



***Michael & Krista***

I will never forget the day I found out I was expecting twins. It was the most exciting day of my life! So many thoughts tumbled through my mind as I laughed and cried and trembled at the news...

I knew that something was wrong as soon as I walked into that room...

Even though our lives have gone on, we continue to grieve the loss of our daughter and sister and the loss of our twins...She will always be a part of our family...

*Linda Z., Michigan*

***Abbie & Sadie***

There are so many stresses: how to grieve when meeting the demands of a little baby, the loss of so much attention, the constant worry for the surviving twin, and the continuing pain, life long, of seeing half of what was once a whole.

*Darlene H., Ohio*

***Brittany, Ryan & Amanda***

I was sure my car knew the way to the University Hospital. The thousands of trips I'd taken to see my infertility doctor...My husband and I spent 6 years traveling there.

A new possibility, a surgical procedure called GIFT... Emotions were confusing—extreme joy with fear as well. The staff was hoping it was only triplets...

I picked her up and she was limp...I screamed...This couldn't happen to me, to us, to our baby...why?

People often said, "It will be easier now..." How can grieving the death of your baby and being a new parent of her two newborn siblings possibly be easier?!?

*Ann S., Oregon*

***Natasha & Vanessa***

After our miscarriage, I was so cautious with the twins—and elated at the birth of two big, healthy babies. All my efforts and care had paid off. One short month later, Natasha died while in her father's arms. I've lost my whole sense of security...

*Sophie A., N.B. (Canada)*

### *Jarad & Joshua*

They say heaven is so peaceful and beautiful, but I just can't help thinking his place was here with his family. His life had just begun and now it's already ended. Tears come to my eyes when I think of my babies not growing up together...

What really hurt was the silence after his death. It was just as if he never existed. Well, he did exist, and I need to talk about him. I don't want him to be forgotten...

*Kathy L., Wisconsin*

### *Brett & Christopher*

I turn to look at Chris, my surviving twin, and think that two years ago today I had everything to look forward to: days full of new things, experiences with the twins. I knew my hands would be full and I loved it... As I sit here and reminisce, I think about Brett being the first one to coo, the first one to smile, and lastly, the first to die...

*Shelley B., BC (Canada)*

### *Tiffany & Nicole*

Taken from the first birthday invitation:

*I wish my sister could also be here  
But in each of our hearts she'll still be near.  
So won't you come celebrate with us?  
I'm sure Mom and Dad will make a big fuss.*

Someone gave a "Tiffany" rose bush with a note saying, "She was just a little bud who never had the chance to bloom".

*Laurie H., California*

### *Praise, Charity, Joy & Crystal*

One had a mild breathing problem, but otherwise all four babies were incredibly healthy... After Praise died, we sought guidance in coping with so many major changes in our lives in such a short period. The major advice we received was to make sure we grew together through these events rather than drifting apart.

*Becky L., Michigan*

### *For Candice & Patrick*

My brother close by, and I, from the start,  
Feel warm and protected, near mother's heart  
I am the first one, he follows along,  
Our bond with each other, and mother, grows strong.

I dream of growing together, sharing childhood's delights,  
Of wonders discovered, stars dotting dark nights,  
Of learning, so proud on our first day of school,  
Of laughter, splashing through waves wild and cool.

Why is mother crying? I'm lost and alone,  
His cradle, now empty, so close to my own,

In grief's shadow, the joy of new life disappears,  
My sweet dreams dissolve in a puddle of tears,  
I see a void, dear brother, in each day to come,  
Though our bond has been severed, I must go on.

*Alice Check, Oregon*

### *Shawn & Evan*

It is heartbreaking for me to know that I cannot fix everything. I no longer believe that things happen for a reason. I can never understand why this has happened to our family, but our children get us up every day and we must go on to make the best lives for them. Shawn is a very smart and active little boy and many times we look at him and wonder what if...especially on the weekend when he asks to play with a friend. I think about Evan 24 hours a day and remember it like it was yesterday. He made a great impact on many lives in the nine months of his short life. The pain will never get easier and will not go away, we just learn to deal with it differently. On the outside we look like very strong people, but on the inside our hearts ache.

*Scott D., Florida*

### *Garrett & Gordon*

The longest ten minutes of my life were the last ten minutes of holding Garrett. In the days following Garrett's passing, we traveled back and forth through different parts of grieving. We thought we wouldn't be able to stop crying some days...One thing is for sure, with time and support the debilitating pain does subside. We have great memories of Garrett.

*Allison G., Georgia*

## **WHAT IS SIDS?**

Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) is the diagnosis given for the sudden death of an infant under one year of age that remains unexplained after a complete investigation which includes an autopsy, examination of the death scene (Center for Disease Control and Prevention guidelines), and review of the symptoms of illnesses the infant had prior to dying and any other pertinent medical or family history. Because most babies sleep in cribs, and therefore most cases of SIDS occur when a baby is in a crib sleeping, SIDS is sometimes called "crib death". Cribs do not cause SIDS...Although SIDS deaths in the United States and elsewhere have decreased substantially in recent years, SIDS remains the number one cause of death in this age group. (*First Candle/SIDS Alliance, www.sidsalliance.org*)

Sudden Unexplained Death in Childhood (SUDC) is the sudden and unexpected death of a child over the age of 12 months which remains unexplained after a thorough case evaluation is conducted. SUDC is a diagnosis of exclusion, given when all the known and possible causes of death have been ruled out. It is far less common than SIDS. Research to date has not been enough to establish specific risk factors or possible preventions. (*SUDC Program, www.sudc.org*) A number of families in CLIMB have lost a toddler-age twin or higher order multiple to SUDC.

## **SIDS and MULTIPLES**

While the cause of SIDS is not known, and it is not predictable or preventable at the present time, it is known that low birth weight and prematurity are risk factors. These are both common in infants born in multiple births. This may be why overall, a twin is about twice as likely to die from SIDS as a singleton

is overall, according to our review of the available studies. A large, term twin may also die of SIDS, with a risk probably similar to that of a term singleton baby. The death of both twins from SIDS seems to be extremely rare. The risks for fraternal and identical twins seem to be the same. There is as yet no data compiled on the risks and incidence for triplets and other higher order multiples.

A family with a set of multiples has a higher risk of experiencing a SIDS death for two reasons: each individual baby has a higher risk, and the risk for the family of being affected is multiplied times the number of babies. We think that in the United States since the early 1990's, the number of multiples born has increased (because of Assisted Reproductive Technology) as much as the incidence of SIDS has decreased in the same period of time, so that the actual number of families affected by the tragic loss of one of their multiples to SIDS has probably remained about the same.

#### **Our resources:**

- \* a quarterly newsletter by and for bereaved multiple birth parents, "Our Newsletter"
- \* a parent contact list with names of bereaved multiple birth parents in the U.S., Canada and elsewhere who would like to be in touch with others
- \* our website section "SIDS in Multiples" which includes personal stories and poems, articles on coping with the loss of a multiple to SIDS, and includes
- \* Alice Check's article "SIDS in Twins" (1991, 2003) which compares and analyzes the available medical and statistical information

#### **SIDS and SUDC Information and Support**

[www.sidsalliance.org](http://www.sidsalliance.org) First Candle/SIDS Alliance (or 1-800-221-SIDS)  
[www.sidscenter.org](http://www.sidscenter.org) National SIDS/Infant Death Resource Center  
[www.cjsids.com](http://www.cjsids.com) CJ Foundation for SIDS  
[www.sudc.org](http://www.sudc.org) SUDC Program  
[www.sidscanada.org](http://www.sidscanada.org) The Canadian Foundation for the Study of Infant Deaths

#### **Center for Loss In Multiple Birth (CLIMB), Inc. A Multiple Birth Loss Support Network**

**By and for parents who have experienced the death of one or more, both or all of their children  
during a twin or higher multiple pregnancy, at birth, in infancy, or in childhood**

**P.O. Box 91377, Anchorage AK 99509  
907-222-5321  
[climb@pobox.alaska.net](mailto:climb@pobox.alaska.net)  
[www.climb-support.org](http://www.climb-support.org)**

*This pamphlet is not intended as medical or psychological advice;  
please consult your caregiver about your individual situation.*

