



REFLECTIONS

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President

Lisa Biakanja

Vice President

Mary Williams

Treasurer

Shari Morinishi

Recording Secretary

Mary Ann Garcia

Historian

Carole Guttilla

Parent Contacts

- Lisa Biakanja
(714)960-9897

lbiakanja@yahoo.com

- Debbie Gemmill
(760)747-4429

mom2127@aol.com

- Irene Holguin
(909)783-3709 (Spanish)

gisie01@yahoo.com

- Shari Morinishi
(714)952-1466

sharmori@comcast.net

- Mary Williams
(714)846-0229

willamsinhb@socal.rr.com

- Mary Ann Garcia
(714)403-1814

mriversgarcia@yahoo.com

Grandparent Contact

Carole Guttilla

(714)524-7647

gutticarole@maintech.com

Medical Advisors

- Thomas G. Keens, MD
Professor of Pediatrics

University of Southern California
School of Medicine/Children's
Hospital, Los Angeles

- Henry Krous, MD, Vice-Chair

Director of Pathology/Children's Hospital San
Diego

Public Health Advisor

Penny Stastny, Public Health
Nurse/Medical Professional

Technical Consultant

Andrew Beale

Unisys Corporation

Executive Director

Barbara Estep

gisoc@compuall.net

“Turning Winters Into Springs” ...From a Parent's Point of View

Debbie Gemmill c 1990

We live in an inland valley now, moving from the coast where the weather was almost always the same, pleasant with little surprise. We would cheer when the fog rolled in; at least it was a change. Not so in this valley surrounded by hills in north San Diego County. We reach blistering temperatures in the summer and some pretty cold nights in the winter.

The first frost hit our area a couple of weeks before Christmas. We had had warning from the local news, so I'd rushed out with old sheets and several empty milk cartons to cover our citrus trees and my babied impatiens. The lemon tree had suffered severe damage the year before, causing the forming fruit to shrivel up and fall off the tree. I'd lost the impatiens altogether. I was taking no chances this winter and went to work like a true farmer covering up a precious harvest. As I hurried back to the warmth of our house, I glanced quickly at our vegetable garden. The only thing left in mid-December was the prolific cherry tomato bush. It had produced all summer and fall, and still had a few tomatoes left on its vines. We'd had our fill of tomatoes, to

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GUILD FOR INFANT SURVIVAL



Office: (714) 973-
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Widening Social Inequalities in Risk for Sudden Infant Death Syndrome.

Am J Public Health. 2005 Nov;95(11):1976-81.

Pickett KE, Luo Y, Lauderdale DS.

Department of Health Sciences, Seeborn Rowntree Building, Area 3, University of York, Heslington, York, YO10 5DD, England. kp6@york.ac.uk.

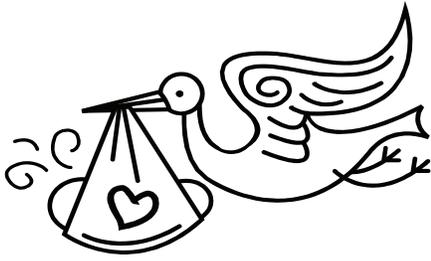
Objectives: In 1994, the US Public Health Service launched the "Back to Sleep" campaign, promoting the supine sleep position to prevent sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS). Studies of SIDS in the United States have generally found socioeconomic and race disparities. Our objective was to see whether the "Back to Sleep" campaign, which involves an effective, easy, and free intervention, has reduced social class inequalities in SIDS.

Methods: We conducted a population-based case-cohort study during 2 periods, 1989 to 1991 and 1996 to 1998, using the US Linked Birth/Infant Death Data Sets. Case group was infants who died of SIDS in infancy (N = 21 126); control group was a 10% random sample of infants who lived through the first year and all infants who died of other causes (N=2241218). Social class was measured by mother's education level.

Results: There was no evidence that inequalities in SIDS were reduced after the Back to Sleep campaign. In fact, odds ratios for SIDS associated with lower social class increased between 1989-1991 and 1996-1998. The race disparity in SIDS increased after the Back to Sleep campaign.

Conclusions: The introduction of an inexpensive, easy, public health intervention has not reduced social inequalities in SIDS; in fact, the gap has widened. Although the risk of SIDS has been reduced for all social class groups, women who are more educated have experienced the greatest decline.

For Full-text: <http://www.ajph.org/cgi/content/full/95/11/1976>



The STORK REPORT

Elizabeth Joyce Curtis

Born October 27, 2005

8 pounds 1 ounce

Congratulations to

Laura and Jim Curtis and

Big Brother Allen Robert Curtis

January 19—February 7, 2002

Is there a new little one at your house?
If so, we would love to share your happiness. Please send all pertinent information to the Guild office for publication in our next newsletter.

Community Support Campaign Donations:

Gail Cady
Nancy LaRuffa
Kim M. Young
Michele Phillips and a
matching gift from

Beatitudes for those who comfort

Reprinted from Life-Line,
No. 37, Winter 1998

- ◆ **Blessed** are those who do not use tears to measure the true feelings of the bereaved.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who do not always have a quick “comforting” answer.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who do not make judgments on the bereaved’s closeness to God by their reaction to the loss of their loved one.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who hear with their hearts and not with their minds.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who allow the bereaved enough time to heal.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who admit their uncomfortableness and put it aside to help the bereaved.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who do not give unwanted advice.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who continue to call, visit, and reach out when the crowd has dwindled and the wounded are left standing alone.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who know the worth of each person as a unique individual and do not pretend that they can be replaced or forgotten.
- ◆ **Blessed** are those who realize the fragility of bereavement and handle it with an understanding shoulder and a loving heart.

MEMORIAL DONATIONS

Donations have been made in the loving memory of the following babies by those who loved them:

In Memory of Kari Lorraine Anderson

Terry & Kristie Anderson

In Memory of Mitchell Alan Bennett

Karen & Alan Bennett

In Memory of Kaylee Rene Billings

Dale & Judy Dunbar

Lisa & A.J. Billings

In Memory of Jason Doo

David & Alpha Doo

In Memory of Jamie Lynn Dow

Melinda Dow

In Memory of Bailey Downs

Devin & Tiffany Downs

In Memory of Madelyn Frowine

Pam Borchard & Nancy Maruyama

In Memory of Mathew A. Gaalswijk

Pete & Liz Gaalswijk

Cornelis & Maria Gaalswijk

In Memory of Kayla Garcia

Stuart & Jennifer Barada

In Memory of Lauren Elizabeth Gehrke

Lorie & Werner Gehrke

In Memory of Scott Francis Hogan

Mr. & Mrs. Richard R. Hogan

In Memory of Amy Michelle Kopic

Bonnie & William Merrill

In Memory of Daniel Kevin Nichols

Donald & Mary Nichols

In Memory of Sarah Ashley Robbins

Leslee Milch

Denise & Thomas Robbins

In Memory of Kurt Andrew Rosenquist

Robert & Connie Rosenquist

In Memory of Anne Frances Schmidt

The Schmidt Family

In Memory of Hayden Raye Strickland

Daddy & Mommy

Big Brother Hunter

Little Sister Hope

In Memory of Ian Russell A. Watson

Russell & Toni Hudson

Thank you to

Tracy A. Ruddy

Help Someone Grieve This Holiday Season

By Kris Wurm, Northeastern Satellite Coordinator
Reprinted by the California SIDS Program

Many people are wary of reaching out to a grieving person. Some are fearful of saying the wrong thing and causing further pain. Others think talking about the child will prevent parents from being able to move on. Still others are uncomfortable with death and intense feelings of sadness.

I have learned from many bereaved parents that being avoided, or the lack of conversation with friends about their baby, is far worse than having someone say something that doesn't help. It is more important to talk to people with good intentions. Avoidance results in greater feelings of isolation and loneliness.

The holidays are a time many bereaving parents need companionship most. Unfortunately, it also is a time people are less likely to give it. Therefore, remember to make a special effort to include a grieving person in a conversation or activity.

Some people believe talking about the baby will prevent the parents from being able to move on. This is not true. The majority of parents will be pleased you remember their child and need for support. Talking about their feelings enables them to work through their grief. By sharing thoughts and feelings, you are showing them you care and that it is OK to talk about it.

Another reason people do not reach out to bereaving parents is their own discomfort with death. The rude reality is tragedies like this can happen. Realize there are many things in life we cannot control. Also, set realistic goals. Do not expect to make the person happy. You cannot make it better, but you can make the grief process easier by being there and allowing them to grieve as they wish.

The following suggestions may help you reach out to someone grieving this holiday season:

- Remember their child – purchase a memorial in the child's name (a memorial brick at the Angel of Hope Monument, a tree, park bench, piece of playground equipment). Make a donation to an organization the parents endorse in memory of their baby (such as GISOC). Place a holiday decoration on the baby's grave. Give them a memento of their baby (an angel). Collect memories from those who knew their baby and compile them in a book. Give them a book on grief and mourning or a subscription to a bereavement magazine.
- Provide opportunities for social interaction – call the parents just to talk. Invite them to join you in an activity, such as a meal, shopping, or ice skating. Offer to attend a support group meeting with them or watch their other children so they might attend. Go with them to their child's gravesite.
- Assist them with their activities – offer to do the parent's grocery shopping. Send a plant or a care package of holiday treats, scented soaps or a casserole. Invite them over to make cookies and candies or offer to do these things with their other children for them. Help them wrap holiday gifts; prepare a holiday meal for them. Help them put up or take down decorations.
- Respect their feelings – the parents may want to observe the holidays in a way that is different from before. Remember incorporating their child's death into their holiday rituals is important and may change over time. Though the holidays will be difficult and different this year, they still can be a time of comfort, hope, and love.

“Turning Winters Into Springs” ...*From a Parent’s Point of View* (Continued from Page 1)

the point where the children were picking them and hiding them so they wouldn’t have them in their lunch sacks again. Frankly, I didn’t care too much if the plant was destroyed by the frost.

It’s an interesting thing about a frost. It does its damage quietly, like a thief in the night. No noise, no warning. You go to sleep thinking everything’s covered up, safe and snug. And while you sleep, the unthought-of occurs.

In the morning I put on a pot of oatmeal for the children, (What? No tomatoes, they said sarcastically), wrapped myself in a thick sweater and ventured out to inspect what damage had been done by the frost.

The lemon tree, as I pulled off the cotton sheet, looked fine. The tiny dark green lemons-in-the-making had survived. I could almost taste out July lemonade and I felt like a hero for having saved them. The impatiens had also made it through the night. Their red and pink flowers looked like waking faces as I pulled the milk cartons from them. What wonderful work I had done protecting them!

Feeling like a rescuer, I walked back toward the house and glanced, really by accident, at the cherry tomatoes. There they were--bright red, glistening in the morning light, tiny tomatoes which had somehow survived a killer frost--unprotected, uncared for. I couldn’t believe it. I picked them, tucked them into the pockets of my sweater, and we had them in our supper salad.

This spring we are enjoying our yellowing lemons and our gorgeous brightly colored impatiens. The tomatoes have since died off, but as I look over at the part of the garden where they had grown, I can’t forget my wonder at a plant that survived, unprotected and uncared for, and provided an unseasonal gift for a family’s winter supper.

I don’t know why these things happen. I don’t understand how plants survive a frost and how other living things--loved, cared for, greatly protected--die anyway. If there’s an answer to that, it’s obviously beyond me.

The only message I heard from the silence of this winter’s frost is that winter does turn into spring, and that sometimes dark green lemons turn into lemonade and sometimes they don’t. Some things are simply out of our control.

Spring comes anyway, whether we’re ready for it or not. Thank goodness.

Unseen Scars
...From a Parent's Point of View
 (Continued from Page 6)

Holiday
 Gift Giving

Need a special gift? Please visit our website, www.gisoc.org. Sales items are available that make perfect stocking stuffers! How about a cuddly lamb or stuffed bear or include a butterfly pen or heart pencil? Best of all your purchase is tax deductible! Order today for immediate delivery.

REFLECTIONS

P.O. Box 17432
 Irvine, CA 92623-7432
 Editor: Cory Morinishi

Reflections is a quarterly publication of the Guild for Infant Survival, Orange County—a non-profit organization. *Reflections* is committed to the collection and dissemination of accurate, up-to-date, scientific and lay information and the correction of misinformation related to SIDS. The Guild is dedicated to the support of families and friends suffering the death of an infant to SIDS.

**The Guild For Infant
 Survival,
 Orange County
 Information:**

2130 E. Fourth Street #125
 Santa Ana, CA 92705
 Ph: (714) 973-8417
 Fax: (714) 973-8429
 (800) 474-SIDS (7437)
 Email Address:
gisoc@compuall.net
 Website Address:
www.gisoc.org

**Newsletter
 Deadlines**

If you would like to contribute an article or poem to an upcoming issue of ***Reflections***, please contact: Cory Morinishi at (714) 952-1466 or e-mail him at sharmori@comcast.net. The next Newsletter deadline is 1/1/06. We encourage your participation!

NEWSLETTER DONATIONS

The cost to print and mail the *Reflections* newsletter is steadily rising. Therefore, it is important that we have your latest contact information. If the address shown on your newsletter is not correct, please e-mail Barbara Estep at gisoc@compuall.net or call her at (714) 973-8417 with your current information.

Newsletter donations of \$20 covers the cost of printing and mailing quarterly newsletters. Mail your donations in today.

END OF THE YEAR DONATIONS

Don't forget to make your charitable donations for 2005 prior to December 31. An envelope is included for your convenience.

YOUR GIFT IS APPRECIATED

This Gift Is In Memory Of:

This Gift Is In Honor Of:

Acknowledge To: _____

Address: _____

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Please print. Make checks payable to:
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 P.O. Box 17432, Irvine, CA 92623-7432

Don't Think I Do Not Grieve

By Brenda Penepent

Don't think I do not feel;
 Because you see no tears.
 A river rages deep inside
 Of grief, and loss, and fears.

Just because I do not cry now,
 Don't think my heart's not broken.

I keep inside the misery
 Of words not to be spoken.

Sometimes I smile, or crack a joke,
 So you won't see the pain;
 Or notice how my hands will shake,
 Or how I've gone insane.

Each time I chance to think of her,
 My heart is ripped asunder.
 The loss I feel is mine alone.
 You will not see my thunder.

ENTERTAINMENT BOOKS

The Guild is once again selling entertainment books for the year 2006. Local books are \$35.00 each. Non local books vary in price. They can make great gifts or make for a great family date night. Contact Barbara estep at (714) 973-8417.

Happy Birthday, Jason!

By: Susanna Shutz Robar

Thirty-five years! How could that possibly be true? We are still, my husband and I, in the same town, on the same street, and in the same house. Our cars are different, our other children are grown, and maybe we are a bit older. But, thirty-five years?

I never thought that I would ever be able to look back over such a long period of time toward our son's home-going. When Jason died on October 4th of 1970, it seemed as though time became one big black hole. It left me swirling in a deluge of mystery that did not want to be set free. There were no more days or weeks for me. The day he died evolved into one tremendously long night in which there was no rest and no understanding.

In those long-ago moments, I wondered how in the world life could be lived in my heart again. A great heaviness and emptiness swept over me. It felt so weighty that I could not comprehend any manifestation of its end.

However, as time, that wonderful blessing bestowed upon each one, moved into my life with various people and in innumerable ways, I slowly took passage on a new path toward wholeness. It was not a return to the same measure of life as I had experienced before. It was a new sort of fullness that has found sustainable under-girding, a secure support.

In the beginning of those dark days, I felt so weak and low. Though today, I read the words that came to me then as I tried to make sense of my tragedy. The sentiment ends with, "...and one day soon, we'll play again beyond the moon." Now I realize that even back then, there was evidence of a strength and courage displayed in me of which I was not aware.

Fittingly so, it seems, it is in our darkest hour that the capacity to endure which has lain dormant deep inside springs forth for such a moment. Even though it might not be immediately noticed, it is there, allowing us the grace to not only endure, but to eventually heal and to hope once again.



Remembering

*A gift of joy for all who shared;
To hold the boy for whom we cared.*

*Carrot red hair and sky blue eyes;
Smile so rare and a look so wise.*

*Dimpled, soft marshmallow cheeks;
Nose aloft, with a laugh so sweet.*

*Baby Mine, Baby Dear;
One who gave us so much cheer.*

*Forever thankful we will be,
To remember you upon our knee.*

*Sleeping sound, sleeping fast,
Or laughing loud out of the past:*

*Be happy, my Dear, for one day soon,
We'll play again beyond the moon.*

©1970 Susanna Shutz Robar

SHOULD PARENTS OR CAREGIVERS USE PRODUCTS THAT ARE DESIGNED TO KEEP BABIES ON THEIR BACKS DURING SLEEP?

The American Academy of Pediatrics does not recommend the use of such products. Some of the devices are designed to keep babies on their sides, and there is good evidence that side sleeping is not as safe as supine (back) sleeping. Other devices are designed to keep a baby on his/her back or to prevent re-breathing. But none of the devices have been studied sufficiently to demonstrate a decrease risk in SIDS. Furthermore, no studies have been published that examine the safety of these products; in fact, there have been some anecdotal reports of babies being trapped against bedding while strapped into products that keep babies on their sides. Babies who sleep on their backs are very unlikely to roll onto their stomachs during the age range most associated with SIDS; therefore, the use of products to prevent babies who are sleeping on their backs from rolling onto their stomachs are unnecessary.

Adopted from Infant Sleep Position and SIDS - Questions and Answers for Health Care Professionals, National Institute of Child Health and Human Development, NIH Publication No. 02-7202, November 2003. Pages 10-11
California SIDS Program "Horizons", Volume 5, Number 6, July 2005.

AAP Revises SIDS Prevention Recommendations For Release: Monday October 10, 2005

"WASHINGTON, DC - Despite major decreases in the incidence of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) over the past decade, SIDS is still responsible for more infant deaths beyond the newborn period in the United States than any other cause of death during infancy. In an updated policy statement on "The Changing Concept of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome: Diagnostic Coding Shifts, Controversies Regarding the Sleeping Environment, and New Variables to Consider in Reducing Risk," the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) addresses several issues that have become relevant since they last published a statement in 2000.

The AAP no longer recognizes side sleeping as a reasonable alternative to fully supine (lying on back) sleeping. Studies have found that the side sleep position is unstable and increases the chances of the infant rolling onto his or her stomach. Every caregiver should use the back sleep position during every sleep period.

Bed sharing is not recommended during sleep. Infants may be brought into bed for nursing or comforting, but should be returned to their own crib or bassinet when the parent is ready to return to sleep. However, there is growing evidence that room sharing (infant sleeping in a crib in parent's bedroom) is associated with a reduced risk of SIDS. The AAP recommends a separate but proximate sleeping environment.

Research now indicates an association between pacifier use and a reduced risk of SIDS, which is why the revised statement recommends the use of pacifiers at nap time and bedtime throughout the first year of life. The evidence that pacifier use inhibits breastfeeding or causes later dental complications is not compelling enough to discredit the recommendation. However, it is recommended that pacifier introduction for breastfed infants be delayed until one month of age to ensure that breastfeeding is firmly established. In addition, if the infant refuses the pacifier, it should not be forced. There is a slight increased risk of ear infections associated with pacifier use, but the incidence of ear infection is generally lower in the first of life, especially the first six months, when the risk of SIDS is the highest."

This is a portion of a news release from the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP). If you would like a copy of the entire release please send your request to GISOC, P.O. Box 17432, Irvine, CA 92623-7432.



2006 MEETING CALENDAR

Parent Support Meetings– All meetings are from 7:00—8:30 PM.

*** Please RSVP to the parent host prior to the meeting**

March 14, 2006 Elizabeth Broderick's Home
17564 Santa Paula Circle, Fountain Valley
RSVP to Mary Ann at (714) 403-1814 or (714) 973-8417

May 9, 2006 Home of Chris and Nancy Eckert
26501 Valpariso, Mission Viejo
RSVP to (949) 768-1863

July 11, 2006 Home of Lisa and Krist Biakanja
20732 Alicante Lane, Huntington Beach
RSVP to (714) 960-9897

September 12, 2006 GISOC Office
2130 East 4th Street, Suite 125, Santa Ana
RSVP to Shari Morinishi at (714) 952-1466

Business Meetings– Business meetings are held at the home of Lisa Biakanja located at 20732 Alicante Lane in Huntington Beach. Meetings begin at 7:00 PM. If you would like to have an item added to the agenda, please contact Lisa at (714) 960-9897 or lbiakanja@yahoo.com.

April 11, 2006



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