

Expressions

Welcome to our Summer edition of Expressions.

If you are a bereaved parent reading this newsletter for the first time, please be assured you are not alone. We are a wide community of grieving whanau who wish to extend you our aroha and support as we remember and honour our babies together.

2020 really has been a challenging year for everyone. It goes without saying that losing a child is one of the hardest things in life to endure.

However, to face loss under lockdown, with restrictions on access and reduced support, would have been a cruel addition to the heartbreak. We would like to acknowledge those families who have experienced loss under these difficult conditions, we are truly sorry for the added burden you have had to carry this year.

We also acknowledge with Christmas approaching, that this can be a difficult time for those missing loved ones. We hope our alert levels remain low so that we are able to be together with family and friends during the festive season.

Please see our "News" section for information on accessing support during this time of year and our exciting new fundraiser of beautiful silver star ornaments, just in time for Christmas.

We will be holding you in our thoughts over the holiday and new year period, and offer you our love and continued support for a gentle and peaceful Christmas.

Your Sands Auckland Committee

Tania, Sara, Linda and Andy

Note to our readers:

Many of the writings featured in our newsletter are the personal narrative of our readers. These, in their entirety or part, may not be printed elsewhere without permission. The nature of these 'stories' is very personal and has not been edited, therefore the views expressed may not necessarily be those of Sands Auckland. Where possible we have acknowledged the original source of all material/information used in Expressions.



DATES TO NOTE

Support Group Meetings

1st Thursday of each month
3rd December

No January group
2021:

4th Feb/4th March
7.15pm – 8.45pm

YMCA Mt Albert,
773 New North Road,
Mt Albert

In the Garlick Room
(to the left of
reception desk)
Parents & Whanau
(adults only)

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome your poems, reflections and personal stories for inclusion in our newsletter. The deadline for our next edition is 20th February 2021.

Please forward your submissions to: info@sandsauckland.org.nz

CONTACT US:

www.sandsauckland.org.nz

info@sandsauckland.org.nz

Find us on Facebook



0508 SANDSA (72 63 72)

Sands Support

We appreciate that this can be a really hard time of the year to get through, and it can seem like a long wait until our next Support Meeting in February. If you wish to reach out to someone for a chat, we do have other support options available:
Phone Support: 0508 726372 – our phonenumber is operational (not 24hrs), if we are unable to take your call please leave a message.

Facebook Groups

Sands New Zealand offers several closed Facebook Groups for online chat with bereaved parents across the country. These groups are moderated by Sands NZ Board Members to ensure they are a safe place to seek support and connect. Information and access to these chat groups can be found here: <http://sands.org.nz/onlinesupport.html>

Sands NZ Bereaved Whanau Chat – a great way to both receive and offer support, and to connect with other parents throughout NZ.
Sands NZ Bereaved Dads Chat – a space for men to feel comfortable to share their thoughts and feelings with other Dads.
Sands NZ Grandparents Chat – a space for grandparents to seek support.

Online Support Meeting: Sands NZ provide various monthly online Zoom support meetings. These allow added access to support between physical face-to-face meetings or for those who can't access physical meetings. These online meetings include – A General Support Group (for all bereaved parents); Pregnancy After Loss Support Group (for bereaved parents experiencing a subsequent pregnancy); and Empty Arms Support group (for bereaved parents with no living children). Details of when these groups take place are posted in the Sands NZ Bereaved WhAnau Facebook Chat Page, or you can email the Sands NZ secretary on secretary@sands.org.nz for information or to request to join a meeting.

Women's Health Study Day

Thank you to North Shore Hospital for inviting us to take part in their study day on 20th October. We were asked to give a short talk on pregnancy loss, with particular reference to miscarriage. This was a great opportunity to talk about the information given to women experiencing a miscarriage and the terminology used by the nurses and hospital staff to bereaved parents. Thank you also to Samantha Chacko for joining us and sharing her experiences of baby loss.

Christmas Stars

We are delighted to share with you our new fundraiser as a lovely way to end the year and honour our sweet babies at Christmas. These beautiful silver star ornaments and keepsakes have been left blank should you wish to arrange for them to be engraved and personalised.

They can be purchased from Sands Auckland, and are \$10 each plus \$3.50 postage (or \$4.50 tracked) – non rural costs.

Please email us at info@sandsauckland.org.nz with details of your address and the number required. We will respond to your email and include our bank account details so that payment can be transferred directly into our account.



Sands Auckland is a charitable entity -
Registration Number
CC20236.

Thank you to all who support our group...

COGS Auckland
City, and the kind
individuals who have
made donations & held
fundraisers.

We survive on grants
and donations and
greatly appreciate any
gesture of support. If
you would like to make
a donation please send
your cheque to us at
Sands Auckland Central
Inc. or visit our website
for internet banking
details.

Sands Auckland Central
PO Box 41 111, St Lukes,
Auckland 1346

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Paul can be contacted on
0274 926681, or on email at:
paul@godigitalprint.co.nz





Baby Loss Awareness Week, 9th-15th October Annual Remembrance Day, 11th October

Leading up to Baby Loss Awareness week we were not even sure our event would be able to take place. After Auckland was placed in lockdown for the second time this year, we watched daily for updates on alert level changes. As this is such an important event for many families, we made the decision to plan for our special day as it would be easy to cancel last minute if we had to.

Unfortunately, we were sadly unable to hold our Annual Wave of Light service as restrictions and safety concerns were still in place for Auckland Hospital.

Thankfully and to much relief, our alert level reduced and it was all systems go for our Annual Remembrance Day. We continued with our environmentally friendly way to honour our babies, by decorating kites and blowing bubbles. This year we also offered lovingly painted rocks which had been donated to us by members of rock hiding groups across Auckland, and we provided pens so that parents could add their baby's name.



Rocks could be treasured as a keepsake, placed in the garden or special planter, or hidden in a park for others to find.

As with previous years it was a beautiful warm sunny day with enough wind to be able to fly the kites, and we enjoyed the comforts of home baking kindly supplied again by the Good Bitches Baking, Auckland Central Chapter.

This really is a heartwarming day for us – seeing the return of familiar faces who we would only see at this annual event, and extending our compassion to newly bereaved families who are seeking support and connections for the first time.

Thank you to our hardworking volunteers who make this day possible, the kind bakers at Good Bitches Baking and Shereena Gregory of Gregory Electrical for the very generous donation towards costs for the

day in memory of her precious daughter Mya. We look forward to seeing you all again next year.

The Twelve Days of Christmas For a Bereaved Parent

Day One – December 14th:
Day Two – December 15th:

Day Three -December 16th:

Day Four – December 17th:

Day Five – December 18th:

Day Six – December 19th:

Day Seven – December 20th:

Day Eight – December 21st:

Day Nine – December 22nd:

Day Ten – December 23rd:

Day Eleven – December 24th:

Day Twelve – December 25th:

Do what is right for you and what you are comfortable with
Brighten someone else's season, lifting someone's spirits will definitely lift your own.

Create new traditions that include your child, buy a new ornament

Plan your day before it arrives, talk with those you will be spending it with

Look for little blessings – watch a feel good movie, listen to your favourite songs

Remember suggestions work for some but not others, grief is unique

Try to balance grief and celebration if you have living children

Be kind to yourself and others, they may say insensitive comments because they don't understand grief and loss of this kind.

Get creative, make an ornament for your baby. Being creative can be cathartic.

There are lots of sides to Christmas and it is possible for joy and sadness to co-exist.

Sometimes the build up is worse than the actual day.

Make this your day, take a walk, be with people who understand, light a candle for your baby, do what works and what feels right to you.

