

How We Help Communities

The Ripple Effect

The death of a child may seem like an isolated family tragedy. However, it is a break in the chain of life and anecdotal evidence suggests that the effects of child death are far-reaching. Like a pebble tossed into a still lake, an infant or child's death profoundly affects entire neighborhoods and communities.

Strong Individuals, Strong Families, and Strong Communities

“More than 70% of women report suicidal ideation after the death of their baby” (DeFrain, 2000).

The death of a child is a tragedy. A tragedy that if not properly identified, counseled, nurtured, and then accepted, can devastate families, both individually and collectively. Without proper support and services, this tragic human experience may affect the mental and physical well being of family members, potentially leading to guilt, misunderstood responsibilities, irrational blame, domestic violence, high risk behavior, maladaptive coping mechanisms such as drug or alcohol abuse, excessive mobility, divorce, declining academic performance, suicidal ideation, and a breakdown of basic trusts and self-esteem. Grieving parents often fall victim to high levels of stress, which can be devastating to the surviving children and the parents' health, careers, and marriage. Especially in cases of limited services and support, the death of a child affects an individual's ability to nurture and provide care to surviving children (McGoldrick & Walsh, 1991).

Without the MISS Foundation, these children and families have limited resources for education and support, which are critical to developing healthy and congruent responses in their grief. Through continuing and expanding our family support services, the MISS Foundation helps to keep grieving families connected, not only to one another, but also to a larger community. This, in turn, helps to buffer the effects of negative coping. Eventually, our members not only return to a level of functioning in which they existed before their child died, but many transcend their place in the world to accomplish amazing things as a legacy to their child. Ultimately, this transformation, if well-supported, builds strong individuals, strong families, and strong communities.