

Expressions

Welcome to our Winter edition of Expressions. If you are a bereaved parent reading this newsletter for the first time, please be assured you are not alone and we are here to provide support at any time.

We acknowledge the courage it can take to contact us during times of loss and we feel honoured to be here to support and walk alongside you, providing aroha (love), tautoko (support) and kotahitanga (togetherness). Aroha nui ki a koe, ki tō whānau hoki – much love to you and your family.



Sara and Tania through their roles on the Sands NZ Board continue to work hard to seek improvements in bereavement care and awareness of baby loss. A recent positive announcement was Health NZ's release of Tuituia te Kahu/National Bereavement Care Pathway report. More information about the report is contained in this newsletter.

Thank you to North Shore Hospital who invited Sara to talk in April as part of a study day to discuss the work and support offered by Sands.

Planning is already under way for Baby Loss Awareness week in October. Keep a look out on our Facebook page and next edition of Expressions for further updates.

Wishing you a dry and healthy winter blessed with winter sunshine.

Much appreciation
Your Sands Auckland Committee
Tania, Sara, Linda & Andy

YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

We welcome your poems, reflections and personal stories for inclusion in our newsletter.

Some parents find it helpful and cathartic to write about their babies, their grief or their experiences. If you would like to share these with our readers we would be honoured to publish them in our newsletter. Many parents find comfort in reading other peoples' stories and to know they are not alone, so your submissions would be greatly appreciated.

The deadline for our next edition is 20th August 2026.

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

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
4th June
2nd July
6th August
3rd September
7.15pm – 8.45pm
Mt Albert Community
and Leisure Centre
773 New North Road, Mt Albert
In the Garlick Room
(to the left of reception desk)
Parents & Whānau (adults only)

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Where to Get Support

We appreciate that this can be a really hard time of the year to get through.

Here are some additional support options:

Lifeline: 0800 543 354
or Text Help to 4357
Samaritans: 0800 72 66 66
Skylight: 0800 299 100
(9am–5pm weekdays)

CONTACT US:

www.sandsauckland.org.nz
info@sandsauckland.org.nz

Find us on Facebook



0508 SANDSA (72 63 72)

Tuituia te Kahu/National Bereavement Care Pathway

April 2026 saw an important step forward for our baby loss whānau across Aotearoa.

Tuituia te Kahu/National Bereavement Care Pathway for Perinatal Loss Report has been officially published by Te Whatu Ora/Health NZ. Sands NZ has been involved in the Technical Advisory Group (TAG) that put this report together, including Vicki Culling as a Co-Chair and Melanie Tarrant as a member.

Tuituia te Kahu sets a clear national direction for compassionate, culturally safe and consistent bereavement care.

Sands NZ welcomes this report and its focus on creating clearer, more compassionate, and better supported pathways for those navigating this heart-breaking journey.

Every recommendation reflects what so many parents have told us for years: that their grief deserves recognition, their voices deserve to be heard, and their care should never depend on where they live.

Here's what Health NZ says about implementation on its website: "Tuituia te Kahu will be used to guide the planning and commissioning of relevant national, regional and local services across the health system (primary, community and hospital and specialist services). Implementation will take a careful and considered approach guided by the recommendations of the TAG to ensure the standards are meaningfully and sustainably integrated across the health system over time."

Alongside the report is a graphic of the proposed nine standards that make up the pathway (see below).



Sands Auckland is a charitable entity - Registration Number CC30352.

Thank you to all who support our group...

COGS Auckland City, Go Digital, Good Bitches Baking 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 you can visit our website for internet banking details or alternatively donate via our Give a Little page <https://givealittle.co.nz/org/sandsaucklandcentral>

Expressions is designed and printed by Paul Gerrard at Go Digital, supporter of Sands Auckland.

If you or your business have a need for design and print, Go Digital will donate 10% of that business to Sands.

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



Grief After Baby Loss



Grief after baby loss can feel like being dropped into a world that no longer makes sense. One moment you are dreaming, planning, and imagining a future, and the next you are learning how to survive the unimaginable. It can feel isolating, exhausting, and deeply unfair. And while everyone's experience of loss is different, one thing is true for many bereaved parents: grief changes you.

carry the love and the loss together. You don't leave your baby behind as you move forward. Instead, you find ways to bring them with you—in your memories, your heart, your family, and your story.

One of the most important things to remember is that healing does not mean forgetting. Healing means finding moments of light again, even while the grief remains. It can feel confusing, and sometimes even disloyal, to smile or laugh after loss.

But sadness and joy can coexist. You can miss your baby deeply and still feel grateful for a warm day, a kind friend, a shared meal, or a moment of peace. Feeling happiness does not diminish your love. It simply means you are human, and your heart is still capable of holding more than one truth at the same time.

Hope after baby loss does not always arrive in a dramatic way. Often, it comes

quietly. It may look like getting through a day you thought you couldn't. It may look like speaking your baby's name out loud. It may look like being able to breathe a little easier, or feeling less afraid of the future. It may look like learning to honour your baby while also allowing yourself to live.

Grief will always be part of your story, because your baby will always be part of your story. But it is possible to find meaning, connection, and even joy again. There is no timeline, no "right" way to grieve, and no expectation to be okay quickly. Be gentle with yourself. Take each day as it comes. And remember: even in the midst of loss, love remains—and where there is love, there is hope.



In the early days, grief can feel all-consuming. It may come in waves—shock, sadness, anger, numbness, guilt, longing. Some days it can be hard to breathe, let alone think about the future. Many parents describe feeling as though time has stopped, while the rest of the world keeps moving forward. It can be incredibly painful to watch life carry on when your heart is still holding the weight of what has been lost.

But grief is not something you "get over." It is not a problem to fix or a destination to reach. Grief is a journey—one that looks different for every person. Over time, the rawness may soften, not because your baby matters any less, but because you begin to learn how to