



# The Compassionate Friends of Canada

## When A Child Dies....

## National Newsletter – Summer 2025

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### NATIONAL EXECUTIVE

**Andy Bond** (Ottawa, ON)

– President

**Donna Rodin** (Medicine Hat, AB)

– Past President / Facebook Host

**Karen Destun** (Waterloo, ON)

– Vice-President

**Diana Cadigan** (St. John's, NL)

– Treasurer

**Eileen Bond** (Ottawa, ON)

– Chapter Development

### DIRECTORS-AT-LARGE

**Larry Cadman** (Ottawa, ON)

– Webmaster

**Barb Noseworthy** (Burin Peninsula, NL)

– Outreach

**Connie Schram** (Waterloo, ON)

### *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.

**Transitions:** One of the more inspiring signs of summer is the appearance of a colourful variety of butterflies fluttering around our backyards and green spaces. The transformation from caterpillar to chrysalis to beautiful winged creature is an inspiring metaphor for anyone undergoing a significant life change. For this reason, butterflies frequently appear in TCF articles and leaflets.

In June, many grief support groups hold a Butterfly Release to represent both a symbolic letting go of the loved one and emergence into a new life without them.

We hope that you will have the opportunity to participate in such an event, either as a chapter activity or with another group. It can be very emotional but is a valuable healing step on our grief journey.

**Annual General Meeting 2025:** The 2025 AGM was held on Saturday, May 31<sup>st</sup> with 12 attendees representing 8 chapters. President Andy Bond reported that some chapter leaders are still

wrestling with low attendance at Sharing Circles and reluctance of volunteers to assist with chapter activities. He encouraged them to recall their original motivation and continue to offer services as best they can. Also, to take care of their own well-being, and, if necessary, seek mutual support from other peers and chapter leaders. Chapter Development Director Eileen Bond reported that over the last year, 3 chapters restarted and one closed, and we currently have 47 active chapters and 15 contacts covering all provinces except PEI. However, details are limited as only 19 chapters provided an Annual Report. Treasurer Diana Cadigan reported that as a result of minimal costs and generous donations, our balance sheet is strong with funds available for national projects.

Andy welcomed Connie Schram (TCF Waterloo Region, ON) to the Board, noting that we are always looking for additional help with various support services, including this newsletter, and invited all members to consider how they may be able to contribute.

Copies of the full reports are available on request from the National Office.

**Donations:** This issue, we give a sincere “Thank You” for donations from TCF Burin Peninsula, NL, TCF Calgary, AB and two individuals in BC and Ontario.

**Chapter Outreach Resources:** After several weeks of work by a small team, editable versions of our grief information leaflets are now available through the *Chapter Leaders* page of the TCF Canada website. These documents follow the same text and layout as the standard leaflets but can be customised with your chapter name and contact information. To restrict access to authorised users, the page is protected by a password which is available on request from the National Office.

We hope that you will find these versions helpful in promoting your chapter activities. The current pdf versions will continue to be available to the public and downloadable at no charge.

We are now working with a videographer on a TCF Canada video that could be used for informational and promotional purposes. This project is being funded by donations in memory of former TCF Ottawa co-leader, Paulette Cadman.

**Discount for Printing Services:** We are pleased to announce that the National Office has arranged with **Staples Canada** for a **20% discount** on printing and copying services for TCF Chapter members. The discount may be used for both chapter materials and personal copying. If this service is of interest to your chapter, please contact the National Office ([NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net](mailto:NationalOffice@TCFCanada.net)) for details and the access code.

**Chapter Email Addresses:** An ongoing challenge for our organization is to ensure that chapter contact information is correct and up to date. Each registered chapter is assigned a public e-mail address ([chapter@tcfcanada.net](mailto:chapter@tcfcanada.net)) which is listed on the TCF Canada website. Mail to that address is forwarded to the local chapter address which is updated as necessary through the chapter Annual Report. This procedure allows anyone to contact the chapter for support while protecting the leader(s) privacy.

We recently learned that some chapters have been using a different local address and have not received forwarded messages, including Bulletins, national newsletters and possibly requests for support. To help resolve this situation, please review which address your chapter is using and advise the National Office, either by e-mail or preferably an Annual Report, so that we can update our records.

**Chapter Chats:** The next *Chapter Chat* will be on **Saturday, June 28<sup>th</sup>**, starting at **12:00 noon Eastern** time. This is an open discussion over Zoom hosted by a Board member for up to an hour. Participation is voluntary, with chapter leaders or representatives invited to share successes, concerns, questions, or any other topics with other leaders across the country. To register, please contact the National Office.

**Compassionate Friends (US) Conference:** Several Canadian members are planning to attend the conference to be held in Bellevue/Seattle, Washington, from **July 11 to 13, 2025** which will include a TCF Canada meet-and-greet table, and a Canadian Memory Board dedicated to honoring and remembering our loved ones.

For more information and to register for the conference, visit [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org). If you would like to contact other Canadian attendees, please email the TCF Canada National Office.

**Facilitator Training:** The next training session will be held in the fall. If you or any of your leadership team would like to attend, please contact the National Office.

**In Closing:** It is with mixed feelings that I have decided to step down as President of TCF Canada after seven years in this role. Over that time, we have had some challenges, notably the Covid-19 pandemic, and several successes, including updated grief information leaflets and virtual support circles coast to coast. In addition, our *Parents* Facebook group has grown to over 1,500 members and our Outreach team is working to raise our profile. It has been my honour to have worked with a team of dedicated individuals to make peer support available to grieving parents across the country. However, I believe that it is an appropriate time to refresh the organization, and I will remain as a Board member to support that transition.

Thank you for your support and commitment to the mission of The Compassionate Friends of Canada.