



Reaching Out

May 2009

To all mothers

Weaving the story of our children into our family narratives can become both a challenge and comfort, particularly if you have experienced the loss of a child. One family narrative that emerges at this time every year is the story of Mother's Day. Mother's Day itself is a story born of a mother's grief and a daughter's love and is a day created by a woman named Anna Jarvis in the early years of last century. Anna was one of eleven children. Seven of these children died in early childhood. It is written by historians, that Anna's mother mourned the death of her children throughout her entire life,

Interestingly, Anna herself never married and had no children, In Anna's view, her mother deserved a memorial because she had lived selflessly and endured considerable suffering. Mother's Day was intended as a tribute to a bereaved mother, a woman who suffered considerable loss yet managed to live a life of kindness and generosity.

All mothers today will have their own meaning that is associated with the day. If this is the first Mother's Day without your child, you may not feel like celebrating but try and take some time to honour your role as a mother and that unique relationship you have with your precious child. For many mothers, the day can often raise the question of 'am I still a mother' after their child has died. Motherhood creates a unique bond between parent and child that goes on forever, and in many cases continues to grow – this bond tells you that you are still a mother and that your child is still with you.

In this newsletter we send our thoughts to all mothers who carry the memory of their child or children who have died.

Mums play an important and special role in the work of SIDS and Kids NT and we have had the privilege of meeting many inspirational mums in the local community. In the area of education services, SIDS and Kids NT have been fortunate to share in stories, music and personal journey's of pregnancy and motherhood. Through our counselling services, we support many mothers and their families, often helping them to find their own special and unique ways of honoring their child who is no longer with them. SIDS and Kids NT's volunteers, some of whom are bereaved parents, have drawn on their own experiences to bring about change and hope for other families. We have recently had a bereaved parent contact us who is interested in establishing a memorial garden for Darwin families. If you would like to be involved in this project please contact our office on 8948 5311. We are also interested in speaking with local families who feel they might be ready to share their experiences with others to contact our office.

SIDS and Kids NT will also be celebrating Volunteer Week, May 11-17 with a stall at Casuarina Square. Please drop in and say hello. It is mothers, fathers, friends and people from varied backgrounds that over the years have opened their hearts to organisations such as ours to enable us to provide our safe sleeping education and bereavement services. If you live outside of Darwin you can still be involved as a volunteer—just give our office a call!

So wherever you may be in your chapter, this Mother's Day we remember and honor you. Remember you are not alone in your journey. Don't forget, SIDS and Kids NT offer 24 hours counselling service every day of the year so please give our counsellor a call on 0448 849 234 if you find this time of year is a difficult one for you.

Mother's day is a time for all bereaved mums to go gently on themselves. We wish you comfort and peace as you go.... From SIDS and Kids NT

