

~Empty Cradle and the Community ~

Community education is another focus of our group. Our parents have given numerous presentations to local hospitals, schools, and civic organizations in an effort to improve professional and community awareness of the needs of bereaved parents. The response has been positive, resulting in many beneficial changes in both professional and personal responses to the death of a baby.

Since 1982, Empty Cradle has established itself as a vital resource in the community. The group was founded by three families to offer comfort, information and friendship to parents suffering the loss of a baby. We have discovered that the common bond of a shared experience draws us together and helps us with the painful task of resolving our grief. For this reason, our volunteer support network is vital not only to the newly bereaved, but also to those whose grief is no longer new. By reaching out to others, we can achieve our stated goal:

“...to comfort the grief of an aching heart and ease the pain of an empty cradle...”

Please visit the Empty Cradle website:

www.emptycradle.org

to view an extensive list of internet sites that provide support, information and materials pertaining to pregnancy and infant loss, stillbirth, SIDS and impending loss. Click on “Resources” and scroll down to “Internet Support.” By clicking on “Remembrance Sites, you will find many sites that offer wonderful memorializing ideas.



“...to comfort the grief of an aching heart and ease the pain of an empty cradle...”

For Support Please Call:
(619) 595-3887

Mailing address:

30520 Rancho California Road
Suite 107 Box 63
Temecula, CA 92591

www.emptycradle.org

~ Empty Cradle ~

Empty Cradle is a self-help support group for parents who have experienced the loss of their baby due to miscarriage, stillbirth, SIDS, or infant death. We also offer support for parents who are facing an impending fetal or neonatal loss. In order to effectively meet the needs of bereaved families, we offer help by means of phone and online peer support, monthly support group meetings, and written materials.

The death of a baby is one of life's most devastating experiences. It leaves parents feeling shocked, disoriented and heartbroken. This grief reaction is a powerful and complex emotional response to the loss of a beloved child. Often, our friends and loved ones may have difficulty understanding the depth of our sorrow or the length of time needed to deal with the pain. For this reason, grieving can be very lonely.

There are other parents, however, who have faced a similar sorrow. Assisting families through the normal grieving process is why Empty Cradle exists. Through sharing, reading, and listening, the newly bereaved come to understand that their feelings are natural, thus giving them a sense of direction and hope. The grief then begins to ease which allows the healing process to begin.

We are not professional counselors, although we do count professionals among our number. We are a non-sectarian and non-profit group composed entirely of volunteers. We are funded by a combination of community grants and individual contributions.

~ What We Offer ~

Every family experiencing the death of a baby is unique, and each has different needs. Our hope is that within the group, parents will find many options for support and healing.

Monthly group meetings provide a forum for the open discussion of feelings and concerns. Parents are free to share (or just listen) in whatever way is most comfortable for them. Although there are no simple answers to the complex emotions surrounding the death of a baby, mutual reassurance is obtained in the group setting.

A valuable resource at monthly meetings is the **lending library**, which contains an extensive collection of literature on miscarriage, stillbirth and infant death and the grieving experience for families that have suffered the loss of a baby.

Parents can receive **individual telephone and/or online support** through a network of trained support volunteers, each of whom has experienced a loss.

Our quarterly **newsletter** includes articles, announcements and upcoming events as well as stories, letters and poems that members have written or have found to be comforting.

When the time is right, our **subsequent pregnancy support group** helps parents receive reassurance and help in dealing with the anxieties and special concerns of a pregnancy following a loss.

We encourage **volunteering** within the group as a way of coming to terms with one's own bereavement, while helping others come to terms with theirs.

~ How to Contact Us ~

Our **message phone number** is available 24 hours a day, seven days a week:

(619) 595-3887

Please leave your name, your phone number, and a short message. Your call will be returned as soon as possible. At that time, a support volunteer who has had a similar loss can be referred to you. You may also receive additional information and be added to our newsletter mailing list, upon request.

~ Meetings ~

Our monthly support group meetings are scheduled on different evenings in several locations throughout San Diego and Riverside County. Bereaved parents and other adults who support them are welcome to attend. No RSVP is necessary. The subsequent pregnancy group meets each month in at least one location. **Please visit our website at www.emptycradle.org for up-to-date meeting locations, dates and times.**

The 2-hour meetings begin with a brief business and announcements period, usually followed by a speaker addressing various issues relevant to bereaved parents and the grief process. Professionals as well as group members participate in such presentations. After a short break for refreshments, the group gathers into smaller "sharing circles." Here parents may share their own experiences and feelings or they may simply listen to others and receive validation. As one father said, "At last I've found a safe place to talk about how I really feel."