



Baby 1st Network Newsletter | August 2018 | Vol. 51

Baby 1st Network Celebrates 40 years of Service



From the Executive Director's Desk

I would like to kick off this issue of Baby 1st Network's quarterly newsletter by saying: I am honored to serve as Baby 1st Network fourth executive director. For 40 years the Network has provided educational materials and support to all who work to reduce the infant mortality rate in the state Ohio. But its origin was dedicated to supporting families who have lost a child from Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The compassionate support services that have been provided to families who have experienced a loss has been a direct result of the many devoted volunteers who made a commitment to carry out the mission of the Network. I want our community to know that even though the name of our organization has changed throughout the years, staffing transition may have taken place, offices may have relocated, our mission remains the same.

We are here to first and foremost save babies. For many of Ohio counties, the infant mortality rate continues to increase, and that's unacceptable. We will continue to join in the efforts to address health disparities. We will work to enhance our bereavement support services for families who have lost a child, and we will expand our community network to provide tools and support to communities who are willing to assist in keeping babies safe. Your support of Baby 1st Network strengthens our ability to **#keepallbabiesafe**.

Stay tuned for announcements of upcoming events and activities celebrating our 40th Anniversary Year!

Stacy Scott, Ph.D., MPA, Executive Director, Baby 1st Network

History of Baby 1st Network: 40 Years of Supporting

Ohio's Families and Communities

The evolution of Baby 1st Network began nearly 40 years ago when the SID Network of Ohio became the umbrella organization for the many regional and local sudden infant death syndrome organizations, and formerly merged programmatic and service delivery operations. Merger affiliates were located as branches in Akron-Cleveland, Columbus, Cincinnati, Toledo and Dayton. The Network became the only statewide volunteer health organization dedicated exclusively to solving the mystery of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome. In addition, the Network also offered supportive services to those families who tragically loss an infant age two and under, suddenly and unexpected in the Ohio population to either diagnosed or undiagnosed causes and manners of death.

Once it became one entity, the SIDS Network set up headquarters in Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio, working to serve the families of Ohio experiencing first-hand the tragedy of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). The mission: to improve the knowledge and skills of those who interact with SIDS/other Infant death families, and to increase public awareness and knowledge regarding sudden unexpected infant deaths.

[Read More>>](#)

Baby 1st Network's New Board of Directors

Here's the new Baby 1st Network Board of Directors. Each member is committed to our mission of saving babies, supporting Ohio families and keeping the Network strong for another 40 years.

Board of Directors

Augustus Parker III, M.D., Interim Board President

Sherry Percival, Esq., Treasurer

Karla Thornhill Coleman, MBA, Secretary

Sheldon Wrice, Ed.D, Associate Dean and Professor, The University of Akron

Mike Furlong, retired certified paramedic/firefighter

Beth McNeill, senior public health consultant

Mark McBee, certified paramedic/firefighter

Keeping memories alive

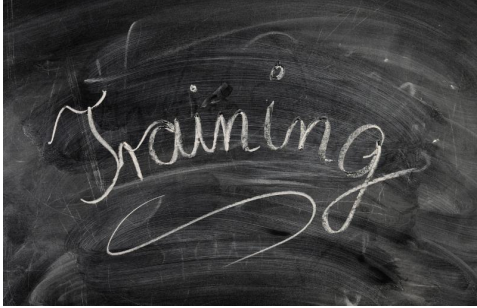
Special thanks to the Fisher and Tully Families!

Kind hearts and annual fundraisers help support the Network's mission

Baby 1st Network would like to acknowledge both the Fisher Family of Hilliard and Tully Family of Reynoldsburg for their ongoing and unwavering support through their annual fundraising events. The Fishers hosted the 18th Annual Nolan Piela Fisher Golf Outing and the Tully family hosted the 10th Annual Brianna Dawn Tully Memorial Golf Outing in Canal Winchester. We truly appreciate your donations, time and dedication!

Extra! Extra!
One more public health training for 2018!

**SIDS Risk Reduction
Workshop Coming this Fall**



The Baby 1st Network and the Ohio Department of Health are pleased to announce that there will be one more SIDS Risk Reduction and Infant Safe Sleep Educational Workshop before the end of the year. Please visit our website for more information, including registration, date, time and location.

Learn from the experts about the impact of SIDS and SUID; risk factors and racial disparities; recommendations for infant safe sleep and SIDS risk reduction; role of the hospital nurse educator; and the role of the home visitor. You will also hear a personal story from a SUID parent and learn about the impact an infant death has on families.

Ohio Department of Health continues contract with Baby 1st Network



Baby 1st Network announces that the Ohio Department of Health (ODH) has renewed its contract with the agency to continue work with service providers in the event of an infant death. In addition, Baby 1st Network will continue its 40-year mission to provide an opportunity for families who have experienced a loss of an infant to receive bereavement support services. A toll-free hotline (1-800-477-7437) is available to provide support during this extremely difficult time.

In response to the needs created by the occurrence of SIDS and other infant deaths, ODH created the Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) Program. In compliance with the mandates of Ohio Revised Code 313.121, related to the reporting of sudden and unexpected infant deaths and the provision of support and bereavement services, ODH works closely with the Baby 1st Network, the Ohio Coroner's Association and local health departments to ensure appropriate service providers are alerted when there has been a sudden infant death in a community.

For additional information and forms, go to <https://www.odh.ohio.gov/odhPrograms/cfhs/sid/sids1.aspx>.

Infant Loss and Grief: I Don't Know What to Say

By [Doris Limnos](#)



Photo credit: Evan Kirby, Unsplash

From the online magazine Still Standing Magazine: Surviving the Aftermath of Loss & Infertility. For more articles and services, go to <https://stillstandingmag.com>.

If I had a dollar for every time I have heard someone say, “I don’t know what to say to someone who’s lost a baby,” I would be rolling in piles of cash. I wouldn’t blame a single confessor of this truth. The topic of baby and infant loss is so taboo and silenced that it’s no wonder we don’t know what to say to support someone grieving the loss of their precious child.

It’s because of wonderful communities like this one that we create awareness around pregnancy and child loss, and bring this taboo subject out into a (hopefully) warm and loving reception. Wouldn’t it be fantastic if the question of what to say no longer needed to be asked? Let’s do a small kindness to ourselves and others, and openly share what we found to be comforting and considerate words in our time of sadness.

I’m Sorry

This is a great place to start. It acknowledges the most important fact of all: *this sucks and there’s nothing anyone can do about it*. Nothing we say can “fix” her forever-broken heart or bring her baby back. A father may not want to talk about it, but he may not want to ignore his loss either. Let’s call it what it is – the devastating loss of a loved one. With any loss, we acknowledge how profoundly sorry we are that this dear person is going through life without their beloved. If you have no other words, “I’m sorry” is truth and comfort together. It’s more than enough.

Related Post: [The Nicest Thing To Say or Do After Loss](#)

What Can I Do?

Asking how to help in a practical way demonstrates the love you have for that person. Doing more than just speaking can show sincerity in a time when a parent is feeling so alone and helpless. There isn’t much you can do, but the offer is always appreciated. It could be organizing a meal roster, offering to pick up other children from school, painting her nails or taking him out for a drink. The likelihood is they may kindly reject the offer – for various reasons. But your genuine, outstretched hand amplifies any sweet words you

could possibly utter.

NOTE: Don't offer unless you are willing to follow through!

I'm Here To Listen When You're Ready

That mother or father has been through the unimaginable. They're going through a plethora of emotions – please do not let them go through all that on their own. Yes, it may be difficult to hear, but it's also difficult for them to experience. Again, this isn't for the faint-hearted, fair-weathered friend. It's for the one who's willing to listen and shoulder just a fraction of the pain this parent is carrying. Just let them know that you're ready to hear their story and their journey, even if it sounds like mad ramblings. And stick around! I'm forever grateful for those true friends who let me tell Elysia's story and who don't shirk from hearing her name. To this day, I will never forget them.

Related Post: Things Not To Say To A Bereaved Parent

Don't Know What to Say? Here's What Not To Say

Let's keep this simple:

- Platitudes: "Health," "heaven and angels," "you can have more babies"... phrases like these may be true and well meant but often have the opposite effect. They don't "fix" the person or bring them back to their "normal" self. They make them feel like the grieving process should be rushed through or pushed aside.
- "What was wrong with him/her?": Regardless of whether there was any medical cause for the loss of this child, asking this question in an inappropriate way or at the wrong time can seem rather intrusive and unnecessary when the main aim is to show compassion.
- Nothing at all: Silence is golden... if the parents ask for it. Otherwise, it just feels like they are being deliberately ignored and abandoned in their time of need. I still remember when I first lost Lissie and those closest to me avoided me completely, as though I were a leper. Those people, too, I won't forget. The smallest acknowledgment goes a long way.

Don't know what to say? Now you know. Please say these words, share them and shed light on the conversation around child loss. You never know who – or how – it will help with healing.

Doris Limnos is a wife and mother to 3 earthside children and stillborn angel Elysia. In her juggle with three kids, three jobs and her third degree, she is a fervent advocate for pregnancy and infant loss awareness and is passionate about educating family and friends on how they can nurture and support their grieving loved ones.

This article is from Still Standing Magazine: <https://stillstandingmag.com>



The mission of the Baby 1st Network is to provide educational material and support for all who work to reduce Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID). We are committed to providing the tools necessary to empower and engage communities to keep their infants safe. We also provide compassionate support services to families who have experienced the sudden unexpected loss of an infant.