the *TBS Super Citizen of the Week* for her work with SHARE Atlanta. Lori Daniel. '92
- **The Dunwoody Crier**, "Angel figure to soothe grieving parents" by Kelly Como: *Polly Keen* .01
- **The Dekalb Neighbor:** SA Subsequent Pregnancy group. *Taylor Deane and her family, Roger, Rachael, and Robert*. Fall '97
- **The Atlanta Journal/The Atlanta Constitution:** "Infant deaths a special loss for parents" 4.94
- **The Gwinnett County News**, “Working through the grief” by Flanigan-Cave: *Candy* 2.88

SHARE Atlanta is ...

- for families who have experienced ectopic, miscarriage, stillbirth and newborn loss.
- a *volunteer*, parent-led, *self-help* or mutual-help group.
- a nonprofit organization since 1984.
- nondenominational; no fees.
- funded completely by tax deductible donations.
- supportive of over 500 parents



Angel's Dedication in 2001
Wes Sarginson, emcee, anchor for 11Alive, Marcia McGinnis, co-founder of SA, Richard Paul Evans, keynote, author of The Christmas Box