



The Compassionate Friends of Canada

When A Child Dies...

National Newsletter – Summer 2022

NATIONAL OFFICE

The Compassionate Friends of Canada
c/o 1346 Ravens View Drive
Victoria BC, Canada
V9B 6P7

E-mail: nationaloffice@tcfcanada.net

Website: www.tcfcanada.net

Toll-free line: 1-866-823-0141

NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

Andy Bond (Ottawa, ON) – President

Donna Rodin (Medicine Hat, AB) –
Vice- President / Past President /
Facebook Host

Diana Cadigan (St. John's, NL) –
Treasurer

Eileen Bond (Ottawa, ON) - Chapter
Development

DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

Larry Cadman (Ottawa, ON) -
Webmaster

Adam Farrell (Vancouver, BC) – Sibling
Facebook Host

Transforming the pain of grief into the elixir of hope.

Reverend Simon Stephens, Founder, TCF.

Welcome to the Summer edition of the national newsletter! Our objective continues to be to provide news, information, and items of interest to connect members from coast to coast, and to provide guidance to leaders in organizing events and activities. If you have any material that you would like to contribute, or suggestions for topics that you would like to see included, please e-mail the National Office.

Rebuilding after Covid

After 2 years of restrictions due to Covid-19, most provincial and municipal authorities are easing group protocols and chapters are looking forward to resuming “normal” meetings. The widespread use of video conferencing allowed many members to participate in virtual sharing circles, but not everyone may feel ready, or even able, to attend a physical gathering. We learned from our “check-in” calls that some chapters are planning hybrid in-person / virtual circles, while others, like TCF Ottawa, are offering separate sessions for each. TCF Cranbrook conducted a telephone survey to update their contact database and determine their members’ preferences. The next few months will be a transition period during which numbers of parents attending sharing circles will fluctuate as they become more comfortable with in-person activities. We encourage chapter leaders to

keep in touch with their members by phone and/or e-mail to ensure that those who need support can access it regardless of their situation. And we are all keeping our fingers crossed that the promise of a full return to pre-Covid activities becomes a reality sooner rather than later.

A Walk to Remember: On June 11th, TCF Burin Peninsula (NL) held the first of what they hope will be an annual event to remember and celebrate the lives of their children. Following introductions, words of welcome, and reading the TCF Credo, nine families shared their stories while walking around the park with the newly designed banner. Afterwards, they enjoyed a barbeque lunch, painted rocks for the memorial garden, and distributed gift bags with seedlings and a butterfly theme. Thanks to Barb and the team for organizing a satisfying day - the attendees are already looking forward to next years event.



Annual General Meeting: The 2022 AGM was held on Saturday, June 4th via Zoom with 10 attendees from St. John's, NL to Qualicum Beach, BC. In his report, the **President** (Andy) noted that one lasting impact of the Covid-19 pandemic may be that peer-support services are provided via videoconferencing as much as in-person. He also regretted that several new national initiatives have been paused for lack of resources, mainly volunteer time. **Chapter Development** (Eileen) reported that 4 chapters either started or reopened and 1 chapter closed, and that we currently have 46 active chapters and 14 contacts across every province except PEI. Although we received only 13 Annual Reports, the recent chapter check-in calls provided useful updates. The **Treasurer** (Diana) recorded that, as a result of ongoing donations and continued cost controls, we achieved a surplus for the year, which would be applied to the reserve for the next National Gathering. The full text of the reports is available from the National Office.

Welcome New Chapters: We are pleased to welcome new chapters in Peel Region (Toronto, ON) and Nipawin (SK), and reopening chapters in Abbotsford (BC) and Sudbury (ON). Thank you to the leaders, Cheryl, Nicole, Ron and Dianne, and Bev for stepping forward to support grieving parents in their communities.

Donations: We gratefully acknowledge donations made directly to our Treasurer and through the *Canada Helps* link on our website. This month, we send a big "Thank You" for recent donations from TCF Winnipeg (MB), TCF Avalon (NL), TCF Calgary (AB), TCF Saskatoon (SK), TCF Kelowna (BC), and from three individuals.

Facilitator Training: The latest session was held via Zoom on May 28th with 6 attendees from Newfoundland, Ontario, Saskatchewan, and BC. Since it was first conducted at the 2017 National Gathering, a total of 78 attendees have participated in 12 sessions of this workshop via teleconference and Zoom. The next session will be in September. To register, please contact the National Office.

Facebook Groups: Our largest TCF Canada community is the *Parents* closed Facebook group, which currently has over 1,100 members across the country sharing stories and offering support. We also offer smaller closed groups for *Siblings* and for *Men in Grief*. To join any of these groups, click on *About Us* → *Facebook Links* on our website. Thanks to Donna, Evelyn, Barb, and Adam for their commitment to hosting these groups.

Resources for Chapter Leaders: The website includes a link to the *TCF Canada Leadership* closed Facebook group, and the RESOURCES tab also includes an area for Chapter Leaders with various forms and reference articles. Please contact the National Office for the password to access this area.

Grief Information Leaflets: The updated leaflets are available under the RESOURCES tab on the national website as pdf documents for download at no charge. Please consider making copies available at your Sharing Circles.

Au Revoir and Thank You! It is with regret that we announce that long-time TCF member **Cathy Sosnowsky** has decided to step down from the National Board. Cathy first attended the North Shore (North Vancouver, BC) Chapter in 1992, a few months after her 17-year-old son Alex died from a freak accident. She then served as Treasurer, telephone contact, Newsletter Editor, Circle Facilitator, and eventually Chapter Leader. As a published author, Cathy says that writing a book of poems and sharing her personal experiences in two other books helped her through the additional losses of her adopted children. She has attended many national and international TCF conferences, presenting workshops on "Writing as Healing" to help others through their grief journeys.

Cathy joined the Board of TCF Canada in 2003 where, most recently, her writing skills were invaluable in editing the national newsletter and in recreating several of our grief information leaflets. We send Cathy and husband Woldy our thanks for their service and best wishes as they continue their personal outreach program.

The Final Word: If you have any chapter news to share, would like to promote a chapter event on the national website, become a Board member, or offer any other comments or suggestions, please contact the National Office.

Best wishes for a peaceful and relaxing summer!