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## **For Immediate Release**

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# **Families Mourning Children Head to Nashville for July Compassionate Friends National Conference**

Oak Brook, IL—More than 1300 bereaved parents, siblings, and grandparents, as well as professionals who provide them support, are preparing to attend The Compassionate Friends 31st National Conference July 18-20 in Nashville, Tennessee, the largest bereavement conference held annually in the U.S. specifically for families where a child has died.

“This conference was designed from the beginning, to be a healing experience,” says TCF Executive Director Patricia Loder, a bereaved parent and sibling herself. “The many who come will find friendship, understanding, and hope as they work their way through the natural, but difficult, grieving process after the death of a child.”

The Compassionate Friends is the world’s largest self-help bereavement organization and TCF/USA has more than 600 chapters in the United States providing support on the local level for many who are simply trying to survive the weeks, months, and years after a child in their family has died.

The conference will feature more than 100 workshops covering a multitude of areas of interest to bereaved parents, siblings, grandparents, and others in some type of parental or support role. Keynote speakers at the Friday and Saturday banquets are: Bruce Murakami, who bonded and teamed, in the name of safety and saving lives, with the drag racing teen who ended the life of his wife and daughter. His inspirational story was made into the Hallmark Hall of Fame movie “Crossroads: A Story of Forgiveness”; and Darrell Scott whose daughter was the first to be killed at Columbine. Out of her death-and her life-was born "Rachel's Challenge," a program that has been presented at more than a thousand high schools to inspire students to pass along kindness and compassion. Darrell has spoken about the program to more than 5 million people in live settings.

Entertainment includes two-time Grammy Award winning Nashville Bluegrass Band and Grammy nominee Beth Nielsen Chapman.

Conference highlights also include Sunday’s popular “Walk to Remember,” sharing sessions, memory boards, hospitality suites, Reflection Room and a fully stocked bookstore. Thursday, a pre-conference Professional Outreach Day is open to professionals who provide support to families after the death of a child. The general public may also register.

While pre-registration has closed, there will be onsite registration at the Sheraton Music City Hotel starting Thursday, July 17. Visit [www.compassionatefriends.org](http://www.compassionatefriends.org) for details on the conference or call toll-free 877-969-0010 for conference information and local chapter referral.