



Summer 2010

Homicide Survivors, Inc.

FOR FAMILIES AND FRIENDS OF MURDER VICTIMS

32 N. Stone Ave., 14th Floor, Tucson, AZ 85701

Office: (520) 740-5729 Fax: (520) 740-5773 homicidesurvivors@pcao.pima.gov

Support Group Meeting Dates:

- Thursday, June 17th
- Thursday, July 15th
- Thursday, August 19th



Patrick Hardesty
Multiservice Center
1100 S. Alvernon Way
7:00—9:00 PM

Fechas de Grupo de Apoyo

- Jueves, 17 de Junio
- Jueves, 15 de Julio
- Jueves, 19 de Agosto



Patrick Hardesty
Multiservice Center
1100 S. Alvernon Way
7:00—9:00 PM

PLEASE FEEL FREE TO JOIN OUR SUPPORT GROUP

We are sorry for the circumstances that bring you to our group, but we hope that we can be of some assistance to you as you work through your grief. Our meetings are open to any survivor of a homicide victim: Parent, Brother, Sister, Son, Daughter, Cousin, Aunt, Uncle, Grandparent, or Friend. Our meetings are held monthly and nothing is required of you. There are no dues or fees expected. Attending your first meeting takes courage, but most find it a comforting network of support, friendship, and understanding that only those who have been there can give. The meetings are a time for sharing stories, experiences and emotions. We believe that our support groups facilitate a self-help response to grief. Making positive changes in our loved ones memory creates a loving legacy.

Lo sentimos que las circunstancias lo acercan a nuestro grupo, esperamos que sea una forma de asistencia en el proceso de su aflicción. Nuestro grupo de apoyo esta disponible para sobrevivientes que han perdido a un ser a homicidio sea Ud. un padre, hermano/a, hijo/a, primo/a, Tio/a, Abuelo/a, o Amistad. Nuestras juntas son mensuales y sin costo ninguno. No hay expectativas de Ud. Atendiendo su primer junta se requiere valentia y fuerza, la mayor parte de participantes se encuentran en un ambiente de apoyo, se sienten comprendido, y encuentran amistades con personas que han caminado en sus pasos. La primera junta es de compartir estorias, experiencias, y emociones. Creemos que nuestros grupos inspiran a la persona a auto sanación de su aflicción. Criando cambio positive en memoria de nuestros seres queridos forma un legacia de amor.

How Long Does Grief Last?

The length of the grief process is different for everyone. There is no predictable schedule for grief. Although it can be quite painful at times, the grief process cannot be rushed. It is important to be patient with yourself as you experience the feelings and your unique reactions to the loss. With time and support, things generally do get better. However, it is normal for significant dates, holidays, or other reminders to trigger feelings related to the loss.



Taking care of yourself, seeking support, and acknowledging your feelings during these times are ways that can help you cope.

Support, Information & Assistance Resources

Homicide Survivors

Office (520)740-5729
1-800-775-7462 x5729
Fax (520)740-5773
homicidesurvivors@pcao.pima.gov
www.azhomicidesurvivors.org
Carol Gaxiola (cell) (520) 240-6300
Director/Advocate
Karla Avalos (cell) 349-0362
Intercesora Bilingüe para Víctimas
(Bilingual Victim Advocate)

Help On Call Crisis Line

323-9373

Information & Referral

(520)881-1794

Pima County Victim Witness Program

(520) 740-5525
1-800-775-7462 x5525

Pima County Superior Court Calendar

(520)740-8721
<http://www.sc.pima.gov>

Crime Victim Compensation

(520)740-5525
You may be eligible for financial assistance for
medical, counseling and funeral expenses

The National Victim Center

1-800-FYI-CALL
Toll Free Information & Referral
**Arizona Attorney General's Office of
Victims Rights & Services**

(520)628-6455

Pima County Attorney's Office

(520) 740-5600
Toll Free 1-800-775-7462 x5600



Phone Friends

Tucson Area

John Prunty	721-0257
Karen Colvin	883-7377
Kathy Ross	889-8525
Kathi Rice	296-6349
Debbie Curry	298-6117
Hosea Barnett	358-9502
Elisa Espinoza-Lopez	434-0340 (Español)
Carlos Castro	624-4965 (Español)
Rick & Yoli Villelas	419-6138 (Español)
Hope & Johnny Valenzuela	574-3139(Español)

Phoenix

Jayne Treen	(602)995-1584
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Southern Arizona

Victoria Thacker	(520)826-3018
Sue Dupee	(520)586-2618
Karen Teeters	(520)384-2765
Dan & Darlene Berry	(520)515-0115

Arkansas

Joan McKinstry	(501)228-9849
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Email Friends

Homicide Survivors Office

homicidesurvivors@pcao.pima.gov

Holly Schysm—brewha71@netscape.net
Gail Leland—gailleland@aol.com
Toni Schneider—Doctor85711@yahoo.com
Kathi Rice—azstormy@aol.com
Sharon LaPlant—dlaplant@new.rr.com
Imeldafuentes01@yahoo.com
Jayne Treen—Jaynetreen@aol.com
Aida Salazar-agsalazar234@yahoo.com
Julie Williams—julie.williams@msn.com

Please call the office if you would like to add your email or phone # to our lists

Our Mission

Homicide Survivors is dedicated to meeting the crisis and long term needs of families of murder victims. Through support, advocacy and assistance we help survivors cope emotionally, stabilize economically and help survivors seek justice for their loved ones. Homicide Survivors is committed to ensuring that no one has to endure the murder of a loved one alone. We can't change the tragic loss, but together, we can ease the pain and prevent further victimization.

This space is with me all the time it seems. Sometimes the empty space is so real I can almost touch it. I can almost see it. It gets so big sometimes that I can't see anything else.

- Arnold and Gemma 1983, 56

Introducing Carol Gaxiola, New Director of Homicide Survivors, Inc.

Dear Fellow Survivors;

I would like to take this opportunity to introduce myself. I have been a survivor of homicide since October, 1999 when my 14 year old beautiful and precious daughter, Jasmine, was murdered in cold blood. She was trying to help a friend who was a material witness to a shooting. The shooter and his accomplice shot both Jasmine and her friend in a effort to silence them.

I was fortunate enough to be referred to Homicide Survivors, Inc. Without the support and guidance of Gail and her staff, I can't imagine how I would have survived this horrendous journey. I have been active on the Board of Directors since 2000 and I have been president of the Board of Directors since 2002. It has been my pleasure to participate with this amazing program. I am excited and humbled to announce that I will become director of Homicide Survivors beginning July 1, 2010.

I am prepared to dedicate 100% of my passion and energy to continue the valuable work that this organization has accomplished since its inception. Although I am acquainted with many of you, I hope I will soon know all of you. My door and my heart are always open to you.

From the bottom of my heart,

Carol Gaxiola



JUNE GRIEF TIPS

- 1) Change some things** - As soon as it seems right, alter some things in your home to make clear this significant change that has occurred. Rearrange a room or replace a piece of furniture or give away certain items that will never again be used in your home. This does not mean to remove all signs of the one who died. It does mean not treating your home or your love one's room as a shrine which cannot be altered.
- 2) Monitor signs of dependency** - While it's normal to become more dependent upon others for awhile immediate after a death, it will not be helpful to continue in that role long-term. Watch for signs that you're prolonging your need for assistance. Congratulate yourself when you do things for yourself.
- 3) Invite someone to give you feedback** - Select someone you trust, preferably someone familiar with the workings of grief, to give you their reaction when you ask for it. If you want to check out how clearly you're thinking, how accurately you're remembering, how effectively you're coping, go to that person. Pose your questions, then listen to their responses. What you choose to do with that information will be up to you.

Do you have a grief tip you would like to share? Call us, fax us, or send it to us at 740-5729, fax 740-5773, or 32 N. Stone Ave, Ste. 1408 Tucson, AZ 85701

Hello everyone, my name is Karla Avalos. I am the new bilingual advocate with Homicide Survivors. I would like to take a few moments and introduce myself to you. I am a 2008 graduate from the University of Arizona with a bachelors in Political Science. I have lived in Tucson all my life. I have an 11 year old daughter and 8 year old son. I have been working with Homicide Survivors since December of 2009. I provide support and assistance to families and friends of murder victims. I can not begin to tell you how much I love what I do. Working with survivors has enriched my life in so many ways. It is unfortunate that we meet under these circumstances but each survivor has taught me something and made a difference in my life. I admire the strength, courage and dignity that survivors demonstrate at such a horrible time in their life. It is such an honor and privilege that I am able to meet and help so many families. With that being said, it is for this reason that I promise to be the best advocate I possibly can. I hope to be able to thoughtfully and compassionately assist and support all of our survivors.

Respectfully yours,

Karla Avalos

P.S. I encourage all of our survivors to attend support group meetings, held every 3rd Thursday of the month. Also please visit our website for helpful information and poems or upload your own poems for other survivors to read.



Hola todos, me llamo Karla Avalos. Soy la nueva Intercesora Bilingüe con Sobrevivientes de Homicidio. Querría tomar unos pocos momentos e introducirme a usted. Soy un 2008 graduado de la Universidad de Arizona estudie Ciencias Políticas. He vivido en Tucson toda mi vida. Tengo una hija de 11 años y un hijo de 8 años. He estado trabajando con Sobrevivientes de Homicidio desde Diciembre de 2009. Yo no puedo comenzar a decirle cuánto yo adoro lo que hago. Trabajar con sobrevivientes ha enriquecido mi vida en tantas maneras. Es lamentable que nos encontramos bajo estas circunstancias pero cada sobreviviente me ha enseñado algo y hecho una diferencia en mi vida. Admiro la fuerza, el valor y la dignidad que sobrevivientes demuestran a la vez tan horrible en su vida. Es un honor y privilegio que pueda apoyar y ayudar tantas familias. Con que ser dicho, es para esta razón que prometo ser la mayor Intercesora que pueda. Espero poder ayudar compasivamente y amablemente y apoyar a todos nuestros sobrevivientes. Les recomiendo que asisten a las juntas de apoyo cade tercer Jueves del mes. Por favor visiten a nuestra pagina web para informacion y poemas. O escribe una poema para compartir con otros sobrevivientes.

Nosotros los comprendemos, los entendemos y compadecemos.

Su Servidora,

Karla Avalos

Pesar

Viene en olas.....como el mar

Viene en tiñieblas.....como la noche

Viene en nubes Como las tormentas

Muy seguido cambia, pero siempre viene.

El hombre de la foto en la puerta del refrigerador, quien está parado y observandome, con los brazos cruzados, está muerto.

El hombre que eta vestido con un traje da gala, con uan cámara en las manos, sonriéndome con una amable y orgullosa sonrisa, está muerto

El hombre que se ve caminando en los bosques llenos de nieve, caminando con su hijo, narrandome su propia imagen, esta muerto?.

Como puede ser que este dulce, y terrible hombre , quien amaba tanto la vida y quein tanto me necesitaba, esta muerto?

Esta mañana, el agua en la playa, estaba baja y calmada, reflejando matutinos rayos azules y amarillos contra las orillas cubiertas de nieve....

Y mi pesar es silencioso e implacable



FELIZ DIA DE LOS PADRES

SUGERENCIAS DE JUNIO

1) Planeé tiempo para estar solo - Quizá ya tiene bastante tiempo para estar solo. Si es así ignore esta sugerencia. Sin embargo si continuamente está rodiado de familiares o conocidos, asegure tiempo para estar solo. Una gran parte del proceso de sentir pena por perder un ser querido es lo que está sucediendo dentro de usted--sus pensamientos, sus sentimientos, sus memorias, sus anhelos y sueños. Dese la oportunidad de mirar dentro de usted para su própio crecimiento.

2) Seleccione su entretenimiento - Es mejor no ver algunas películas o programas cuando unó siente pena muy profunda. Lo mismo se aplica a ciertos libros o artículos. Es por esto que es importante de informarse sobre su entretenimiento de antemano. De esta manera no se encontrará con una experencia que trairá a la superficie demasiados sentimientos que no podrá soportar confortablemente.

3) Empieze su día a lado de sus ser querido - Si su pena es muy reciente, usted posiblemente despertará pensando en él o élla. No sería mejor de hacer la decisión de inclúir a él o élla desde el principio del día. Enfoque este tiempo de una manera positiva. Hagasé recordar momentos compartidos--por ejemplo, lecciones aprendidas de esta persona o regalos que él o élla le haya dado. Piense como puede mejor mantener la memoria de su ser querido y traerla consigo mismo durante el día.

Deseamos expresar nuestro agradecimiento a todas las personas que asistieron nuestro 24to Aniversario de el Vigilio de Velas de Sobrevivientes De Homicidio. Fue un evento muy emótivo, personal y poderoso. Ver a tanta persona impactado/a por el crimen de homicidio es un imagen potente, pero ver a tantas personas reunidas en honor de sus seres queridos es un imagen inspirante. Para todas las personas que han compartido su perdida con nosotros, unidos encontraremos consolacion para salir adelante y extenderle una mano a aquellas personas que estan en el empiezo de este camino tan doloroso. Estamos para servirles y asistirles. Gracias, de parte de nuestros empleados.

A Dad's Grief

It must be very difficult, to be a man in grief.
Since "men don't cry" and no tears can bring relief
It must be very difficult, to stand up to the test
And hold the calls and visitors, so she can get some rest
They always ask if she's all right, and what she's going through
But seldom take his hand and ask. "My friend, how are you?"
He hears her crying in the night and thinks his heart will break
And dries the tears and comforts her, but "stays strong" for her sake
It must be very difficult, to start each day anew
And try to be so brave, he lost his baby, too
Author Unknown

Falling Apart

I seem to be falling apart.
My attention span can be measured in seconds,
My patience in minutes.
I cry at the drop of a hat.
I forget things constantly.
The morning toast burns daily.
I forget to sign the checks.
Half of everything in the house is misplaced.
Anxiety and restlessness are my constant companions.
Rainy days seem extra dreary.
Sunny days seem an outrage.
Other people's pain and frustration
Seem insignificant.
Laughing, happy people seem out of place in my world.
It has become routine to feel half crazy.
I am normal, I am told.
I am a newly bereaved person.
Written by Eloise Cole, TCF

When Fathers Weep at Graves

I see them weep
The fathers at the stones
Taking off brave armor
Forced to wear in the workplace
Clearing away the debris
With gentle fingers
Inhaling the sorrow
Diminished by anguish
Their hearts desiring
What they cannot have—
To walk hand in hand
With children no longer held
To all the fathers who leave a part
Of their hearts at the stones
May breezes underneath trees of time
Ease their pain
As they receive healing tears
...the gift the children give.
Alice J. Wisler



FATHER'S DAY by Gerry Hunt, TCF, White River Junction, Vermont

Every father believes in his role as protector of his family. He has been assigned the job of fixer and problem solver. He has been told since his youngest days that he must be strong---must not cry. But each father among us has had to face that point where no amount of fixing, problem solving and protecting has been able to stop our child's death. And inside, we must ask ourselves about our failure, and we must face our lack of omnipotence.

Father's Day is often a forgotten holiday, overshadowed by the longer-standing tribute to mothers. But for the bereaved father it is a poignant reminder of bitter sweetness; sweet in the memory of a loved, now lost, child; bitter for the death and pain and recognition of inability to stop what happened. Fathers do not often have a chance to share their hurts and concerns. Oftentimes they are unable to do so, a remnant of childhood learning's about the strength and stoicism of "big boy." A father may even be uncomfortable opening up to his wife, and the wife who pushes him to talk may be pushing too hard.

Father's Day does not have to be a time when everyone pours out of the woodwork to say, "I'm sorry we haven't talked. Let's do it now." But it can be a time when the family gives Dad a hug, does something special, helps with the chores, and mostly, lets him know how important and needed and loved he is. It is some of these things that he has lost with the death of a child. And, like Mother's Day, the day set aside for Fathers does not have to be limited to a Sunday in June. It can be any day and every day. Fathers often show their hurts differently, often internally, But They Do Hurt.

“When a grandchild dies, grandparents are called upon in their sorrow to witness the agony of their own child, as well. It’s a double whammy—two heartaches. In both, they feel powerless. In both, they feel the need to be strong...The feeling...is one of helplessness and frustration... the thought is that ‘all I can do is be there for my child.’”

TO BEREAVED GRANDPARENTS

I am powerless. I am helpless. I am frustrated. I sit here and cry with her. She cries for her daughter and I cry for mine. I cannot help her. I can't reach inside and take her broken heart. I must watch her suffer day after day and see her desolation.

I listen to her tell me over and over how she misses Emily, how she wants her back. I can't bring Emily back for her. I can't buy her an even better Emily than she had, like I bought her an even better toy when she was a child. I can't kiss the hurt and make it go away. I can't even kiss a small part of it away. There's no band-aid large enough to cover her bleeding heart.

I used to listen to her talk about a boyfriend and tell her it would be okay, and know in my heart that in two weeks she wouldn't even think of him. Can I tell her it'll be okay in two years when I know it will never be okay, that she will carry this pain of "what might have been" in her deepest heart for the rest of her life?

I see this young woman, my child, who was once carefree and fun-loving and bubbling with life, slumped in a chair with eyes full of agony. Where is my power now? Where is my mother's bag of tricks that will make it all better? Why can't I join her in the aloneness of her grief? As tight as my arms wrap around her, I can't reach that aloneness.

Where are the magic words that will give her comfort? What chapter in Dr. Spock tells me how to do this? He has told me everything else I needed to know. Where are the answers? I should have them. I'm the mother.

I know that someday she'll find happiness again, that her life will have meaning again. I can hold out hope for her someday, but what about now? this minute? this hour? this day?

I can give her my love and my prayers and my care and my concern. I could give her my life. But even that won't help.

By Margaret Gerner of The Compassionate Friends (TCF)



HEALING THE GRIEVING CHILD'S HEART:

Editor's note: The following ideas are excerpted from Dr. Wolfelt's book published in "Healing the Grieving Child's Heart: 100 Practical Ideas for Families, Friends & Caregivers"

Idea 1. Understand the difference between grief and mourning.

Grief is the constellation of internal thoughts and feelings we experience when someone loved dies.

Mourning is the outward expression of our grief. Mourning is necessary for healing to take place.

I often refer to children as "forgotten mourners." Why? Because though all children grieve when someone loved dies, we (as a society, as families and often as individuals) rarely encourage them to mourn.

You can help the grieving child you love by encouraging her or him to mourn. You can be the person she/he feels "safe" to mourn in the presence of.

CARPE DIEM: Think about your own experiences with grief. Did you mourn? If so, what ways of mourning were helpful to you?

GRIEF TIPS

1) USE YOUR HANDS - Sometimes there's value in doing repetitive things with your hands, something you don't have to think about very much because it becomes second nature. Knitting and crocheting are like that. So are carving, woodworking, polishing, solving jigsaw puzzles, painting, braiding, shoveling, washing, and countless other activities.

2) RECALL YOUR DREAMS - Your dreams often have important things to say about your feelings and about your relationship with the one who died. Your dreams may be scary or sad, especially early on. They may seem weird or crazy to you. You may find that your loved one appears in your dreams. Accept your dreams for what they are and see what you can learn from them. No one knows that better than you.

3) WRITE DOWN YOUR LESSONS - Your grief experience will have much to teach you. From time to time reflect upon what it is you're learning. State it as plainly as you're able. Carry those lessons with you as you go about your days.

4) DO SOMETHING YOUR LOVED ONE WOULD ENJOY - Remember the one who died in your own unique way. One widowed woman has a special sour kraut meal once a year. She doesn't like this tangy dish herself, but it was her husband's favorite, and she finds solace in remembering him in that way. There are probably a hundred different things you could do that once brought meaning or satisfaction to the one you loved. The meaning and satisfaction don't have to end with the death of that person.

5) PLANT A GARDEN - Digging is a great stress relieving exercise and all things grow with love.

6) SHARE - Share your memories, feelings, and lessons with others. Often, survivors find comfort in helping others.

If you have a grief tip you'd like to share, please send it to us.
HSI 32 N Stone Ave, 14th floor Tucson, AZ 85701

In loving memory

In February 2008, 15-year-old Ricardo Varela was murdered in a random, **unsolved** drive-by shooting while visiting his grandmother. Just three years earlier, 16-year-old Santiago Alvarez was murdered less than a block away from where Ricardo was killed.

The family of Ricardo would like to have a memorial wall built in honor of these innocent victims at a playground in the neighborhood where these tragedies occurred. It is hoped that the wall will make the community aware of what has happened, make parents aware of what is going on, and hopefully make a difference in their lives.

To fund the construction of the wall, Ricardo's family would like to do **light yard work** for donations.

For more information please call (520)248-0425.

If you would like to make a donation, please send it to:

The Master's Touch Memorial
1201 W Miracle Mile
Tucson, AZ 85705
Memo: Ricardo Varela



No death so sad.

At some time or other, everyone goes through a crisis or tragedy but no one expects to go through the trauma of his or her child, parent, sister, brother, spouse, or closest friend being murdered. It can happen to anyone of any age unexpectedly.

For many, the worst time is when "all the fuss" has died down but the strong feelings remain.

Everyone expects you to return to a normal life, but you know you will never be the same again. The world goes on much as before while inside you feel alone and that no one truly understands the pain and suffering you are going through. We all have difficulty in taking in what has happened, everything seems so unreal. Many survivors describe it as "being in a dream" or feeling that it was happening to someone else, and not to them. You may find that you have painful pictures or intrusive memories of things that have happened. You may also have nightmares. You may find yourself going over what happened again and again - Like an obsession in feeling the need to know every detail of what happened and why it happened to your loved one.

Some of us know that death is so tragic and yet we must go through the pains of overcoming the tragedy. But that life is too precious to let this make our lives become a tragedy. We have to face what has happened and find a way to bless our future by remembering the blessings we had because of what we shared with those we lost. And all the good things past become better things future because we have learned to cherish them and grow from them and pass them on to all who affect our lives.

As long as we can hold the promise that they are not lost from us forever, not gone from us completely, we can learn to live with peace in our hearts knowing they are watching over us always. We can't touch them or see them, but we can always feel them in our hearts and our spirit.

This is death..... and this is life. Judy Divers



*"When it seems that our sorrow is too great to be borne,
let us think of the great family of the heavy-hearted into
which our grief has given us entrance, and inevitably,
we will feel about us their arms,
their sympathy, their understanding."
Helen Keller*

National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims

Candlelight Vigil

Saturday, September 25th 2010

Details to come



The National Day of Remembrance for Murder Victims provides an opportunity for the people of the United States to honor the memories of murder victims and to recognize the impact on surviving family members and loved ones. Please join us in remembering those lost in the Tucson-area.

“Love is stronger than death even though
it can't stop death from happening,
but no matter how hard death tries it can't separate people from love.
It can't take away our memories either.
In the end, life is stronger than death.”
-Anonymous

Homicide Survivors, Inc.

32 N. Stone Avenue, Suite 1408
Tucson, Arizona 85701

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Homicide Survivors

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Opinions contained herein are those of the author and do not necessarily represent the position or policies of the U.S. DOJ or the Arizona DPS”



MOVING...? NEW PHONE #? PLEASE LET US KNOW
YOUR CHANGE OF ADDRESS OR PHONE #

NAME _____

STREET _____

CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP CODE _____

PHONE (_____) _____

E-MAIL _____

Loved One/Agency _____

SEND THIS COUPON TO:

HOMICIDE SURVIVORS, INC
32 N. STONE, 14TH FLOOR
TUCSON, AZ 85701-1412

CALL WITH INFORMATION : (520) 740-5729

OR FAX TO: (520) 740-5773

DO YOU WISH TO REMAIN ON OUR MAILING LIST? YES _____ NO _____