



**What to say and do  
when someone you know  
has lost a child.**





WHEN SOMEONE  
HAS LOST A CHILD,

*What do I say?*

**BE KIND AND HONEST, SHOWING GENUINE CONCERN**

- I am so sorry for the loss of your baby/son/daughter/child. It is devastating.
- I am so very sorry you are having to go through this.
- I can't imagine what you are going through.
- I have no words, but I am here for you if you need me.
- I want to do something for you but I don't know what to do.
- You can count on me for anything you need.
- This is so unfair.
- There are no words for the agony you are feeling., but I am here. You are not alone.
- I will never forget him/her (use child's name)
- You are such a good mother/father, death cannot change that.
- I miss them too.



WHEN SOMEONE  
HAS LOST A CHILD,

*Be There*

- Let them know that you are always there to hear about their child and their memories.
- Don't forget to reach out to them periodically after their loss and the initial time of support has passed.

WHEN IN DOUBT SAYING SOMETHING IS BETTER THAN  
NOT SAYING ANYTHING

- Pretending they don't have grief and pain just makes them feel worse.



WHEN SOMEONE  
HAS LOST A CHILD,

*Practical Help*

- Show up. Go to the funeral or memorial service, even if not personally asked.
- Don't be afraid of their grief - tears, anger, why me moments.
- Be comfortable with silence. Let the grieving parent know you just want to sit with them.
- Send a handwritten card or a Mass card.
- Send some flowers later after the first flowers have died, perhaps one month after the death.
- Give a blanket or stuffed animal with a note along the lines of: something to hold when your arms feel empty or something to wrap around you when you need comfort.
- Don't leave it so the grieving family has to contact you, just turn up or call anyway.
- May I bring you dinner next Thursday? Give a restaurant or coffee voucher. Mow their lawn or leave baking and flowers at their door.



- Send a note card or picture of their child's name. Give a plant, tree, windchime or other gift that will help their child's memory continue.
- Visit their child's grave if possible and send a photo to say you were there.
- Do these things at any time, even if the loss was weeks, months or even years previous. The parents are still grieving. Your kindness is still important.
- Remember the anniversary of their child's death with a card.
- Take the time to sit and listen, allow them to share their grief as often as they need.
- Invite their other young children on play dates and outings.
- Remember their child by name and mention them.



**IF YOU KNEW THE CHILD, BE SPECIFIC. SAY THE CHILD'S NAME AND SHARE SOMETHING UNIQUE AND SPECIAL ABOUT THEM.**

- I am so lucky to have spent time with your child. He/she was such a character and so special. I will always remember him/her.
- Tell me a little story about them (child's name) you remember?
- Use the child's name and share a memory you have of them.

**IF YOU DID NOT KNOW THE CHILD**

- Ask questions about their child.
- Say the child's name and share that you wish you had a chance to meet them.
- Ask what they were like or something that they really loved about them.

**FOR A MISCARRIAGE OR STILLBORN LOSS**

- Ask if they chose a name for their child. Use their baby's name often.
- Ask about the due date and make a note to reach out on that day. 'Remembering your precious baby with you today'