



Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

The Compassionate Friends Mandurah Chapter
Rm 2, Mandurah Lotteries House, 7 Anzac Place
Mandurah 6210
Ph. (08) 9535 7761
website:- www.tcfmandurah.com.au
National helpline: 1300 064 068
E-mail:- tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

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Founded in England by Rev Simon Stephens 1969
Australian Founders Lindsay & Margaret Harmer, 1978
WA Patron Graham Mabury OAM Cit WA FECU
BA (Hons) Grad. Dip. Ed.

Welcome

A warm welcome to everyone and a special welcome to those reading this newsletter for the first time. This time of year as we approach Christmas, is particularly difficult for bereaved parents, especially if our child has died this year. We are surrounded by Christmas music, advertisements and mentions of happy family gatherings. For us there will always now be a precious loved one missing from the celebrations. The first of everything is extremely difficult, birthdays, special days and events, mothers day & fathers day and now Christmas. Gradually we'll find our own ways to deal with these days and so it is with Christmas. There is some helpful information in this issue.

I find the Candlelight Memorial Service helps me to deal with Christmas. To gather together with similar others and have that time for those who've gone is so healing and special. The details of this years service in Mandurah are in this issue and also of the Merredin service which is a first and will be held outdoors.

When I look back on 2025 I feel so proud of what our volunteers have achieved. We've spread the word about TCF and established services, including support groups, in some areas where they are needed. We had a training session in Mandurah mid-year and recently I conducted a training session in Merredin for volunteers there who will provide services to families throughout the wheatbelt region. It's so reassuring to know that TCF will be there for families like our own who never expect to be in our position and so desperately need support and understanding.

My Christmas wish for you is that you be given peace. Peace of mind, heart and spirit. Peace be with you all my friends and remember to reach out to another Compassionate friends when you need to.

Margot McAllister

Mother of Kevin, Nana of Jackson

Annual Worldwide Candlelighting

Second Sunday in December

The Compassionate Friends Worldwide candlelighting unites families and friends around the globe in lighting candles to honour the memory of our children, siblings and grandchildren who have died too soon. Starting in New Zealand at 7 p.m. on Sunday 14 December candles are lit. As candles are lit in the different time zones we create a virtual 24 hours wave of light around the world. Hundreds of candlelighting events are held and many are in homes, as families gather in remembrance of children who died too soon but are forever loved and remembered.



**If you need help, we are here for you. TCF Mandurah has a range of grief support services and resources available for bereaved parents, grandparents and siblings.
We offer understanding, friendship, compassion and hope.**

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PAST EVENTS

BENDIGO BANK RAFFLE Thank you for participating in our most recent community raffle.

TCF raised \$1000 with ticket sales.

Bendigo Bank had 58 organisations participate and they raised a record amount coming in just under \$107,000. Over the past few years, their raffles have raised a total of \$487,000 for local organisations.

Congratulations to the winners

1st Prize (\$15,000 cash) - ticket # 00836 - Carol Funazzi - sold by Halls Head Bowling Club

2nd prize (\$6,000 cash) - ticket # 26050 - Kiri Taylor - sold by Riding for the Disabled

3rd prize (\$4,000 cash) - ticket # 01538 - Nola Michels - sold by City of Mandurah RSL

4th prize - ticket # 30606 - Christine Wilson - sold by Mandurah Murray Vietnam Veterans Group

5th prize - ticket # 08483 - Ann Street - sold by Mandurah Croquet and Recreation Club.

TCF 2025 AGM

TCF Mandurah held its AGM on Friday 26th September. All positions were declared vacant by the Returning Office, Nicole Blackwell from Peel Volunteer Resource Centre.

All nominations were accepted and voted in with our 2025/2026 Committee as follows;

President: Gary Withers **Vice President:** Carolyn Lee
Treasurer: Gaye Schmidt **PR Manager:** Margot McAllister
Funding: Peter Watson **Secretary:** Cheryl Wellington
Promotions: Lara Hall

Committee Tina Pearce, Wendy Hancock, Jean Tongue

Thank you to our retiring committee members:
Emily Pinnell, Alain D'Argent, Sylvia Watts and Kate Reynolds.



2025/2026 committee

PEACH Grant

Once again we say a huge Thank You to PEACH of ALCOA. This grant obtained by our funding volunteer, Peter Watson, has enabled us to purchase a new printer which has the features needed to produce our members newsletter and pamphlets, saving us the cost of printing.

We also purchased several other items including promotional banners and a gazebo. The photo shows Jamie Martley and Mark Russell from the PEACH board with Peter. Thank you PEACH for helping us to continue our work with bereaved families.



VOLUNTEER UPDATE

We said farewell to **Dianne Gibbs** who has looked after our library so well for several years. Thank you Dianne and best wishes for a speedy recovery from the recent surgery.

Petra Flory sent out the anniversary cards to members of TCF WA and has well and truly earned retirement. Thank you Petra.

Welcome **Janet Goldstraw** who has come on board to assist Lara with promotions. We're likely to see Jan assisting with other activities so she will be a good member of the team.



Promoting TCF Services

Our Promotions volunteer, Lara Hall, had a busy time with several displays. One was held on September 10 which is World Suicide Prevention Day, at the Mandurah Forum Shopping Centre. TCF President, Gary Withers, assisted at this display where our information was distributed and several people stopped to ask about our services.

Falcon Primary School

TCF responded to a request to hold a display for a late R.U.OK Day.

Parents and pupils were interested in our information and the children

Enjoyed painting rocks and sharing memories of past relatives.

Wellness Wednesday

Dozens of community groups set up displays on the Mandurah foreshore on Wednesday 1 October. In addition to distributing information about our grief support services for families, so important for good mental health, we had an activity for children with rocks and paints. Lara, Jan, Angel, Gary and Margot all participated.



2025 Weekend Retreat

Fourteen members attended the retreat with seven people there for the first time. We're grateful to the therapists who gave so generously of their time; Michelle and John Holter, Stephen Giles, Jane Roberts and her friend Sally. It rained on Friday night but the weather was fine on Saturday and Sunday.

All enjoyed the "Flowers on the water" ceremony.

Four members attended from Merredin and Tracey O'Donnell wrote the following;

My partner & I attended the Compassionate Friends retreat at Nanga Camp, a serene and beautiful setting nestled within the forest. The natural surroundings provided a peaceful and reflective atmosphere, perfect for connection, healing and remembrance. We stayed in the roundhouse, a warm and welcoming space that offered comfort and tranquility throughout our stay. The forest views and rustic charm added to the overall sense of calm and grounding.

The retreat was a deeply moving experience filled with shared moments of understanding, support, and compassion among attendees. We enjoyed wonderful meals shared together, fostering community and heartfelt conversation. Therapeutic sessions guided by a compassionate therapist included Sound Healing, Reiki, crystal energy work and intuitive readings. Each session encouraged personal reflection and emotional release, helping participants connect with themselves and others on a healing journey".

The retreat concluded with a beautiful and serene flower ceremony by the water- a heartfelt tribute to our children. As petals floated gently down the stream, the soft tones of Koshi chimes filled the air, harmonizing with the sounds of nature. The gentle movement of flowers in the water, illuminated by soft light, created a moving and spiritual atmosphere- symbolizing love, remembrance and release.

The Compassionate Friends retreat at Nanga camp offered a space of peace, understanding and renewal. The combination of nature, sound, shared connection and heartfelt ritual made this experience truly healing and unforgettable.

"May the sound of the chimes and the flow of the water carry our love and memories onward"



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Candlelight Memorial Service

The 2025 Candlelight Memorial Service will be held on Sunday 14th December which is World-wide Candle-lighting Sunday.

The venue is the Church of the Way, Steerforth Avenue, Coodanup

Please arrive from 6.30p.m. for a 7p.m. start. Candles are provided.

Feel free to bring a framed photograph of your loved one and a plate for a shared supper afterwards.

This is our service, compiled and presented by bereaved parents, siblings and grandparents.

It is a special time when the presence of others like ourselves brings a sense of strength and comfort as we approach Christmas.

If you have a special poem or reading that you would like to present please contact me.

Margot McAllister, P.R. Manager

Mother of Kevin, nana of Jackson

On 0427 777 810 or at the office on 9535 7761



International Childrens Memorial Day

Sunday 25th January, 2026 @ 8.30 am

Dalrymple Park, Leslie Street, Mandurah.

Park in Murphy's car park near the new bridge

Please note: the Park gates will not open—please walk around the fence line to access the park.

The Compassionate Friends warmly invite you, your family and friends to gather together to remember our children, siblings, grandchildren and friends.

Flowers will be provided with cards for you to write a special message to your loved one. Following the reading of our Credo we walk under the bridge to place our flowers on the water and spend a quiet time of reflection.

When we return to the park, a light breakfast will be supplied for a gold coin donation.

We hope you can join us for a time of sharing and caring with each other to honour our loved ones.

We look forward to seeing you on 25th January, 2026

For further details, please phone 95357761

ANNUAL WALK TO REMEMBER

Calendar Reminder, 8th March 2026

Once again we will be holding our Annual "Walk to Remember" on the second Sunday in March.

As well as being an important major fundraising event, this memorial walk is to honour the memory of our loved one/one's who have died and raise awareness in the community of our existence.

Bring along your relatives, friends and neighbors.

This will be our 21st annual walk, the Lions Club of Mandurah will be there again with the sausage sizzle and we'll be led along the foreshore by our piper.

Thanks to all who have helped make previous walks so successful. If you have a business, or know someone in business, and would like to sponsor this event

please contact Margot McAllister at the office on 08 9535 7761

New Years Resolutions

I will try not to expect so much understanding from others who have not walked the same path.

I will be kind to myself - health, physical appearance, and some time...just to myself.

I will remember that I owe it to myself to try to enjoy life.

I will try to be more considerate to my spouse, children and parents. They, too, are coping.

I resolve, in memory of my child, to do something to help someone else.

For I know that in doing this, my child will live through me.

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TCF Mobile, Alabama

Merredin update

I had the pleasure recently of presenting a training session to five TCF members at Merredin. We were able to hold the session at the Merredin Resource Centre which was an ideal venue. These special five members have reached a point in their own grief journeys where they now wish to use their experience to help other bereaved parents. The training covered telephone contact and group facilitation and is designed to enhance the volunteers own abilities and provide further skills and information in line with TCF policy. I'm sure these volunteers will now be able to assist the chapter leader Anne in the provision of TCF services and extend TCF support to bereaved parents of the future across the wheatbelt region of W.A. Its so reassuring to know that TCF will continue in their capable hands.

The photograph shows from left to right, Tracey O'Donnell, Kerry Brown, Vicki Pustkuchen, Anne Mottershead, Susan Clark and Neville Middleton



The 2025 Merredin Candlelight Memorial service

will be held on Sunday 14 December from 6 to 8p.m at the Merredin town centre, opposite the post office. Attendees are asked to bring a chair or blanket to sit on and a photograph or keepsake of their loved one to place on the remembrance table.

To register contact Anne Mottershead by 9 December on 0429 440 307

Or email. annemottershead69@gmail.com

COPING WITH CHRISTMAS

- Light a special candle to burn on Christmas Day in memory of your child or loved one.
- Make or buy a special decoration to hang on the tree in their memory.
- Some bereaved parents buy a small gift for the age their child would be and donate it to charity. - Visiting the grave can help to remember the child.
- Plan your time so that you are under as little stress as possible. Plan your 'escape' if need be. Don't over-commit. Rehearse a simple explanation of why you may not attend a function.
- Share the memories with someone, by telling stories and looking at photographs.
- If you have young children in the family, be aware they might wish for Christmas to carry on as before. While this can be very painful for you, living through the normality of seasonal celebrations can be a comfort.
- New Year's Eve celebrations can also be difficult. Acknowledge your feelings to yourself and to those close to you and spend New Year's Eve with close, understanding family and friends who will allow you to be yourself and remember your child.

Author unknown

A heartfelt thanks to all our amazing Volunteers.

We couldn't do it without you.

Well done everyone and we wish you a peaceful Christmas & New Year.

TCF Mandurah, President & Committee.

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Poems & Articles

I have learnt

During this ongoing grief journey of mine I have learnt many things; these were things about myself as I gradually questioned and redefined all that made me and all that I knew about life. Redefining physically—the many physical sides to grief surprised me & how the reduction in our immune system leaves us so vulnerable to all kinds of conditions. Redefining emotionally & mentally—wow as with all bereaved parents this is almost impossible to describe. Sufficient to say that we process so much and finally learn how to be kind to ourselves and release our emotions in order to grieve in a healthy way. The final aspect, the spiritual one, was immensely difficult. My strong belief was severely tested and it took me a long time of questioning, searching and reading to eventually reach a new and stronger belief system.

We learn so much about grief. We know that the journey is never ending but we also finally find peace in our own way and I find solace in the knowledge that for me there will eventually come a time when we will be together again. I look back and recall bemoaning the fact that each day that passed was taking me further away from my son. Someone then said to me that in fact each day that passed was bringing me closer to him, that changed my outlook and now that so many years have passed

I look forward to the future with hope and contentment.

This picture of a reunion of mother and child says it all.

© Margot McAllister, Mother of Kevin

Nana of Jackson



I will spend my life waiting
To meet you on the other side
Where the end is just the beginning,
And time no longer exists.
It is here where we will begin again,
And the word goodbye will
Never again be uttered.

Zoe Clark-Coates



Love Came First

You don't move on after loss,
but you must move *with*
you must shake hands with grief,
welcome her in, for she lives with you now.
Pull her a chair at the table and offer her comfort.
She is not the monster you first thought her to be.
She is love. And she will walk with you now, stay
with you, peacefully, if you let her.
And on the days when your anger is high,
remember why she came, remember who she
represents. Remember. Grief came to you my friend,
because love came first

Love came first

Donna Ashworth,



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NOTICES

TCF Mandurah office will be closed from 2pm Friday 19th December—re-opening on Monday 12th January.

During this time please feel free to ring Margot on 0427 777 810

Carolyn on 0481063968

TCF Membership Reminder

Annual Membership Fee is now **\$35 for singles and \$60 for couples** and was **due on 1st July**. This is only payable after the first year of bereavement. This can be paid by cash, cheque, money order or directly into TCF Mandurah, Bendigo Bank BSB 633000

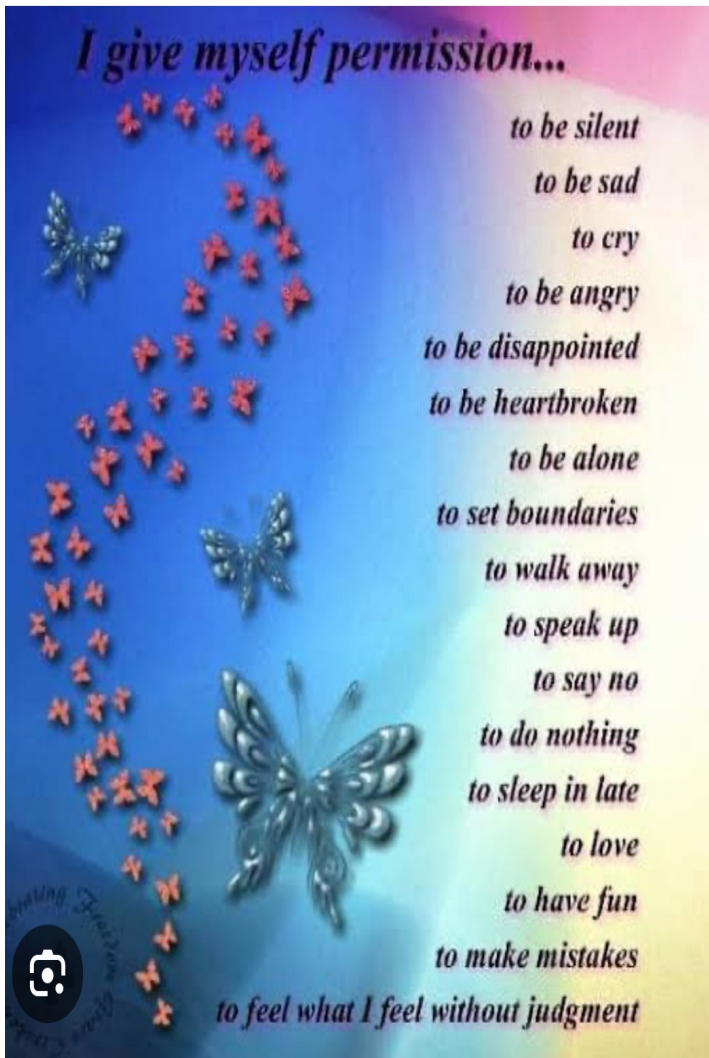
A/C # 157735895. Please state your Surname and send in your membership form.

Your membership entitles you to our services:

- Drop in Centre – Monday -Friday
10am—2pm, Wed 9am -1pm
- One on One meetings by appointment
- Monthly support groups
- Coffee mornings
- Telephone friends available 24 hours
- Home visits
- Memorial events
- Resource Library
- Quarterly Newsletter
- Information and referral
- Metro and Country contacts
- Community grief education

All our services are free of charge and provided by trained volunteers.

Thank you for your support.



Memorial page

On our website we have a memorial page.

If you wish to have your child included on this page please send in to the office a photograph, full name , birth and death dates.



Peel Grief Support

Often the death of a child is followed in later years by the death of a spouse or other loved one.

Peel Grief Support operates in a similar way to TCF and provides free services to any person who is grieving the death of any loved one.

This is a useful extra support group held on the second Thursday of each month.

Contact Mark on 0439800 857

Remembered With Love

December, 2025, January & February, 2026

Christopher Glen BRIGHT

8th February to 20th March

You have taken a large part of our hearts. We will miss you always.

Alwyn Robert BROWN

21st June to 9th February

In loving memory of Alwyn. The strength of our love will always remain with me.

Manu CLARK-WATTS

24th October – 11th February

Manu – of the birds – fly free

Robyn Nichole D'ARGENT

18th December to 1st December

Forever in our Hearts. Miss you Mom, Dad, Brother's, and Family.

Mark GALLAGHER

3rd May to 31st January

Forever missed, Forever Loved.

Jonathon HANCOCK

30th January to 15th January

Our darling boy, you are as loved today as you were every day of your life. We miss you with every breath we take, but we will make every step forward for you. Love always Mum, Dad and Chrissy

Ruben John HODDY

9th June to 1st January

Forever in my heart my beautiful son. Always in our thoughts, Mum and brother Tama. oxox

William (Bill) Joseph HUTT

12th March to 25th January

Dearly beloved son of Barbara and Bill (dec'd).

Loved younger brother of Jayne, Tim, Sally, Jill and Terry (dec'd). "He's just a thought away".

Christopher LEE

10th February to 21st September

Son of Carolyn & Dave and brother of Jessica.

Our special Supernova who burned brightly, but whose circle of life was too short. Xxx

Trent MOTTERSHEAD

17th October to 17th December

In loving memory of our son and brother, Trent. Always busy, so full of love and life, sharing and caring for others. Creating memories that we now treasure. As hard as it was lose you, it has given us the opportunity to change and make the most of our own lives. Thank you, Trent for showing us that life is worth fighting for. You lived like there was no tomorrow. Love Mum, Dad & Luke

Daniel Silvio PENCO

16th March to 29th February

Son of Danica. Always in our heart, never forgotten, Love Mama & Tania

Jackson PERRY-ELLIS

20th January to 5th May

Forever young.



Haydn John PINNELL

22nd January to 23rd February

ary

Our love for you has no ending, for you are always in our hearts every day and always will be.

Remembered With Love

December, 2025, January & February, 2026

Dean RADFORD

11th January to 16th May

Every day we think of you. Thank you for the wonderful memories we have of you. You made us so proud. Wish you were here. Love and miss you, Mum, Lance & Danielle

Brooke Lyn RICHARDSON

6th March to 4th December

Miss you Brooke, You are my Sunshine-Love from your Mummum, Granddad and Western Australia Family.

Kris Ronald WITHERS

22nd January to 21st August

Remembered Forever



Gary David WITHERS

21st January to 31st October

You touched us with your light, your infectious giggle, your cheeky smile. You made us whole.

While we are here, you are here, in our minds, in our hearts, in our memories. We think of you long and often.

Sagitte YOM-TOV

14th June to 23rd January

Our Dear Sagitty. You will always be in our hearts. We were lucky to have you being part of our lives, with your modesty, beauty, friendliness, artwork and wisdom.

Our loved ones are still and always will be a part of us.

They are threads in our fabric and
we cannot lose their love."

by ~ Darcie Sims

Vale John Salerian

Sadly we say goodbye to John Salerian. John and his wife Val have been our contacts in the lovely town of Waroona where they were involved in many community activities over the years. John was a true gentleman and it was a pleasure to know him.

TCF Mandurah sends our sympathy and love to Val and family.

Reunited with his daughter Carolyn. R.I.P. John.

The photograph of John and wife Val

was taken at a Christmas lunch for TCF volunteers.



Grief is hanging on to love, that's why you always feel it.

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Library

We have a substantial library of resources at our Mandurah Drop in Centre, offering excellent **books, magazines, tapes, CDs, etc.** on grief issues associated with the death of a child/ren and siblings. All library resources are available for loan by our members. Access to the library is available by visiting the Drop in Centre. In return, we need our members to be vigilant and return these items back to the Drop in Centre so other TCF members are able to avail themselves of this useful service.



Support groups

Evening Support Group Mandurah

When: Dec 4th, Jan closed, Feb 5th (First Thursday of each month)
Time: 7pm—9pm **Contact:** The centre on 08 9535 7761
Where: Eastlake Church cnr Lakes Road and Murdoch Drive, Mandurah
(Opposite Peel Health Campus)

Bereaved by Suicide Group Mandurah

When: Dec 19th, Jan 20th, Feb 20th (Third Friday of each month)
Time: 10am –12pm **Contact:** TCF Office on 08 9535 7761
Where: Mandurah Lotteries House

Merredin Support Group

When: First Wednesday of each month
Time: 7pm—9pm. **Contact:** Anne - 0429 440 307
Where: 82 Barrack St, Merredin

Nedlands Coffee Morning

When: Fourth Thursday of each month
Time: 10am—12noon **Contact:** TCF office 08 9535 7761
Where: 77 Melvista Avenue, Nedlands

Ocean Reef Group

When: First Wednesday of each month
Time: 7pm—9pm **Contact:** Priya—0431 465 223
Where: Beaumaris Community Hall, 66 Constellation Drive Ocean Reef

Please contact the office if you are willing to host an informal coffee morning.

Changed Your Contact Details

Please let us know if you have changed your telephone number or your address, or if you would like your newsletter e-mailed.

Please contact us on:-
tcfmandurah@bigpond.com

Yesterday, Today & Tomorrow

Unsubscribe

If you no longer require the newsletter please e-mail or phone to cancel.



Telephone Friends - The Compassionate Friends

Please call a telephone friend whenever you need to talk “We need not walk alone”

NORTH OF PERTH: Priya 0431 465 223

ARMADALE: Cathy 0418 923 735

GRANDPARENTS Margot 0427 777 810

FATHERS Gary 0414 491 524

SUICIDE Margot 0427 777 810

MANDURAH Drop-In 08 9535 7761

KARRATHA Dee 0409 806 890

MERREDIN Anne 0429 440 307

GOLDFIELDS Lorraine 0497 687 201

FATHERS Peter 0447 741 219

BRIDGETOWN Christine 0409 882 639

TCF Interstate and Overseas Contacts

	<u>Telephone</u>	<u>Web Site</u>
ACT/QUEANBEYAN	(02) 6286 6134	www.thecompassionatefriends.org.au/ACT.htm
NEW SOUTH WALES	(02) 9290 2355	www.thecompassionatefriendsnsw.org.au
NORTHERN TERRITORY	(08) 8927 1320	
QUEENSLAND	(07) 3254 2657	www.compassionatefriendsqld.org.au/
SOUTH AUSTRALIA	(08) 8351 0344	www.compassionatefriendssa.org.au
TASMANIA	(03) 6261 4250	
VICTORIA	(03) 9888 4944	www.compassionatefriendsvictoria.org.au
UNITED KINGDOM	(08) 451 20 37 85	www.tcf.org.uk
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA		www.compassionatefriends.org
SOUTH AFRICA		www.compassionatefriends.org.za
SWITZERLAND		www.verin-regenbogen.ch

Some Internet Resources

www.dougy.org	National centre for grieving children & families; a non-profit resource
www.grieflossrecovery.com	Poems, articles, memoirs, memorials, links - professional site
www.silentgrief.com	For those who have suffered a miscarriage and later child loss
www.bereavement-poems-articles.com	
www.menslines.org.au	Phone: 1300 78 99 78
www.kidshelp.com.au	Web & email counselling
www.beyondblue.org.au	National depression initiative
www.parentsofsuicide-aunz.com	Suicide grief support internet community
www.mesotheliomaweb.org	Resource information & support
www.gonetoosoon.org	A forum for questions, answers and support from others with similar loss.
www.recover-from-grief.com	
www.gratefulness.org/light-a-candle/	Light a virtual candle and/or leave a message.

Other Useful Contacts

Alcohol & Drug Support Link		08 9442 500
Department of Community Services (Child Protection & Homelessness)		1800 190 008
Helping Minds Rockingham		08 9427 7100
Coroners Counselling Services		08 9425 5200
Headspace.org.au	Support for people 12 to 25 struggling with mental health issues	1800 650 890
Palmerston Counselling Services	Drug and alcohol Related	08 9581 4010
Peel Grief Support	grief support services after the death of any loved one Mark	0439 800 857
Peel Community Legal Services		08 9581 4511
Relationships Australia	7 Cooper Street	08 6164 0570
Samaritans	Free Call	1800 198 313
Suicide Call-Back Services (SCDS) - Bereaved by Suicide National Free Counselling		1300 659 467
South Coast Women's Health Services – Rockingham	www.schs.com.au	08 9550 0900
SOLACEWA-Loss of Spouse	Sandra or www.solacegriefsupport.org.au	0488 991 084
Victim Support Services	Rockingham	08 9527 7699
Victim Support Services	Mandurah	08 9583 1120

If any TCF member has found an agency or counsellor, other than those listed, To be helpful, please advise us and we will consider their information for inclusion in future issues.

TCF Mandurah Sponsors 2025



Our Lady's Assumption
church



Halls Head
Community Bank®
Branch



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