



The Hygeia Newsletter

Issue No. 1, Spring 2010

Welcome to the first edition of The Hygeia Newsletter!

With this issue, we begin publication of a quarterly newsletter. Inside, you will find both information about Hygeia and, we hope, words of comfort.

We welcome feedback and comments about anything you read in our newsletter. Please don't hesitate to contact us with your thoughts.

Best regards,

Michael R. Berman, M.D.
Founder and President
Hygeia Foundation, Inc.

The mission of the Hygeia Foundation is to comfort those who grieve the loss of a pregnancy or newborn child. Hygeia provides programs to educate, counsel, and support families who have lost a pregnancy or newborn child, to advocate for the health care of women and children worldwide, and to promote humanism in the education of tomorrow's health care professionals.

A Brief History of the Hygeia Foundation's Peer-to-Peer Support Programs

by Rachel Steigleder

The Hygeia Foundation held its first local support group meeting in June of 2007. Since then, 51 families have attended our meetings. We started out with one site located in New Haven, Connecticut. To accommodate a growing group, we moved to a bigger office in Woodbridge, CT. We currently hold meetings in three cities: Woodbridge, Guilford and Westport. Starting with only a generic loss group, we have expanded to a Loss group, a Subsequent Pregnancy group, a Parenting after a Loss group and a Grandparent Peer-to-Peer Support group. With the help of volunteers, it is incredible what we have been able to do.

Our meetings are facilitated by women who have suffered a loss. They have been trained to facilitate a support meeting. Were it not for these volunteers,

continued on page 2

A Brief History *continued from page 1*

our meetings would not be possible. Each month they take time away from their busy lives to help others.

For some families who come to Hygeia, the support group setting may not be the most comfortable. For them, we offer peer-to-peer (one-on-one) support.

We are there for our families every step of the way: as they learn they are not alone in their grief, as they work towards a new normal, and as they begin to put hope back into their lives. With our Subsequent Pregnancy meetings, we support them if and when they want to try to get pregnant again. Because one still grieves even after the arrival of a new child, we offer our Parenting After a Loss group. Parents can bring in their babies and talk to other parents about keeping the balance between grieving and parenting. This has been a huge success.

We believe that group support is not for everyone. We are not offended when a family does not return. We stay in touch to offer what support we can. We have our website where anyone can post and talk to other families worldwide about their loss.

It is a club no one of us thought he or she would ever join...but it is a club we are proud to be a part of.

To the Child in My Heart

Author unknown

O precious, tiny, sweet little one
You will always be to me
So perfect, pure, and innocent
Just as you were meant to be.
We dreamed of you and of your life
And all that it would be
We waited and longed for you to come
And join our family.

We never had the chance to play,
To laugh, to rock, to wiggle.
We long to hold you, touch you now
And listen to you giggle.
I'll always be your mother.
He'll always be your dad.
You will always be our child,
The child that we had.

But now you're gone...but yet you're here.
We'll sense you everywhere.
You are our sorrow and our joy
There's love in every tear.
Just know our love goes deep and strong.
We'll forget you never -
The child we had, but never had,
And yet will have forever.

Newsletter Editor: Gillian Eversman
info@hygeiafoundation.org

Assistant Editor: Mark Chartier

Submission deadline for the next issue:

JUNE 15, 2010

CALL FOR VOLUNTEERS

Have you ever thought that you might like to give back to Hygeia in some way? Please consider volunteering your time - even just an hour or two each month - to benefit Hygeia. Our volunteers help to ensure that we can provide compassion and comfort to bereaved parents, and many of our volunteers regard the time they spend helping Hygeia as time spent honoring the memory of the children or grandchildren they have lost.

Our door is always open to new volunteers, and we hope that you will consider giving some of your time to Hygeia. You can make a difference in the life of someone who grieves the devastating loss of a pregnancy or newborn.

We would welcome help with any of the following:

- ❖ Planning and organizing fundraisers
- ❖ Researching and writing grants
- ❖ Facilitating our support groups
- ❖ Coordinating our support groups
- ❖ Assisting with our phone hotline
- ❖ Reaching out to medical professionals and hospitals
- ❖ Organizing and managing our library
- ❖ Writing thank you notes to donors
- ❖ Making baby blankets to honor subsequent births and adoptions
- ❖ Administering our burial fund, which provides monetary assistance to parents in need

If you are interested in helping with any of the above or would like to discuss other ways you might share your talents with Hygeia now or in the future, please contact us at 1-800-893-9198 or info@hygeiafoundation.org. We look forward to hearing from you!

In Support of Hygeia

Mark your calendars!

Hygeia has two exciting fundraisers coming up in May:

Ride the Carousel at Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale! Bring your family and friends for a ride (or two) on the carousel. 100% of the proceeds will go to Hygeia.

When: Friday, May 21st, 2010, from 12:00 pm – 9:00 pm

Where: Lenny & Joe's Fish Tale Drive-In

1301 Boston Post Road

Madison, CT 06443

Cost: \$1 per ride

Contact with questions: Kimberly Nelly at 203-283-1230 or kimn@hygeiafoundation.org

Get Your Game On at the SportsCenter of Connecticut! Bring everyone you know to the SportsCenter of Connecticut for an evening full of golf, mini golf, fun bowling, batting cages, lazer tag, magic by Danny Magic, photography by Melissa Wilson, and free food!

When: Saturday, May 22nd, 2010, from 5:30 pm – 8:00 pm

Where: SportsCenter of Connecticut

784 River Road (Route 110)

Shelton, CT 06484

Cost: \$25 per person or \$75 for a family of four

Tickets: Available at www.hygeiafoundation.org/donations and at the door. Be sure to get your tickets ahead of time so you can go straight to the games!

Contact with questions: Kimberly Nelly at 203-283-1230 or kimn@hygeiafoundation.org

Together, We Can Help

All who fundraise on behalf of Hygeia are making a difference in the lives of our families. Thank you to:

Kimberly Nelly and *Elaine Ranciato* for hosting a **Pampered Chef Cooking Show** and donating all proceeds to Hygeia.

Claudia Esposito for organizing a **movie fundraiser** at **The Madison Art Cinemas**. Thank you also to sponsors **Guilford Savings Bank, The Source, and County Obstetrics and Gynecology Group, P.C.**

Kimberly Nelly and *Tina Aldo* for hosting a **Premier Designs High Fashion Jewelry Show** and donating all proceeds to Hygeia.

Rachel Steigleder and the *Church of the Good Shepherd Women's Group* for holding a **scrapbooking fundraiser** and **bake sale** that benefited Hygeia.

Hygeia needs you. If you would like to plan a special event to benefit Hygeia or to raise awareness of pregnancy and infant loss, please contact us at 1-800-893-9198 or info@hygeiafoundation.org.

Here are some fundraising ideas you might consider, both big and small:

- Host a luncheon – collect donations at the door and/or auction goods and services donated by local businesses.
- Host a wine tasting – see above re: luncheon.
- Hold a tag sale and/or a bake sale.
- Put out donation boxes at local businesses.
- Musicians: perform a benefit concert.
- Runners: ask people to sponsor you during your next race by donating to Hygeia.
- Crafters: sell your wares to benefit Hygeia.

Support Group Meetings

Below, please find the schedule of our free support group meetings. Dates and times are subject to change, so **please check the current schedule at www.hygeiafoundation.org prior to each meeting.**

Pregnancy and Infant Loss Groups

Parents who have lost a pregnancy or newborn soon after birth, no matter when the loss occurred, are welcome to attend. Feel free to come to multiple meetings each month.

Second Wednesday of the month *and*

Third Monday of the month

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Hygeia Foundation

264 Amity Road, Suite 211

Woodbridge, CT 06525

Third Thursday of the month

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Women and Family Life Center

96 Fair Street

Guilford, CT 06437

Fourth Monday of the month

7:30 – 9:00 pm

Saugatuck Congregational Church

245 Post Road East

Westport, CT 06880

*Please RSVP to 1-800-893-9198 if you plan on attending a meeting in Westport

Subsequent Pregnancy Group

Bereaved parents who are trying to conceive (or thinking about trying to conceive) and parents who are pregnant are encouraged to attend this group.

First Monday of the month

7:00 – 8:30 pm

Hygeia Foundation

264 Amity Road, Suite 211

Woodbridge, CT 06525

Parenting After a Loss Group

This group addresses the concerns of parents who have lost a pregnancy or newborn and who have living children at home. Babies and children are welcome at meetings.

Second Saturday of the month

11:00 am – 12:30 pm

Hygeia Foundation

264 Amity Road, Suite 211

Woodbridge, CT 06525

In Memoriam

Contact us at info@hygeiafoundation.org if you would like to honor a baby who has passed away.

Andrew and Joseph Esposito, born still on September 5, 1998, to Andrew and Claudia Esposito

Wyatt Blake Chartier – June 26, 2007

Parents Mark and Wade Chartier

Our angel *Adrian Minter* – June 23, 2009

Timothy Mark Larchar – December 31, 2009

Born to Heather and Mark Larchar

In Loving Memory of *Vanessa Alexis Ortiz Sanchez*, nuestra bella durmiente, born still on July 25th, 2003, to Orlando and Melissa Ortiz

Margaret Stella "Maggie" Bonito – stillbirth at 38 weeks, July 7, 2009

Baby Bonito – miscarriage at 9 weeks, March 16, 2010

James Patrick Edward Lawrence – September 16, 2007

Parents Christopher and Jessie Lawrence

Bobby Neave and Andy Neave, who passed away on June 9th, 2008

Our Little Angel and beloved daughter

Sierra Biggs – October 7-November 11, 2007

Born to Karen and Charley Biggs

Rachmiel Cohen Levenson, born September 8, 2006, to Leora Cohen and Joel Levenson

Stella Jane Johnson – June 24, 2007

Carina Sofia Fanelli – July 8, 2008

Parents Michael and Carrie Fanelli

Brothers Joey and Anthony Fanelli

Silas Orion Gallagher – September 25, 2008

Born to Chris Gallagher and Lani Rosen-Gallagher

The DeLuca babies

Parents Suzanne and Lew

Rachael Burlakoff – November 6, 2000

Stillbirth at 36 weeks

Born to Harry and Michele Burlakoff

Liam Christopher Witcher, born sleeping to Kari Beth Miller and Christopher Michael Witcher on June 16, 2009. Forever loved and missed!

The Hygeia Foundation, Inc.
264 Amity Road, Suite 211
Woodbridge, CT 06525
1-800-893-9198
www.hygeiafoundation.org
info@hygeiafoundation.org

Board of Directors

Michael R. Berman, M.D.,
Founder and President
Joshua Teplitzky, J.D.,
Vice President
Sherman Krevolin, J.D.,
Secretary

Parent Advisory Board

Michele Burlakoff
Leora Cohen
Claudia Esposito
Gillian Eversman
Lisa Harkness
Jodie Jerzyk
Ginny McParland
Kimberly Nelly
Sloan O'Connell
Melissa Ortiz
Jennifer Rosenzweig
Leslie Shannehan
Rachel Steigleder

Medical Advisory Board

Ian Gross, M.D.
Yale-New Haven Hospital
Michael J. Paidas, M.D.
Yale-New Haven Hospital

Professional Advisory Board

Tim DiScipio,
Founder and CEO, Epals.com
Tucker Leary,
Vice President,
Yale-New Haven Hospital
Alex Richardson,
Founder and Director, NetKey, Inc.

Copyright©2010
Hygeia Foundation, Inc., except
when noted otherwise.

Safe Arrivals

Contact us at info@hygeiafoundation.org if you would like to announce a birth or adoption following a loss.

Shayla Kate Lawrence, born on January 29, 2009
Parents Christopher and Jessie Lawrence

Shir Hain Yedidya Levenson, born October 3, 2007, to Leora Cohen
and Joel Levenson

Samuel Israel Amichai Levenson, born March 31, 2009, to Leora Cohen
and Joel Levenson

Alexandra Rose DeLuca, born July 17, 2009
Parents Suzanne and Lew

Eliza Ruth Sage Petkovich, born July 23, 2009
Parents Jennifer Rosenzweig and Geoffrey Petkovich
Brother Zachary Sage Emil Petkovich (born / died November 12, 2005)

Coco Biggs, born April 4, 2009, to Karen and Charley Biggs

\$13 for 13 Years

Since its founding, Hygeia has become the most enduring program – both online and off – of compassion, empathy, and support pertaining to pregnancy and newborn loss. Many of you have come to Hygeia seeking information, comfort, and support when no other support was available to you when your baby died. Providing this support has always been my commitment and Hygeia's mission.

We are now completing our 13th year and we still provide support to bereaved parents locally, nationally, and internationally. We are, however, in need of financial support so we may continue to help families who grieve the loss of a pregnancy or newborn child. Help us to continue our work.

If you feel that you have benefited from Hygeia,

**please consider making at least a \$13 donation
– 13 dollars for 13 years –
at www.hygeiafoundation.org/donations**

You may also send a check to:

**Hygeia Foundation
P.O. Box 3943
New Haven, CT 06525**

Thank you in advance for your generosity.

Michael R. Berman, M.D.
Founder and President
Hygeia Foundation, Inc.