

Starting our “New Normal”

By Rob Anderson
TCF - Sugar Grove, IL

How do we get back on our knees and learn to crawl again after having been crushed by the terror of our child’s death? What can we do to learn how to live again, which is exactly what we try to do? We’ve begun a new life, a new normal, where we look different, we act different, and we communicate differently than we did in our past life. Most bereaved parents will tell you we now live in terms of before and after our child died. All events are measured in terms of the instant they passed away. When a neighbor tells us they went on vacation last year, we think, My child would still have been alive for another six months. Or, we figure exactly how many days, weeks, months, or years they would have already been gone. It’s an automatic calculation.

My first baby step to my new normal came with the acknowledgment of our son Brendon’s death. March 16, 1998, at 4:15 p.m. through a phone call from my wife, Kathy, was how I first learned that Bren had been murdered. Nine months later, sitting at my desk at our photo studio, the realization that Bren’s physical body was never coming back washed over me. It was still a while before that acknowledgment completely lived in me, but it was a small first step to my new normal. When I was able to say, and believe, that Bren’s body was never coming back, I began to heal ever so slightly. Leaning on those who are willing to support our lifelong

journey can help build our new normal. For me, that person has been my sister Marcia. Her unconditional love in the face of my anger, confusion, and irrational behavior has kept me from falling. She could not understand my pain over the murder of her nephew, and never professed to, but she has understood and accepted an emotional turmoil in me that she can relate to. She was grieving her loss, too, but still has reached out to me on many, many levels.

The single most powerful factor in starting my new normal has been the realization that death did not take all of my child. Brendon’s death did not take all of his life. His spirit and life live on through my memories. Everything I had with Bren when he was alive still lives in me. Every hug, every kiss, every laugh, and every tear will always be a part of my life. I certainly wish there had been many more memories to be made, but that decision was not mine to make. In the beginning, the memories I had were mostly about what I lost. I thought Bren was gone forever and I would experience his life again only when I died and we were reunited. Now, most of my memories are more about what I had, and still have, with him. The good times, the bad times – all the times are special and treasured moments that I hold closely and am very grateful for. It’s very painful to have lost our son, but we have not lost all of him. His life force and

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In memory of
Robert Matthew Sanders

Born: June 6, 2007; Angel Day: September 10, 2007

"Hey Little Buddy"

Hey little buddy, it's been a long while,
Since I last heard that sweet voice and gazed upon your
bright smile

I miss you boy...Oh where did you go?
The days you've been gone seem to go by forever, so slow

Why wasn't it me that God had to call?
You hadn't yet lived; you were so new and so small.
It doesn't seem fair; no it's not fair at all!

I remember the times when at night you would cry,
A hungry belly, a dirty diaper perhaps...and though tired
I'd get up and sigh.

You'd look up at me with those great big blue eyes,
I'd pick you up and hold you up high.
You'd smile so big and then you would wiggle,
I'd smile back and you'd always giggle.

I miss those days when you were here by my side.
Everyday now I think of you, my eyes water up and cry
tears I can't hide

Hey little buddy, I wonder what you're doing now
in Heaven with the Lord up above?

I bet that you're playing with angels and getting
loads and loads of Love.

I want to hug and kiss you...boy I miss you so much.
When I sleep I swear I can still feel you
and your warm gentle touch.

When I wake up from dreaming, sadly I realize you're not near,
But then I feel butterfly kisses on the lobes of my ear.

I shiver then smile because even though you're gone,
you are still with me

And I know little buddy that you're always right here!

I love you Always, Daddy
By Robert W. Sanders, September 8, 2010

Internet Group for SIDS families

If you want to connect with others who have experienced the sudden death of a baby, please join our Yahoo Group. This internet support group is open only to families involved with

SIDS Resources. No one else has access to this board. You may share something about your child, your experience, or ask questions.

Please e-mail Sara at stamburrino@sidsresources.org and request to participate on the Yahoo message board.

Monthly Infant Loss Group Meetings

Listed below are usual meeting times, but they are subject to change. Please call to confirm time and location. Family members and friends are encouraged to attend.

Eastern Region - St. Louis, MO

3rd Monday of the month at 7:00 p.m.
SIDS Resources' office:
1120 South 6th Street
St. Louis, MO 63104
Call Teresa at 314-822-2323 or
1-800-421-3511

Western Region - Kansas City, MO

4th Wednesdays of the month at 6:00 p.m.
St. Paul's Episcopal Church
40th and Main, KCMO
Call Kelly at 816-569-6956

South Central/Southwest Region - Springfield, MO

Call Sara at 573-364-5900

NEWS AROUND THE REGIONS

See MANY more photos of recent events on SIDS Resources' facebook page and the links listed below

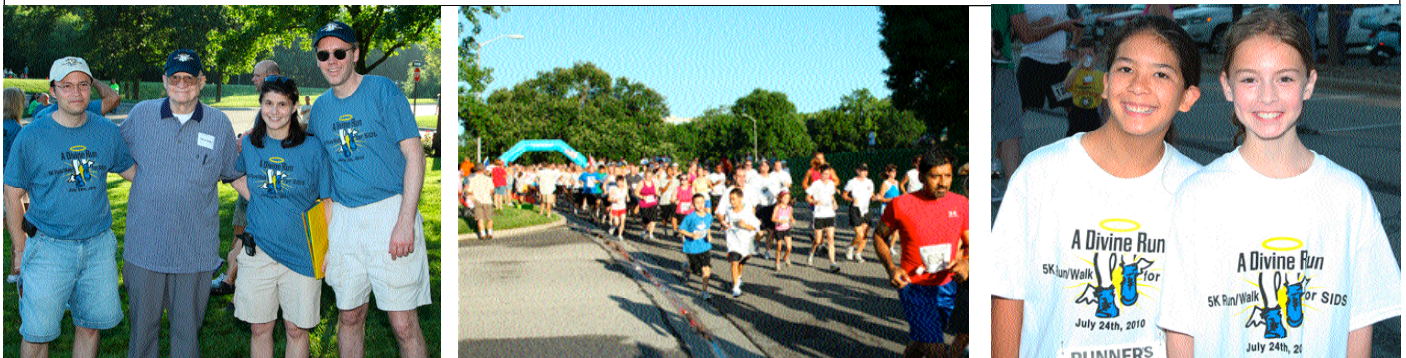
Eastern region - St. Louis area

- **Strides For SIDS** (shown below) - for more, visit www.stridesforsids.com
- **Summer Fun and Fashion Show** - visit SIDS Resources' album on www.facebook.com



Western Region - Kansas City area

- **A Divine Run** (shown below) - for more, visit www.divinerun.com
- **Tee it up for SIDS** - visit SIDS Resources' album on www.facebook.com



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NEWS AROUND THE REGIONS

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South Central/Southwest Region - Springfield area

Contact Sara Tamburrino if you are interested in attending a support group in the Springfield, Branson, or Joplin areas. Sara also organizes a **telephone support group**. Please contact her if you are interested. Call 1-800-421-3511 or email: stamburrino@sidsresources.org

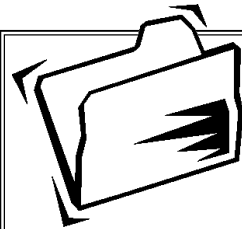
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wonderful spirit shines in our lives. My realization about Bren's life was not something I consciously decided to feel. I didn't go to the healing store and buy it off the shelf. Through my grief work, and leaving myself open to all possibilities of healing, I was able to bring Bren's life back into mine.

Frankly, I don't think we have all that much control over our grief. It just kind of drags us along. What we can control is how we do our grief work and our attitude toward our healing.

I believe the terms "grieving" and "healing" are synonymous. As we grieve, we heal. We must never stop fighting for our children. Their lives are out there waiting for us to bring them back into ours. This is a rough, rough journey, but if we travel it side by side, hand in hand with our kids' lives, it can make our path a bit easier.

Reprinted from Bereaved Parents USA newsletter, March-April 2005



Anything you'd like to share?

Send us your personal story and we will include it in a future update. Remember to include your name, your baby's name, birth date, angel date, and a photo if you'd like.

We would also like to hear about the "NEWS" in your lives. Please let us know how we can spread "your" word. Contact us at 1-800-421-3511 or email Lori at lbehrens@sidsresources.org

LET US KNOW...subsequent baby news, new job, a special event, anything you'd like to share.

This newsletter is made possible by a generous grant from the Employee Community Fund of Boeing St. Louis.

Call to action

Dress *Down* to fight SIDS!

Does your company have a "dress down for charity" program?

If so, SIDS Resources would love to be included on their list of recipients. We will be happy to supply informational material to all who participate.

Please contact Lori at 800-421-3511 for more information. *It will be helpful if you provide a contact name at your company so we can follow-up and initiate the process.*
Thank you for your support!

Workplace giving benefits SIDS Resources

Kansas City area -

SIDS Resources' receives donations through United Way and Community Health Charities. Other counties in Missouri are also a part of Community Health Charities. Call the St. Louis office for more information about workplace giving in your area.

St. Louis area -

SIDS Resources is a proud member of the Greater St. Louis United Way; please support your workplace campaign. If your workplace does not have a campaign, call the St. Louis office to find out how to begin one.

Combined Federal Campaign -

If you work for the federal government, you may designate SIDS Resources as your workplace giving charity.

If you want to help:

- **Donate items or services**
- **Volunteer (events, office)**
- **Financial Contributions**

**Please call
1-800-421-3511**



SIDS Resources, Inc.
 1120 South 6th Street, Suite 100
 St. Louis, Mo. 63104
 Phone: 1-800-421-3511
 Fax: 314-588-0850
 www.sidsresources.org

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 United Way of greater St. Louis



To access support services for bereaved families, or to schedule a SIDS training for professional and community groups, please call 1-800-421-3511 or your regional SIDS Resources office:

SIDS Resources Program Staff:

Eastern Region - St. Louis area

314-822-2323

Lori Behrens, LCSW, *Executive Director*
 lbehrens@sidsresources.org

Teresa Buehler, MSW, LCSW, *Program Coordinator*
 tbuehler@sidsresources.org

Western Region - Kansas City area

816-569-6956

Kelly Demo, M.Div., *Program Coordinator*
 kdemo@sidsresources.org

Cheryl Herzog-Arneill, MSW, *Community Educator*
 carneill@sidsresources.org

Melissa Merriam, *Development Coordinator*
 mmerriam@sidsresources.org

South Central/Southwest Region - Springfield

573-364-5900

Sara Tamburrino, *Program Coordinator*
 stamburrino@sidsresources.org

{ Sept./Oct. 2010 }
{ Bi-Monthly update }

We hope that you benefit from receiving this update...

Please let us know your suggestions and ways we can continue to improve our services.

If you would like to add a family member or friend to this mailing, please contact us.

If for any reason you would like to be removed from this mailing, please contact us at 1-800-421-3511 or email lbehrens@sidsresources.org