



**The
Compassionate
Friends**
Supporting Family After a Child Dies

In Partnership with



**FUNERAL SERVICE
FOUNDATION**

WHAT BEREAVED SIBLINGS WANT YOU TO KNOW



Siblings have a unique relationship with one another. They often are the witnesses of important milestones in their growth and development. They can be confidants, protectors, and partners amid life's challenges. When a sibling dies, surviving siblings' lives are forever changed. Siblings feel the pressure of the loss in many ways. Siblings may feel pressure to take care of their parents, to be strong for others in the family, or to fill the void left by their sibling. They often feel that a piece of them died when their sibling died.

WE WILL MISS OUR SIBLING FOR THE REST OF OUR LIVES

Because siblings often share such a close bond, the death of a sibling is a lifelong loss. They will miss their siblings for the rest of their lives. They might grapple with conflicted feelings about their sibling and may struggle with survivor's guilt that they are still living, but their sibling has died.

WE OFTEN FEEL OVERLOOKED OR FORGOTTEN

A sibling's grief is often shadowed by the grief of their parents. They will sometimes step into a protective role within the family, and it may appear that their grief is less intense than their parents. Yet, when their sibling died, they felt like they lost a part of themselves. Their grief is different than their parents' and it is comforting when people ask them how they are doing. Acknowledging their unique grief is helpful and will be remembered as they think back to those first few days after the death.



WHEN OUR SIBLING DIED, WE LOST A PART OF OUR PAST AND OUR FUTURE

Siblings do not expect their brother or sister to die before their parent(s). It is expected that they will have one another through life's many milestones. Siblings are sojourners in life that share a special bond with one another. Though they may fight or fuss with one another, they are also companions, friends, and allies within the family unit. When a sibling dies, the surviving sibling grieves the past that they shared together and the future relationship they would have shared together.

WHEN OUR SIBLING DIED, WE LOST A PART OF OURSELVES AND THE FAMILY WE KNEW

Surviving siblings may feel as though a part of their selves died with their sibling. They sometimes feel empty inside and battle with feeling disconnected or different from others. Siblings are also grieving the loss of the family they knew before their sibling died. They see their parents' pain and may struggle with the many changes the death of their sibling has brought to their family. Be patient with siblings as they adapt to these changes, learn new roles within the family, and find their footing again after the death of their brother or sister.



CONTACT US

877.969.0010

nationaloffice@compassionatefriends.org

compassionatefriends.org