

# What to Say and Do

From Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep.org

The list below has been compiled from the hearts of the bereaved parents of Now I Lay Me Down to Sleep. Here are some thoughts and ideas of what to say and/or do for a grieving parent and family...

- The most helpful thing people said to my wife and me during that time was, "You're in our prayers." Knowing that we were in the hearts and prayers of friends, family, and even strangers, was one of the few comforts we felt. **Damon Fecitt**, *Aidan's daddy*
- Please don't avoid us. I know it's hard to know the right words to say to me right now. But, just being there for me so I can cry on your shoulder, means more to me than you'll ever know.
- Please let us know that the death of our baby affected you also.
- Please let me share my story with you. Over and over again if necessary. Sometimes, I need to keep going over the details until they seem real.
- Please send us a card, so we know that you are thinking of us and that we are in your prayers.
- If we have other children, please remember them, also. They are grieving too. Offer to take them on an outing, because we still can't face the reality that "life goes on."
- If you are running errands, please call to see if we need anything.
- Please arrange for meals for our family. Something that can be frozen for later would be preferable.
- Please remember our baby on her birthday. Mark the birthdate of the baby on your calendar so you can send a note or call. I have found that when friends call and say, "I thought of Marah today." it makes me smile. Just to hear the name of my baby or to see it in print gave me some comfort. ~ **Deb Stoner**, *Marah's mommy*
- Purchase a special ornament or figurine with baby's name on it. ~ **Cheryl Haggard**, *Maddux's mommy*
- If you think about giving us a call or stopping over for a visit.... don't think about it, just do it. I can't tell you how many people I've had come up to me and say, "I wanted to call you or stop by but...." ~ **Tammy Becker**, *Chase's mommy*

- Truthfully, one of the most memorable things I received as a gift after my son died was a gift certificate for a tree. I picked out a birch and we have it in our backyard... it is a beautiful tree that is doing well. ~ **Jessi Hill**, *Tristan's mommy*
- As much as you may want to comfort a family member or friend and make the tears stop, unfortunately there is nothing that can be said or done. Just being there for us, and letting us know you are thinking about us, not wanting to run away when we shed our tears truly means a lot. This is a difficult task to ask of you, but it also lets us know that you care.  
~ **Tammy Becker**, *Chase's mommy*
- Offer to come over to throw a load of laundry in the wash, or other light duty house work.
- Give a gift certificate to the family's favorite restaurant, preferably with no expiration date, if possible.
- Give a gift basket just for mom. Bubble bath, shower gel, stress relieving soaks, candles, etc. Or lounge clothing and a box of chocolates or other sweets.
- Get something for the other children (if applicable) like a gift basket of age appropriate toys, coloring books, reading books or even DVD/VHS movies.
- It always seems awkward when someone asks how many children I have and you're not sure if you should say the living number or include those who have passed. Sometimes it is just easier to say the living number to avoid the awkward look or questions. But, then I wonder, who is it really easier for? It's definitely not easier on me and why should I make someone else's life "easier" when I am going through so much pain? ~ **Tina Denzer**, *Isaiah's mommy*
- Although most people have nothing but the best of intentions, some comments do hurt. Please remember our loss, and speak words that do not sting. Our parents have graciously compiled a list of insensitive comments so you may have a better understanding:
- The most helpful thing people said to my wife and me during that time was, "You're in our prayers." Knowing that we were in the hearts and prayers of friends, family, and even strangers, was one of the few comforts we felt. **Damon Fecitt**, *Aidan's daddy*
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- Please arrange for meals for our family. Something that can be frozen for later would be preferable.
- Please remember our baby on her birthday. Mark the birthdate of the baby on your calendar so you can send a note or call. I have found that when friends call and say, "I thought of Merah today." it makes me smile. Just to hear the name of my baby or to see it in print gave me some comfort. ~ **Deb Stoner**, *Marah's mommy*
- Purchase a special ornament or figurine with baby's name on it. ~ **Cheryl Haggard**, *Maddux's mommy*
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- Please don't tell me you know how I feel, because you don't, unless you too, have also experienced the death of a child. And if you have, please share your story with me, and be patient as I share mine. ~ **Cheryl Haggard**, *Maddux's mommy*

- Today I spoke to a friend and told her I was having a really rough week... her response... “Yeah, my week has been really tough also. I have been *so busy*.” And I am scheduled to go back to work soon, so today she asked how I was enjoying my last few days of my vacation!?!?! Does this look like I have been having a vacation? Is grief a vacation? If so, I never want anyone to go on “vacation” again! ~ **Mandy Sheridan**, *Jake’s mommy*
- A pregnant customer of mine asked me if I was “still taking pictures after all that happened with my daughter?” I said yes. She simply said...“Oh, by the way...that reminds me, I need to make an appointment to get portraits taken of my daughter when she is born in August.” ~ **Sarah O’Neal**, *Teegan’s mommy*
- Please do not tell me that my baby is in a better place. ~ **Estrella Estrada**, *Anthony’s mommy* (*While true, this might not feel helpful to grieving parents immediately*)
- After a friend returned from her grandmother’s funeral she told me, “There’s no way I’m going to be buried when I die. I don’t want a bunch of worms and bugs crawling through my eyes! Did you know you could be buried above ground?” She was at my daughter Emma’s funeral and knows that we had her buried.~ **Julie Bigge**, *Emma Kate’s mommy*
- I was showing Maddux’s DVD to someone who was helping us file papers with the IRS for the organization. We were eating breakfast, and he put his fork down for just a minute, wiped a tear from his eye and said, “I can see how you could get so attached. I do a lot of work with orphaned animals, and when we lose a little critter, I feel the same way.” ~**Cheryl Haggard**, *Maddux’s mommy*
- I wish that people would not say to bereaved parents “You are young, you can still have more children.” How do they know that? Some may be unable to have more, their babies death may have been caused by something genetic, or the parents may have spent years and years and thousands of dollars to conceive this baby. No matter the reason or even if we are able to have more children, understand that no child will EVER replace the one I lost. ~**Lindzy Foster**, *Kadence’s mommy*
- “Get over it. You can’t bring him back!” These words cut deep into my heart.~ **Estrella Estrada**, *Anthony’s mommy*
- After experiencing two stillbirths and two miscarriages and then finally was pregnant with a healthy baby, someone said, “Well maybe you had to get the other pregnancies and babies out of the way so you could have a healthy baby.” ~**Gina Harris**, *David and Ethan’s mommy*