



National Office
P.O. Box 3696
Oak Brook, IL 60522-3696

For Immediate Release

September 12, 2002

FROM: Wayne Loder
Public Awareness Coordinator
The Compassionate Friends
(Toll free) 866-964-4000

Chapter Leader Orientation to Help Families Dealing with Death of Children September 11

“I need to be with others who have gone through the same thing.”

These words have been verbalized in slightly different forms perhaps thousands of times since the tragedy of September 11 when families were torn apart and relatives across the country tried to figure out how they would ever cope with the sudden and senseless loss of loved ones, including children—most of them adults.

“There is no way to know for sure how many of those who died left behind parents, siblings, and grandparents, but one thing is for sure—there were a lot of them,” said Patricia Loder, Executive Director of The Compassionate Friends.

The organization has nearly 600 chapters in the United States alone and over 100 chapters in New York and immediate surrounding states. It is the world’s largest bereavement self-help support organization with a mission to assist families toward the positive resolution of grief following the death of a child of any age and to provide information to help others be supportive. **The Morris Area Chapter is located in Parsippany.**

While any family that has suffered the death of a child deals with bereavement issues for untold numbers of years, the terrorist attacks on The World Trade Center created unique aspects that may have delayed many family members from seeking solace, comfort, and coping techniques through interaction with other bereaved parents and siblings.

“While some parents who lost children in the attacks have attended chapter meetings, many have waited and we expect large numbers to filter in this year,” said Mrs. Loder. “That is why The Compassionate Friends has set up a special workshop for chapter leaders that will help them handle the situations unique to the terrorist attacks.”

The chapter leader orientation, which requires prior registration, will be held in Manhattan Saturday, September 21. Speakers will include a representative of the medical examiner’s office, professionals specializing in crisis incident trauma and post-traumatic stress syndrome, and a parent whose adult son died in the Rome airport terrorist attack in 1985.

“Information presented will include medical details provided to the families, description of DNA collection, symptoms of crisis incident trauma and post-traumatic stress, and effective means of assisting people in dealing with crisis and trauma,” said Mrs. Loder. “We want our chapter leadership to be as prepared as possible to assist the 9-11 families”

Bereaved parents, grandparents, and siblings can receive chapter information at The Compassionate Friends Web site, www.compassionatefriends.org or by calling toll-free 877-969-0010. The Compassionate Friends has chapters in all 50 states and a national presence in 26 countries around the world. Pfizer, Inc. has provided a grant to fund the cost of the orientation.

###

