



National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

For Immediate Release

FROM: Wayne Loder
Public Awareness Coordinator
The Compassionate Friends
(Toll-free) 866-964-4000
E-mail: wayne@compassionatefriends.org

Families Remember Children Who Died; Plan for Summer Conference in Oklahoma City

Oak Brook, IL (May 10, 2007)—As many as 1500 parents, siblings, grandparents, and relatives, coping with the death of a child, are making plans now to remember them and learn about the many facets of grief by attending the 30th national conference of The Compassionate Friends (TCF) July 20-22 in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma.

“The loss of a child is a devastating experience which happens to thousands of families every year,” says TCF Executive Director Patricia Loder who is a twice bereaved parent and a bereaved sibling. “Our upcoming conference is designed to provide a way for bereaved family members to connect with others who are walking a similar path. This will be a nurturing atmosphere of acceptance, validation, understanding, and hope.”

The Compassionate Friends is the world’s largest self-help bereavement support organization, with nearly 600 chapters in the United States including all 50 states, Washington D.C., and Puerto Rico. TCF also has a national presence in an estimated 29 countries around the world.

Keynote speakers at the conference will include: Elizabeth Edwards, bereaved parent and wife of presidential candidate John Edwards; Bill Hancock, bereaved parent and administrator of the NCAA Bowl Championship Series; Simon Stephens, founder of The Compassionate Friends; Bud Welch, whose daughter was killed in the Oklahoma City Murrah Federal Building bombing; and Doug Manning, author and popular bereavement speaker.

As well as a number of other activities, including a complete sibling program, there will be more than 100 bereavement workshops covering an extensive variety of topics related to the death of a child and the journey that follows.

An annual highlight of the conference will be the eighth “Walk to Remember,” Sunday, July 22 when as many as 1300 persons attending the conference and from the surrounding area, are expected for the two mile event, carrying the names of thousands of children who have died, but are not forgotten. Anyone who wishes to have a child remembered during the Walk may submit the child’s name online at www.tcfwalktoremember.org and volunteers will carry those names on special memorial walk pages. The Walk to Remember is also a fundraiser, which supports the organization’s many national outreach programs.

In conjunction with the conference, a Professional Outreach Day seminar will be held Thursday, July 19 for nurses, physicians, social workers, counselors, emergency personnel, funeral directors, law enforcement officers, clergy, educators, and all who care for individuals or are interested in providing support for bereaved families after the death of a child. Continuing Education Units will be available for many professions. The public is invited to register. Registration for Professional Outreach Day includes admission to the full three day conference.

For more information, or to register for the conference, the Walk to Remember, or Professional Outreach Day, visit The Compassionate Friends national website at www.compassionatefriends.org or call the National Office toll-free at 877-969-0010.

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