



ANAK KO

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Backgrounder: ANAK KO charitable cause for children's memories

By Dr. Elaine Dispo-Rendón, ANAK KO chair

BROWNSVILLE, Texas: ANAK KO offers financial and emotional support to families who grieve the loss of children and/or pets. As a “grief relief” foundation, ANAK KO helps provide care packages, expenses for memorial markers and scholarships.

Filipino for “my child,” ANAK KO stands for Angel Nevaeh Always Kailanman Kisses Onward. Co-founders and chairs Dr. Elaine Dispo-Rendón and David Rendón named ANAK KO after their first unborn child then lost their oldest cat and second baby while establishing their nonprofit organization in 2020.

This is a way to “help families grieve and express themselves,” said ANAK KO vice chair Rendón, who is corporate executive chef at El Santuario Tacos and Cocktails and Flying Pig Grill and Cantina in Olmito.

Currently, ANAK KO seeks applications for its Marigold Scholarship, named for the floral symbol of Día de los Muertos, Spanish for “All Souls’ Day.” College students and high school upperclassmen with a 3.5 GPA qualify to apply by the June 30 deadline.

So far, ANAK KO has contributed toward memorial expenses since the coronavirus pandemic, thanks to patrons, including Arroyo Vista Family Medicine’s Dr. Samuel Landero, Brownsville Advanced Ob/Gyn’s Dr. Fernando Ramírez-Gómez and Boca Chica Animal Hospital’s Dr. Kindra Phillip-Gulley.

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ANAK KO's annual fundraising drives include Pregnancy and Infant Loss (PAIL) Remembrance Day 5K on Oct. 15 and EJ5K, which is named after ANAK KO president Bernadette Ania's son, Elijah James Humphrey.

Dispo-Rendón, ANAK KO chair and a college educator, wrote "Our Babies Have Halos and Wings: Grief Communication Guide to Healing for Bereaving Families" for grieving parents and others who want to help them mourn their losses. ANAK KO published this softcover, eBook and audio book, which is part of CARE packages with the acronym Community Advocates Render Empathy. The content includes self-help tips during bereavement of a beloved child or animal, journal space and stories of parents and their babies who they lost.

"Sharing your testimony is so powerful, opens doors for others," Ida Serna, ANAK KO chaplain, said about supporting parents who mourn.

Outliving a child can be devastating at any age, even if a baby was not born.

"A real child was involved," said ANAK KO treasurer Linda Johnson, "and several people out there internalize it."

With Mental Health Awareness Month in May, ANAK KO's book emphasizes the importance of self-care and includes resources where to seek professional help. Bereaved Parents Month in July, PAIL Awareness Month in October and other times of the year observe families and children's memories.

Ania pointed out how the foundation advocates for "those who need more counseling and to learn to take care of themselves."

Christine García, ANAK KO secretary, assured that families served by this foundation "are not alone, regardless of where you live, your status."

Her husband, José García, added the importance of ANAK KO making "people feel comfortable because some don't know how to bring it up."

To apply for ANAK KO's Marigold Scholarship, seek services, order the book or donate, please visit [AnakKo.org](http://AnakKo.org).

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### ANAK KO Info

ANAK KO is a nonprofit organization for bereaving families who have lost children and/or pets. Meaning “my child” in Filipino, ANAK KO stands for Angel Nevaeh Always Kailanman Kisses Onward. Established in Brownsville, Texas, in 2020, this “grief relief” foundation offers memorial markers assistance, Marigold Scholarships and CARE packages with the acronym Community Advocates Render Empathy. Co-founders Elaine and David Rendón named ANAK KO after their first unborn child then lost their oldest cat and second baby while starting ANAK KO. For more information about ANAK KO’s services and how to contribute, please visit <https://AnakKo.org> and follow handle @AnakKoOrg on online platforms: Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Pinterest, LinkedIn, PayPal and YouTube.

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