

# “Dwelling” vs. Remembering

by Cheryl Macomber

A few weeks ago, 15 months after the loss of our daughter, Madison Marie (Maddy), I was engaged in a casual conversation with a close family member regarding my children. When the topic went to Maddy, I immediately saw the walls go up and the tension rise. Although I was able to talk about Maddy through smiles of comfort, I was still asked, “I guess we all want to know why you are still dwelling on it?”

I admit I was taken back by this. I did not expect these words to come from the mouth of someone who has been a support to me through this horrific journey I was forced to take. The term “dwelling” has become a word of distaste to me.

I told this person, “I’m not dwelling, I’m remembering her.”

Maddy may not have lived outside of my womb, but I still have memories of her life. She was so full of life while in my womb – the constant acrobatics, the response to daddy’s morning belly tapping, the singing of her heartbeat in the exam room, the hiccupping. All these things bring me comfort to remember the life she had.

Like my three earthly angels, I want people to know Maddy, too. I may not have new stories to tell about

Maddy herself because her life was taken so suddenly at birth, but I’m always learning something new through this journey and experiencing comforting measures that help me through this path I must now walk. If and when I wish to share these experiences, it is not a moment of “dwelling” on the past. Instead, I’m remembering a beautiful little girl who soars above me and would have been 16 months old.

What’s the difference, some will ask. To dwell is to think about for a long time. To remember is to keep in your mind and never forget. Sure, I think about Maddy a lot, but

the term dwelling refers to a time when I will not think about her anymore. That time will never come. Therefore, I will always remember my sweet baby girl named Madison Marie, taken suddenly during labor due to a placenta abruption at 37 weeks gestation on March 4, 2004

I pray there will come a time when all of us can talk about our precious angels to someone and it would be understood that we are not crazy individuals. Just grieving mommies and daddies who love and miss their sweet child, and want others to know we remember them.

In loving memory of Maddy and all our angels.



  
**Heartfelts  
&  
Gratitude**

Thank you to Gary and Jenny McSpadden, Asena Nicolosi, and the entire conference 2005 committee members and presenters for their tireless efforts in making the event a tremendous success.

**Save the date:**

May 31-June 4, 2006

When a Child Dies:  
The Vow to Remember,  
The Call to Comfort.

The conference in 2006 will be held at the Radisson Ft. McDowell and Casino on the Yavapai Indian Reservation. Don't MISS this event.

It will change your life!

## A Tribute to You

by Krista McInerney ~ written July 9<sup>th</sup>, 2002

*In Loving Memory of  
Madison Elaine 03/13/02 ~ 03/15/02*

One year ago today was when we learned of you,  
How our lives would change, we were certain that we knew.

We planned, we learned, we anticipated too,  
We felt you move inside me as you quickly grew.

The day finally came and we were ready to go.  
On the way, we were nervous, but couldn't have known.

Then all the yelling began "Quick! We must get her!!"  
Your heart was dropping, as I heard you on the monitor.

Next thing I know, I'm waking and seeing your daddy,  
His tears streaming from the news of our lady Maddie.

An untimely goodbye was what we had in store,  
It was not meant to be and we could hold you no more.

Letting you go has been my most difficult task,  
The pain and emptiness will forever outlast.

The journey of life and any promise of tomorrow,  
I will live with this ache and carry this sorrow.

My thoughts of your absence are always so unnerving,  
Knowing that as parents, we are ever so deserving.

My world now is altered, never to feel the same,  
But know in my heart I will again call your name.

Wherever I go and what ever I may do,  
I will always live my life as a tribute to you.

Such lessons you have taught me of my hidden inner strength.  
I will always treasure each day of my life, whatever it's length.

When my turn here is over and near  
comes my end,  
I will be joyous knowing my living with  
you can begin.



*Miss Foundation's  
Sacred Hearts Logo Pendant*



A beautiful gift representing the eternal love between Mother and Child. This exclusive pendant is custom made of sterling silver and hangs on your choice of a 20" or 24" chain. Now available with our without a birthstone. Orders for the Sacred Hearts Pendant can be placed on-line in our store at [www.missfoundation.org](http://www.missfoundation.org). Be sure to indicate your options (*i.e. birthstone month, chain size*).

**Pricing: Pendant w/20" chain \$60**  
**Add birthstone add \$12**  
**With 24" chain add \$5**

U.S. SURGEON GENERAL RELEASES ADVISORY ON ALCOHOL USE IN PREGNANCY: URGES WOMEN WHO ARE PREGNANT OR WHO MAY BECOME PREGNANT TO ABSTAIN FROM ALCOHOL

U.S. Surgeon General Richard H. Carmona today warned pregnant women and women who may become pregnant to abstain from alcohol consumption in order to eliminate the chance of giving birth to a baby with any of the harmful effects of the Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). FASD is the full spectrum of birth defects caused by prenatal alcohol exposure.

The spectrum may include mild and subtle changes, such as a slight learning disability and/or physical abnormality, through full-blown Fetal Alcohol Syndrome, which can include severe learning disabilities, growth deficiencies, abnormal facial features, and central nervous system disorders. This updates a 1981 Surgeon General's Advisory that suggested that pregnant women limit the amount of alcohol they drink.

"We must prevent all injury and illness that is preventable in society, and alcohol-related birth defects are completely preventable," Dr. Carmona said. "We do not know what, if any, amount of alcohol is safe. But we do know that the risk of a baby being born with any of the fetal alcohol spectrum disorders increases with the amount of alcohol a pregnant woman drinks, as does the likely severity of the condition. And when a pregnant woman drinks alcohol, so does her baby. Therefore, it's in the child's best interest for a pregnant woman to simply not drink alcohol."

In addition, studies indicate that a baby could be affected by alcohol consumption within the earliest weeks after conception, even before a woman knows that she is pregnant. For that reason, the Surgeon General is recommending that women who may become pregnant also abstain from alcohol.

"Thanks to our ever-increasing body of scientific knowledge we are now able to identify more and more causes of premature births and birth defects," Dr. Carmona said. "And we must use this knowledge, not for knowledge's sake, but for the sake of the health of children everywhere."

*Surgeon General's Advisory on Alcohol Use in Pregnancy:*

Thirty-two years ago, United States researchers first recognized fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS). FAS is characterized by growth deficiencies (or decreased growth), abnormal facial features (specific facial features), and

central nervous system (or brain) abnormalities. FAS falls under the spectrum of adverse outcomes caused by prenatal alcohol exposure called Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD). The discovery of FAS led to considerable public education and awareness initiatives informing women to limit the amount of alcohol they consume while pregnant. But since that time, more has been learned about the effects of alcohol on a fetus. It is now clear that no amount of alcohol can be considered safe.

I now wish to emphasize to prospective parents, healthcare practitioners, and all childbearing-aged women, especially those who are pregnant, the importance of not drinking alcohol if a woman is pregnant or considering becoming pregnant.

*Based on the current, best science available we now know the following:*

- \* Alcohol consumed during pregnancy increases the risk of alcohol related birth defects, including growth deficiencies, facial abnormalities, central nervous system impairment, behavioral disorders, and intellectual development.
- \* No amount of alcohol consumption can be considered safe during pregnancy.
- \* Alcohol can cause damage at any stage of pregnancy. Damage can occur in the earliest weeks of pregnancy, even before a woman knows that she is pregnant.
- \* The cognitive deficits and behavioral problems resulting from prenatal alcohol exposure are lifelong.
- \* Alcohol-related birth defects are completely preventable.

*For these reasons:*

1. A pregnant woman should not drink alcohol during pregnancy.
2. A pregnant woman who has already consumed alcohol during her pregnancy should stop in order to minimize further risk.
3. A woman who is considering becoming pregnant should abstain from alcohol.
4. Recognizing that nearly half of all births in the United States are unplanned, women of child-bearing age should consult their physician and take steps to reduce the possibility of prenatal alcohol exposure.
5. Health professionals should inquire routinely about alcohol consumption by women of childbearing age, inform them of the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, and advise them not to drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy.

**Background**

In the United States, FAS is the leading preventable birth defect with associated mental and behavioral impairment. There are many individuals exposed to prenatal alcohol who, while not exhibiting all of the characteristic features of FAS, do manifest lifelong neurocognitive and behavioral problems arising from this early alcohol exposure. In the United States,

*continued on page 21*



# Remembering our July & August Birthdays...

## July

Abbygale Mary Miller  
 Abrianna Patrice Lomis-Stephan  
 Alexis Romero  
 Alexis-Lucille Fancy  
 Cooper-De La Cerda  
 Amanda Karen Manero  
 Amber Cheyenne Murphy  
 Andrew George Bao Huy  
 Zuong  
 Angel Elizabeth Wood  
 Angelina Munoz  
 Anouk Jaquier  
 Anthony Froilan Albazon  
 Anthony Griego  
 Ben James Allman  
 Benjamin Wood  
 Brian Kai Hansberry  
 Bridgette Desire'-Victoria Scherr  
 Brock Patrick Bell  
 Caleb Joseph Elizondo  
 Carys Anne Kadell  
 Cassandra Nicole Choquette  
 Cheyenne Bakken  
 Cheyenne Cacciatore  
 Christen Bryce  
 Christiana L. Kurtz  
 Christopher Redmond  
 Cienna Rae Valenzuela  
 Conrad Allen Clevenger  
 Crystal Sheyenne  
 Valentine-Gripp  
 Dakotah Rayne Dougherty  
 Darryl Fluker, Jr.  
 Denzell Virgil Harris  
 Devin Jennings  
 Devon Cornell-Drury  
 Devonnte Makail Johnson  
 Edward Lugo  
 Elajha Moreno  
 Elijah Chase  
 Elijah David Lamore  
 Elijah Ortega  
 Elyse Audine Donovan  
 Emily Elizabeth Morreale  
 Erika Jensen  
 Ethan Lee Trujillo  
 Gregory Clark Charlton  
 Hallee Paige Johnson  
 Hayley Caitlin Mills

Jack Tudor  
 Jacob T Deming  
 Jade Leilani Rickman  
 Jade Suzanne Cloud  
 Ocevedo  
 James Anthony Weiss  
 James Carter  
 James Richard Jenkins  
 Jeffery Von Hayes  
 Jennifer Lynda Perez  
 Jonathan Jay Shuy  
 Jonathan Navrat  
 Jordan Ashley Heffley  
 Jordan Rebecca Salting  
 Joshua T. Burke  
 Justin Mark Madison  
 Justin Paul Saurey  
 Kaela Summer  
 Karina Cruz-Robles  
 Kaylyn Rae Owen  
 Kelly Lynn Wallisa  
 Kenneth James Butts  
 Kevin Lamar Jones  
 Leeanna Lomeli  
 Loren Cordes  
 Loren Keil  
 Mackenzie Fitchett  
 MacKenzie Jean Simmons  
 Maclaine Elise Loomis  
 Maddie Annabelle Ayers  
 Madison Adair Heaverin  
 Mahkenzie Louise Booker  
 Makayla Mae Hensley  
 Matthew Spencer Peden  
 Russell  
 MIRACLE  
 Molly Lynn O'Malley  
 Noah David Riley  
 Noah Zachary Barrett  
 Olivia Lynn Lomis-Stephan  
 Ricky England  
 Ryleigh Denna Green  
 Sadie Diane Brashears  
 Samantha Ann Lopes  
 Samantha Paige Hullings  
 Samuel Allen Kerner  
 Santino Stento  
 Savannah Raye Godbey  
 Sharon Souza-Dotson  
 Sharon Christopher  
 Shawn Christopher  
 Mensing, Jr.  
 Skylar Marie DeLucia  
 Sophie Marie Sheard  
 Soren Dennehy Meagher  
 Ta-Neya Butler  
 Tea Elyse Cepeda

Thomas Mark Pitts  
 Tori Elizabeth Kuhn  
 Travis Taron Peters  
 Trevon Young  
 Tyler Joseph Bailey  
 Walker Scott  
 William Francis Holmes  
 William Fredrick Vann  
 Xavier Betancourt Salazar  
 Zachary Isaac Gatewood

## August

Adam Riley  
 Alejandra Tellez  
 Alejandro Angel  
 Alexa Perrone  
 Alexandra Leilani  
 Alexis Kay Kinsman  
 Alexis Victoria Rawley  
 Alyssa Jean Jackson  
 Anna Elizabeth Lwowski  
 Ashleigh Rose Thomas  
 Autumn Sarah Carmack  
 Avery Nichole DuBois  
 Baily Rey Murry  
 Bradley Farrell  
 Braeden Alexander  
 Krossschell  
 Braeden Joseph Chamblee  
 Bump Nevels  
 Camille Rayana Olsen  
 Cassie Ann Hubbard  
 Charlotte Raylene Stadler  
 Chelsea Renai Johnson  
 Corbin Elyott Ackley  
 Daisy Alexis Reyes  
 Devyn Michael Van Houten  
 Dimitri Kekoa Page  
 Dominick Chase Smith-Vega  
 Elizabeth Ann Byrd  
 Ella Rose Shelmire  
 Emily Kathryn Nell  
 Ethan Nicholas Barbisan  
 Finnley Sage Butler  
 Francis Bernard Baldoz  
 Francis Jason Miele  
 Gabriel Anthony Lay  
 Gabriella Suzanne Alvarez  
 Rooney  
 Gabriella Watkins  
 Gabrielle Kay Buycks  
 Grace Lynn Janssen  
 Hunter Michael Grobeck-Simmons  
 Ian Martin Paul Sadler  
 Ivan Miles Brooks

Iyanna Crainey  
 James "Jimmy" Carr  
 Jamond Thompson  
 Jared Michael Kennedy  
 Jesse James Davis  
 Joel Albert Grayson  
 John Devereaux  
 Joshua G. Roberts  
 Joshua Sullivan  
 Julian Andres Olvera  
 Kathleen Joy Brokaw  
 Kayla Marie Williams  
 Kayla Rose Battle  
 Kaylin Christiana Oglesby  
 Kenna Leigh Coles  
 Kyle Patrick Roger Flynn  
 Kylee Nicole Berg  
 Kylie Noelle Southworth  
 Luke Daniel Bauman  
 MacKenzie Grace Petroff  
 Mariana Joy-Frances  
 Antone  
 Marisa Reyanna Botello  
 Marissa Lorraine Valencia  
 Mark Scott Vila  
 Martin Garvan Gomez  
 Matthew Noyd  
 Matthew Sinclair Standish  
 Michelle Leigh Cospers  
 Miguel Gracia Aguilar  
 Nadir Nathaniel Shah  
 Natalie Rose Baker  
 Nathan Gibson  
 Nerina Perez Stevens  
 Nicholas Ervin  
 Nicolas Gutierrez-Cantin  
 Noah Jaden Smith  
 Noah Mesa  
 Owen Paul Larsen  
 Peyton Daniel Siler  
 Raeanne Ethelyn  
 Reid William Drozd  
 Ryan Thomas Gallagher  
 Samantha Jane Taylor  
 Starlet Jade Steele  
 Stephanie Maichel  
 Sydney Ella Wilson  
 Thomas Charles Allen  
 Toni Marie Velez  
 Tyler John Brunskill  
 Tyler S. Fields  
 Zachary Cole Howell  
 Zachary Noyd  
 Zaria Marie Gibson

# In Memoriam...

## July

Abrianna Patrice Lomis-Stephan  
 Alesia Dawn Carder  
 Alexandria Vargas  
 Allyson Sabrina Karpus  
 Amanda Karen Manero  
 Andrew George Bao Huy  
 Zuong  
 Angel Elizabeth Wood  
 Anouk Jaquier  
 Anthony Froilan Albazon  
 Ben James Allman  
 Benjamin Wood  
 Bernice Celis  
 Blake Michael Tompkins  
 Brian Kai Hansberry  
 Briana Danielle Nunez  
 Brock Patrick Bell  
 Caleb Joseph Elizondo  
 Carys Anne Kadell  
 Catherina Laughing  
 Cheyenne Cacciatore  
 Christen Bryce  
 Christiana L. Kurtz  
 Christopher Allen Schnyder  
 Christopher Angel Pena  
 Christopher Michael  
 Masterson  
 Christopher Redmond  
 Collin James Watson  
 Colter Hatch  
 Conrad Allen Clevenger  
 Dana Jane Franklin  
 Darryl Fluker, Jr.  
 Devon Cornell-Drury  
 Devonnte Makail Johnson  
 Dylan Margus Harris  
 Eian James Albin  
 Elijah Chase  
 Elijah David Lamore  
 Erica Cohen  
 Ethan Alec Shirley-Williams  
 Ethan Lee Trujillo  
 Ethan Nicholas Barbisan  
 Gareth Phillip Udall  
 Grayce Marie Sanchez  
 Gregory Richard Joseph  
 Hallee Paige Johnson  
 Hillary Newton  
 Ian Lee Lewis  
 Isiah Daniel Young  
 Jack Tudor  
 Jacob Alan Boatwright  
 Jade Leilani Rickman

Jade Suzanne Cloud  
 Ocevedo  
 James Anthony Weiss  
 Jennifer Marie Gonzalez  
 Jesse Quinonez-Perez  
 Jonathan Jay Shuy  
 Jordan Ashley Heffley  
 Joseph Delgado  
 Joshua G. Roberts  
 Joshua T. Burke  
 Justin Paul Saurey  
 Kaela Summer  
 Kaylee Honey Dry  
 Kevin Austin Staggs  
 MacKenzie Jean Simmons  
 Maclaine Elise Loomis  
 Maddie Annabelle Ayers  
 Madison Adair Heaverin  
 Makayla Mae Hensley  
 Matthew Spencer Peden Russell  
 Melissa Godoy  
 Michael B. Kurtz  
 Miguel Gracia Aguilar  
 MIRACLE  
 Molly Lynn O'Malley  
 Nathan Gibson  
 Nicholas Aaron Mattingly  
 Noah David Riley  
 Noah Zachary Barrett  
 Olivia Lynn Lomis-Stephan  
 Oralee Tucker  
 Quintin Octavien Sly  
 Riley Ann Lanza  
 Ross Martin Droge  
 Ryleigh Denna Green  
 Sadie Diane Brashears  
 Samantha Ann Lopes  
 Samantha Paige Hullings  
 Samuel Allen Kerner  
 Santino Stento  
 Sara Victoria Koski  
 Serena Duncan  
 Shawn Christopher  
 Mensing, Jr.  
 Simon de Miguel  
 Skylar Marie DeLucia  
 Sophie Marie Sheard  
 Soren Dennehy Meagher  
 Stephanie Rangel  
 Tara Janean Smith  
 Thomas Mark Pitts  
 Timothy David (T.J.) Hulme  
 Tori Elizabeth Kuhn  
 Tristan Collins

Tyler Joseph Bailey  
 Walker Scott  
 William Francis Holmes  
 William Fredrick Vann

## August

Abbygale Mary Miller  
 Adam Paul Entz  
 Alejandro Angel  
 Alexa Perrone  
 Alexandra Leilani  
 Alexis Kay Kinsman  
 Alexis Romero  
 Alexis Victoria Rawley  
 Allison Rose Kuczumarski  
 Anna Elizabeth Lwowski  
 Anthony Griego  
 Aydon Jerzy Yancey  
 Baily Rey Murry  
 Braeden Joseph Chamblee  
 Bryce Stiehl Ferrin  
 Bump Nevels  
 Cade VanBronckhorst  
 Camille Rayana Olsen  
 Chad Douglas Aitken  
 Charlotte Raylene Stadler  
 Clayton Alex Haynes  
 Daisy Alexis Reyes  
 David Allen Bloomquist  
 Devyn Michael Van Houten  
 Dimitri Kekoa Page  
 Dominick Chase Smith-Vega  
 Ella Rose Shelmire  
 Emily Kathryn Nell  
 Erik Rocha, Jr.  
 Finnley Sage Butler  
 Fiona Elizabeth Skinner  
 Francis Jason Miele  
 Gabriella Suzanne Alvarez Rooney  
 Gabriella Watkins  
 Gabrielle Kay Buycks  
 Grace Lynn Janssen  
 Hannah Housden  
 Hayley Caitlin Mills  
 Hunter Michael Grobeck-  
 Simmons  
 Ivan Miles Brooks  
 Jacob Kisto  
 Jason E. Wynn, Jr.  
 Jesse James Davis  
 Jessica Andrews  
 Justin Cox  
 Karina Cruz-Robles  
 Kathleen Joy Brokaw  
 Kayla Marie Williams

Kelly Lynn Wallisa  
 Kenna Leigh Coles  
 Kenneth James Butts  
 Kevin Lamar Jones  
 Kimberley Gratke  
 Kyle Patrick Roger Flynn  
 Kylee Nicole Berg  
 Laura Yudir Fuentes  
 Lincoln "Noah" Jeremiah Auau  
 Lydell Epps, Jr.  
 Mackenzie Fitchett  
 Malcolm Sharratt  
 Mark Scott Vila  
 Mary Elizabeth Rowland  
 Matthew Gallardo  
 Matthew Noyd  
 Matthew Sinclair Standish  
 Michelle Leigh Cospier  
 Mikey Warschauer  
 Monica Ann Hudsen  
 Natalie Rose Baker  
 Nerina Perez Stevens  
 Nicholas William Lopez  
 Noah Jaden Smith  
 Noah Mesa  
 Owen Paul Larsen  
 Peyton Daniel Siler  
 Quinton Joseph Conner  
 Alexander Lee Raban  
 Raeanne Ethelyn  
 Ricky England  
 Ross Ethan Andrew  
 Killinger  
 Samuel Mendoza  
 Scottie Michael Mullenix  
 Serena Carlson  
 Tiffany Joan Peterson/Cohen  
 Tommy Christopher Stewart  
 Trevon Young  
 Zachary Noyd  
 Zachary Thomas Schwabe



Perspective  
 Compassion  
 Love  
 HOPE  
 Wisdom  
 Friendship  
 Faith  
 Awakening  
 Strength  
 Inspiration  
 Peace

# Memorial Donations

# In Loving Memory of...

## **Jared Michael Kennedy**

A tithe from Anna Kennedy, his loving mom

## **Cheyenne Cacciatore**

By her mom, Joanne

## **Carter Devon Richardson**

by Devon and Brandy, his parents  
In memory of our handsome little angel

## **Taylor Louise St Laurent**

by Rick and Kim

## **Gurraj Tuffan Singh Takhar**

by Dana Southworth,  
Robin Kennedy  
& anonymous donor

## **Luke Brian Planert**

Loving you and missing you,  
Luke on your golden birthday.  
I bet heaven is beautiful.  
Love forever, Mommy, Daddy, Sam,  
Melanie, Elijah and Joey

## **Madeline and Madison Wetterhan**

In loving memory of our Angels,  
Love Grandma, Poppy,  
and Auntie Mair

## **Patrick Lanham**

by his loving parents, Sean and  
Carol Cirulli Lanham

## **Blake "Peanut" Cash**

by Dancing Peanut Productions  
and Katie Hodge Dean

## **Baby Naylor-Wangel**

by Mary A. Naylor  
and Marc Wangel

## **Taylor Louise St Laurent**

by Michele and Kevin Coleman

## **Nicolas Gutierrez-Cantin**

by Guillermo Gutierrez

## **Liam Cass**

by Lois Hartwig

## **Camille Rayana Olsen**

by Allegiance Homes, LLC  
Richard K. Olsen, manager

## **Kyle Patrick Roger Flynn**

by Kevin P. Flynn & Jennifer F.  
Roger-Flynn

## **Zachary Isaac Gatewood**

by Kelli and Nathan Gatewood

## **Cody William Charles**

by Trina Charles

## **Taylor Louise St Laurent**

by Rick and Kim, her loving parents

## **Dillon Michael Mondino**

by Carl and Hannah Hunn

## **Cassidy Power Bass**

by her loving grandparents, Kip and  
Tusi Power

## **Jared Michael Kennedy**

By Anna Kennedy, his devoted mom

## **Kylie Noelle Southworth**

by her mother, Dana Southworth  
In remembrance of the day you were  
born, five years ago. Loving you gives  
meaning to my life.

## **Sydney Ella Wilson**

by Aunt Andra & Uncle  
Roberto Sanchez  
Happy 5th birthday, we miss you!

## **General Donations:**

Lisa Hoover

Sun and Moon Inspirations

Susanne Weltz

Michael and Patricia Whitlock

Natalie Little, RN

Kalliopeia Foundation

Patricia Ahlman

## **Reminder!**

Your tax-deductible  
donations can be sent to:

MISS Foundation

P.O. Box 5333

Peoria, AZ 85385

You can also make your donation on-  
line by visiting

[www.missfoundation.org](http://www.missfoundation.org)

**In honor of my son, Aaron,  
who was due August 5th**

**Two people**

**Two hearts**

**One future**

**Two hopes**

**Two dreams**

**One family**

**One baby**

**Two breaths**

**Only two breaths.....**

**Two sad people**

**Two sad hearts**

**One changed future**

**Two broken hopes**

**Two broken dreams**

**One altered family**

**One baby**

**Two worlds**

**Heaven, and Earth**

by Patti Ahlman

July 21, 2005

# My thoughts about “Why”

by  
Heidi Ciepielinski  
MN MISS Facilitator

Our only daughter, Natalie, died on her 6<sup>th</sup> day of life, just over 5 years ago. She was born with a severe congenital heart defect and couldn't recover following her open heart surgery. Her diagnosis came suddenly on her 18<sup>th</sup> hour of life, after a healthy and wonderful pregnancy, labor, and delivery. Until that time, her story had been what dreams are made of, life was at it's absolute best. Her diagnosis was a shock, but her death was even more unexpected. No one had prepared us for the possibility that she might not survive.

It's been 5 years, and I still struggle, at times, with the reality of her existence. I still ask the questions, “was she really here?” and “did it all really happen?” Even though I know in an instant by the ache in my heart, that it is true, I need to get out her things and bring her back into my reality again. I smell the baby lotion, I rub the soft yarn of her booties. I still watch the 7 minutes of video in amazement of her movement and noises, clear proof that she existed. And I look at the photos of us together, and I pay attention. The stuffed animals that were right there, next to her, and are now right next to me. I still need those reminders that she was here, and she was real. She was not something I dreamt about or a figment of my imagination.



But I only occasionally think about the question “why.” I know it sounds crazy, but I really haven't been as plagued with that question. I read something from another bereaved mother, about 10 weeks after Natalie's death, that made sense to me. It gave me a bit of relief about what had happened to Natalie and to

our family. It allowed me to see myself as less of a victim. It brought, and continues to bring, a small sense of acceptance. Not an acceptance of being without my child, but of the way Natalie was, of the way her life unfolded. An acceptance of Natalie's.

I truly believe God didn't take her from me. It was simply her time to go, it was her destiny. Yes, our time was far too short together, but I believe it was the only way it could be, there was no other option for her, or for us.

My thoughts about “why” may not work for every situation, they may even seem ‘crazy’ to you, but they work for me. They ease my soul and the torment it has endured. I needed some way to make sense of such a senseless situation, and this is it. These words brought me comfort 5 years ago, and continue to bring me comfort yet today.

I hope in sharing these words, they may make sense to some of you and perhaps even soothe another's aching heart, just as they have mine.

Lord knows, I don't have all the answers, none of us do. But I read a wonderful description of another

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# Remembering...



Adam John Riley



Autumn Sarah Carmack



Cassandra N. Choquette



Cheyenne Cacciatore



Alexis Faith Romero



Christian Samuel Pitts



Christopher M. Masterson



Cody Alan Oldham



Alesia Dawn Carder



Charlotte Raylene Stadtler



Francis Baldoz



Jared Kennedy



Justin A. Castro



Brandon Boettcher



Camille Rayana Olsen



Ivan Miles Brooks



Duncan Joseph Grant



Noah Jaden Smith



Dakotah Dougherty



Emily Kathryn Nell



Helen Sayako Kaneshiro



Kyle Everett Davis



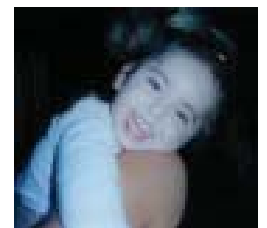
Hallee Johnson



Joel Albert Grayson



Kaylyn Rae Owen



Kylie Noelle Southworth