Opening to the Pain of Loss

By Brianne Edwards

When, in a single moment, we were thrown into the depths of grief with a pain as big as the loss of a child, it is only natural to protest this new and horrific experience with every bit of our being. A loss this big infiltrates every single moment of our lives, with tentacles reaching into every thought, every breath, awake or asleep, into every mundane task and every meaningful moment. It is all consuming. It is dirty and messy. It is excruciatingly painful. This grief is an unwelcome invasion, and, by all outward appearances, seems to be an enemy, the thief that came in the night and stole our joy and our purpose.

We naturally fight this enemy of pain, flee from it or lay limp in defeat. We hurt like we’ve never hurt before, so we clench our fists and our jaws, scrapping for the upper hand that we can never seem to find. “It shouldn’t be this way,” “It’s not fair,” “I can’t live like this,” or “I won’t, live like this.” When we’re too exhausted to fight, then we turn and flee. We will just do whatever it takes to avoid uncomfortable moments, to dodge painful feelings and memories, and when running from those feelings doesn’t work, maybe we will give up hope on a meaningful life and on ever finding joy again, surrendering to the thought that “I am forever broken and ruined.” These are natural responses. Our bodies and our brains are designed to react in “fight or flight” to threatening situations to help us avoid physical harm. But this threat is of a different nature and it doesn’t have to be this way... at least not forever.

What if...just what if...we dared to look at that pain through a different lens and view it as a teacher, rather than an enemy? The constant ache of missing a child is so much to bear on its own. Are we really helping anything by fighting the invisible enemy of pain, or are we just

Continued on page 2

Prairie Meadows Awards Grant to ISF

Prairie Meadows recently awarded the Iowa SIDS Foundation a community betterment grant totaling $4,823. The grant will help fund the Foundation’s safe sleep efforts across the state of Iowa. As a nonprofit organization, Prairie Meadows fulfills its mission by giving back to various organizations that support arts and culture, education, economic development, and human services. We are excited to see the impact this project will have on our Central Iowa community,” said Julie Stewart, Prairie Meadows’ Director of Community Relations.

The awarded funds will improve the lives of many families in Central Iowa by enabling the Iowa SIDS Foundation in providing safe sleep educational resources for Iowa families, child care providers, and healthcare professionals. The grant will be used to provide safe sleep educational inserts with all live Iowa birth certificates in 2020, to print safe sleep educational brochures, to print a tumble time visual for child care and healthcare use, and to develop a general brochure to promote the SIDS Foundation. The project is expected to be completed in the Fall of 2019.

Prairie Meadows, located in Altoona, IA, is a nonprofit business dedicated to lessening the burden of government by promoting economic development, jobs, agriculture, and tourism in the state of Iowa. We appreciate the support of Prairie Meadows are proud to partner with them in providing safe sleep education. https://www.prairie Meadows.com/
Opening to the Pain of Loss, continued from page one.

adding a tremendous struggle to our already heavy burden? What if we unclenched our fists and laid the boxing gloves aside? What if we softened our eyes and our hearts and saw this pain as a teacher bringing growth to our lives. Some of the greatest teachers are the ones that demand the most of us. They present challenges that seem impossible and push us way outside our comfort zones. The lessons are painful, yes, but if we give them space to take root, something beautiful just might grow.

This teacher of pain has too many deep lessons to think we can tackle them all at once. This is a subject that will take a lifetime to learn. If there’s a task that’s too big in the moment, that’s okay, maybe it’s a lesson to be tabled for now and approached again at another time. But bit by bit, we can learn from our pain and let our grief be our ally to growing in love and wisdom.

When I stop to consider this pain of loss as my teacher, rather than an enemy to evade at all costs, everything inside of me softens a bit. I am reminded of the experience of labor. It is an all-encompassing physical pain. I can fight that, tightening every muscle of my body, dreading with anxiety over every contraction that’s coming, and in doing so, add exhaustion, tension, and emotional distress to my pain…a good support team, that I will be okay, and that something beautiful and life-changing will come from this experience. In being open to the pain rather than fighting it, I can change the experience entirely. It is much the same in the pain of loss. When I stop fighting the experience, the sadness remains, but so much tension, bitterness, and anger fades away. And with that, my eyes are opened to the opportunities for growth, and I can see the beauty that has emerged from the dirty, the messy, and the ugly.

Ask yourself: What are the lessons, both good and bad, that have come from my grief and the pain of my loss? How have I changed for the better because of this? How do I want to change because of this? What are the beautiful things that have grown from these ashes? What am I still learning? What are the beautiful things I would like to see emerge in my life from this experience?

Go ahead. Let something beautiful grow.

*Brienne Edwards is the founder of Lach’s Legacy, a nonprofit SIDS organization for the South Dakota SIDS community. Her son, Lachlan, was 10 1/2 months old when he died of SIDS in 2008. She writes for the Lach’s Legacy blog and Facebook page with vulnerability and depth, acknowledging the profundity of the pain of losing a child as well as the hope of healing. Brienne’s work was reprinted with permission from Grief Digest, Centering Corporation, Omaha, NE, 866-218-0101.

Special thanks to Sondra Porter. In July 2006, Sondra began her employment as the first Administrative Assistant for the Iowa SIDS Foundation. After sharing thirteen years with the families and our Foundation, she decided to resign to fully enjoy her retirement. Sondra will truly be missed but we wish her well as she enjoys her extra time!!

Best Wishes from your Friends and Family at the Iowa SIDS Foundation!

Upcoming Volunteer Opportunities

**Board of Directors, Statewide:** We are looking for individuals that are interested in being involved with the administrative function and leadership of the Foundation. The Board of Directors meets three times per year in the Des Moines area and the term is for 3 years. Interested in learning more about this commitment? Call 515-965-7655 or email patty@iowasisds.org and you will be connected with a current volunteer board member to answer your questions.

**Peer Contact, Statewide:** We are in need of volunteers interested in offering support to newly bereaved families. Orientation takes approximately two hours and can be scheduled at your convenience and in your community!!

**Education Booths:** Volunteers are always welcome to join staff at educational conferences and/or booths across the state. We will be in Ottumwa on August 3rd and at the AWHONN Conference, Des Moines, on October 29th.

If you are interested in any of the above opportunities or would like more details, please feel free to contact the office at info@iowasisds.org or call 515-965-7655.
20th ANNIVERSARY Walk for the Future will be August 24, 2019

Registration forms for the 20th anniversary of the Iowa SIDS Foundation’s Walk are rolling in!! This year’s Walk is scheduled to be held on August 24th in seven cities across the state of Iowa. Family, friends and community supporters will gather across the state to raise awareness for SIDS/SUID and to honor the lives of Iowa babies. This family friendly event is our primary fundraising event for the Foundation and funds are used to fulfill our daily mission of offering emotional grief support to SIDS/SUID families, educating professionals and the general public regarding SIDS/SUID and safe sleep, and to supplement an annual contribution to research.

**How to Register:**
Three options for registering are now available:

Option 1: Complete and submit a registration form to the Iowa SIDS office. These forms were mailed the week of July 8th; additional forms may be requested by calling 515-965-7655 or by email at info@iowasids.org. If mailing your registration, please note our address has changed.

Option 2: Walkers can register and make payment on line at www.iowasids.org. Payment may be made using PayPal or by using a debit or credit card.

Option 3: On or after August 13th, walkers can register on site the morning of the Walk at the location of their choice.

Note: Pre-registration is highly encouraged. Prior to 8/13, the cost is $25 for adults and $10 for children. On or after 8/13, each registration does increase to $30 for adults and $12 for children. Pre-registrations also reserves a walk tee in your preferred size.

**NEW for 2019:**

**Site Locations:** The Quad Cities walk is moving back to Veteran’s Memorial Park in Bettendorf. Under new leadership, the Des Moines area Walk is moving to Johnston. This Walk will begin at the Simpson Barn-Johnston Greens located at 6169 Northglenn Drive, Johnston. Please note the extended registration time and new Walk time.

**On line Registration:** On line registration will be available through August 12th. The on line registration is perfect for registering an individual or chose the group option to register your whole family or small group.

**Raffle Donations:** Families are welcome to donate an item or gift basket in memory of their baby to be included in the raffle or silent auction. **Every site will be offering a raffle or silent auction in 2019!** Contact the office, 515-965-7655 or info@iowasids.org, to sign up or for additional details.

**Pledge Incentive:** For every $150 in pledges collected, walkers have the option to receive a sweatshirt. The sweatshirts will have the same logo and text on front and back as the 2019 tees. The sweatshirts will be available in adult sizes only.

**Weather:** If it is raining, the walks will still take place. If the Walk must be delayed due to dangerous weather, that will be posted on our website’s event page and on our Facebook page. If the dangerous storms are predicted to last all morning and results in cancelling the Walk due to safety, no refunds are provided and shirts will be provided to those that pre-register or registered the morning of the Walk.

**Questions?** Please call 515-965-7655 or email info@iowasids.org.

2962 99th Street, #3, Urbandale, IA 50322

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**2019 WALK LOCATIONS**

**BETTENDORF — NEW Location**
Veteran’s Memorial Park
Registration 9:00 am - Walk 10:00 am

**CEDAR RAPIDS**
Noelridge Park — Creekside Pavilion
Registration 8:15 - Walk 9:00 am

**JOHNSTON — NEW Location**
Simpson Barn-Johnston Greens
Registration 9:00 am - Walk 10:15 am

**LE MARS**
Willow Creek Golf Course & Shelter House
Walk Registration 8:30 am - Walk 9:30 am

**MASON CITY**
Monroe Park
Registration 9:30 am - Walk 10:00 am

**WASHINGTON**
Sunset Park
Walk Registration 8:30 am - Walk 9:30 am

**WHAT CHEER**
Keokuk County Fairgrounds
Registration 8:30 am - Walk 9:00 am

*For a listing of specific activities for each walk location, please visit our website at www.iowasids.org
Remembering Our Babies

Happy Birthday

**July**
- Elizabeth Grace Atzen
- Jerome Alexander Brown
- Cole Edward Clark
- Rylee Elizabeth Erwin
- Owen Jay Fisher
- Brennan Charley Godfredsen
- Alana P. Gonzales
- Ryder Martin Harnish
- Zarena Rayne Jennings
- Catherine Elizabeth LaFerlty
- Shelby Jo McConnell
- Ethan Daniel McDermott
- Darian Bea O’Connell
- Jessica Lynne Otto
- Carson David Phillips
- Joshua Izaiah Rivera
- Jaycee Marie Schilling
- Jacoby James Sickels
- Bryton Thompson
- Jordyn N. Thompson

**August**
- Braxton Timothy Charles Bell
- Zoey Kaye Bestland
- Max David Bushack
- Johnathon Oscar Danner
- Jennifer Lynn Dyar
- Dash Riley Ellingworth
- Kenna Reese Henss
- Kingston Richard Hronik
- Evan Dean Klemme
- Abigail Ilene Knoop
- La’Tianna Jo’Nae Luten
- Amara C. Magee
- Danielle Rose Noggle
- Hope ElizaRae Ohrt
- Aaron Postel
- Zachary Kyle Renaud
- Arie Jai Richardson
- Analisa Ines Rodriguez
- Maggie Amelia Rose Rogerson
- Nolan Douglas Rubendall
- Jared John Smith
- Hunter Dean Stevens
- Cael Anthony Subject
- Shane Adam Tate
- Ella Elizabeth Timm
- Kyle Anthony Timmons
- Oakley Joe Van Patten
- Shiana Lynn West
- Kyler Lon Wilcox

**September**
- Dylan Peter Christian Andersen
- Maria Irene Andersen
- Benjamin Blowers
- Kayla Sue Brewer
- Cody Michael Coleman
- Kory Lynn Dunkin
- Kaleb Dean Hargens
- Chelsea Miranda Jones
- Dominic Joseph Laurenzo
- Hailey Erin Lincoln
- Jacob Anthony Lipski
- Ross “Rosco” Jacob McGlothlen
- Brenden Meinecke
- Alex Ostlund
- Knox Owen Palmer
- Darran Dasan Perkins
- Johnathan Danial Prescott
- Ariel Faith Rattler
- Ashton Lavall Seaton
- Gavin Lee Sievers
- Beth Marie Stukerjurgan
- Alec Robert Wagner
- Warren Edwin White
- Donna-Oyann Williamson
- Noah James Zarate

**October**
- Matthew James Avery
- Cody James Beck
- Robert Carl Davis III
- Cara Lynn Eddie
- Alexia Jean Jonas
- Peyton Jo Lehman
- Dawson John Lewis
- Quinten Matis
- Justin Evan Miller
- Robby Matthew Miller
- Gunner Jacob Alex Nail
- Madison “Maddy” Lynn Nesbitt
- Avery Ann Palmer
- Cameron Palmer
- Samantha Alina Parks
- Riley Jane-Marie Perkins
- Isaac Thomas Pressley
- Ryan Allen Robinson
- Daeshaun Marquis Rodriguez
- Jessica Lynn Sammons
- Levy Joel Simaj-Christianson
- Kellan Rayne Christine Starrett
- Erika Elizabeth Story

In Loving Memory

**July**
- Sydney Nicole Allen
- Cole Alexander Davis
- Rowan James Dolezal
- Owen Jay Fisher
- Brooke Louise Goodyk
- Marianna Sarina Guess
- Logan Grant Higinbotham
- Dominick Paul McFarland, Jr.
- Ryan Dennis Mougine
- Matthew Timothy Otten
- Mariah Pickering
- Kelly Ann Pitts
- Alexis Deane Rudkin
- Douglas Ronald Tietge
- Lauren Elizabeth Nichole Viaene
- Austin Micheal Vogt

**September**
- Ethan Troy Livingston
- Benjamin Scott Meints
- Hope ElizaRae Ohrt
- Kaleb J. Peverill
- Arie Jai Richardson
- Jacoby James Sickels
- Emily Rose Studer
- Bryton Thompson
- Andrew Jay “A.J.” VanDerSchaaf
- Zachary Richard VanVleet
- Donna-Oyann Williamson
- Keaton James Wirtz

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**We talk about them, not because we’re stuck or because we haven’t moved on, but we talk about them because we are theirs, and they are ours, and no passage of time will ever change that.**

- *Scribbles & Crumbs*

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**August**
- Olivia Nora Aikey
- Jerome Alexander Brown
- Cheyanne Marie Camp
- Joey Cusick
- Jordan Lee Daniel
- Caitlin Rose Davis
- Joseph Laurence Devore
- Caden DeVries
- Parker G. Donaldson
- Gavin Eli Gratz
- Devon James Hayes-Jones
- Steven Michael Jeneary
- Carson David Phillips
- Thomas Jay Fallon Robinson
- Tara Beth Schroder
- Justin Ryker Swick
- Dawson Thomas Vandello
- Caleb Richard Williams

**October**
- Braxton Timothy Charles Bell
- Zoey Kaye Bestland
- Lane Kurt Carter
- Thaddeus Charles Ernzen
- Christopher Scott Evans
- Teagon Lee Fowler
- Kingston Richard Hronik
- Zarena Rayne Jennings
- James Allen Magruder
- Jaxon Matt
- Ethan Daniel McDermott
- Brenden Meinecke
- Zachary D. Mohatt
- Danielle Rose Noggle
- Darian Bea O’Connell
- Aaron Postel
- Joshua Izaiah Rivera
- Mario Francisco Robles
- Jaycee Marie Schilling
- Hunter Dean Stevens
- Jordyn N. Thompson
- Oakley Joe Van Patten
- Alec Robert Wagner
- Sophia Halas Welch
- Kyler Lon Wilcox
New Faces: We are excited to announce both a new board member, Neal Wallace and Ruth Arndt, the Foundation’s new Administrative Assistant.

Neal Wallace began his three year term at the June 29th board meeting. In his letter of interest, Neal shared, "It has been several years since we have lost our son, Bryce to SIDS and I feel it's time where I can start helping people and this organization with education and healing." Neal lives with his family in Pleasant Hill. We are thankful Neal chose to share his time to help guide the Foundation and are excited to have him join the Board.

Ruth Arndt was born and raised in the Des Moines area and currently lives in Clive with her husband, Marty. She has 3 adult children and 4 grandchildren. In her free time, Ruth enjoys reading, walking, bicycle riding (got to love Iowa and all the bike trails), and spending time with family. Needless to say, her favorite seasons are spring, summer and fall!

Ruth previously worked for 22 years in the insurance industry and volunteers in various capacities and organizations. She is looking forward to working with the Foundation and supporting our families!

Ruth is doing an amazing job and we are thrilled to have her as part of our team. She can be contacted at 515-965-7655 or by email at ruth@iowaisds.org. Welcome, Ruth!!

In our Spring newsletter, we inadvertently spelled Gavin Lee Sievers incorrectly in the Remembering our Babies article. Our sincere apologies to the Sievers family for this oversight.

Siouxland Community Nights: Volunteers from the Siouxland area (Sioux City and Le Mars) have participated in two Community Impact Nights to benefit the Iowa SIDS Foundation. The first event was held July 9th at the Le Mars Pizza Ranch. Volunteers participating included Tom and Pam Jenearry, Jacob and Megan Jenearry, Nancy, Brayden and Emma Webb, Patty Hatting, Patti Bollin, Gerry Sue Kriener, Linda Ludwig, Laurie Kellen, and Betty Shea. This group raised approximately $325. Thank you for sharing your time to advocate for SIDS and promote the 2019 Walk! Great work!!

On July 18th, the Outback Steakhouse in Sioux City hosted a Community Give Back night to support the SIDS Foundation. We appreciate the tremendous and continuous support from the Siouxland community!

6/29/19: Our Board of Directors shared their Saturday for our annual Meeting. The following officers were elected: President-Tony Lipski, VP-Jessie Mireles, Treasurer-Gary Marker, Secretary-Amy Gould.

Siouxland Twins Raise Money for SIDS
For the fourth year in a row, 10 year old twins, Jacob and Megan Jenearry, hosted a lemonade stand to help raise money for the Iowa SIDS Foundation. This tradition started as the cause is important for them as their uncle, Stevie, passed away from SIDS before they were born.

The kids mixed up fresh lemonade and made bracelets to sell. This year, all visitors to the stand also received a free raffle ticket to use at the upcoming 20th annual “Walk for the Future” in Le Mars.

“It just makes my heart swell up with pride and love for them that they would be willing to do this because it is something that is hard to understand," said the kids grandmother Pam Jenearry. Thank you to Megan and Jacob—we appreciate your thoughtfulness and kind hearts!!

The twins were able to collect $450 that will help support SIDS awareness. Megan and Jacob are the children of Greg and Anne Jenearry.

Upcoming Events: 8/3 Breastfeeding Event (Ottumwa); 10/19 Board Meeting; 10/24 Child Care Training (Waterloo); 10/29 AWHONN Conference (Des Moines).
Thank You... The Iowa SIDS Foundation wishes to thank the following donors for their generous gifts.

Memory Of:
Sean Matthew Allmendinger
Anonymous (2)
Mason James Bauer
Dean and Becky Paulson
Libbi Bendickson
Wade and Bobbi Bendickson
Coleen Colton
Joey Cusick
Betty Cusick
Shep Hamann
Connie Hamann
Colin Michael McGaffin
Emigdio Camu
Ryan Dennis Mougins
Jane Gent
Frank and Vivian Mougins
Camden O’Connor
Nicole Horak
Matthew Timothy Otten
Timothy & Angela Otten
Toby Daniel Sejkora
Gary and Pamela Sejkora
Gavin Lee Sievers
Ronnie Sievers
Kellan Rayne Christine Starrett
Julia Goodale
Andrew Jay “A.J.” VanDerSchaaf
Steven VanDerSchaaf

Gifts Given in Honor Of:
Patricia R. Shutts in memory of Laikyn Shutts
Merriamme Burkhardt
Bernita Fruhling
Marcia Kozeliski
Steve Munson
Patricia Probasco
Kathryn Stark
Larry and Jo Wray
Sylvia Schlesman
Tom and Pam Jeneary

United Way Donations-Employer Pledges-Employer Match
Anonymous Donors (2)
Jayme Bright
Janice Burris
Amy Gould
Leanne Grewell
Linda Jonas
Joel Krusemark
Penelope Lumley
Ryan and Meg Schon
Amanda Stecker
Jay and Ingrid Stukerjurgen
Kent and Joann Tipping
Emily Truitt
Diana VanFleet
Helen Wares
The Wellmark Foundation
Rebecca Wiedeholt
Becky Ziemer
Steve and Kathy Zumbach

General Donations
Amazon Smile
CNOS-Dakota Dunes
Exceptional Persons, Inc.
Northwest Bank
Nicole Nostwich
Orchard Place—Des Moines
Paul Peglow
Pizza Ranch—Le Mars

Birdies for Charity—Principal Charity Classic
Russell Belz
Stephen Bogle
Terry Hoil
PJ Ipsen
Pam Jeneary
Patty Keeley
Richard Kinseth
John Lang
Cheryl Livingston
Gary Marker
Jill Matthias
Cody Mireles

Donations are an important part of our support. They allow us to reach out to newly bereaved parents, provide resources to families, relatives, and professionals, print the newsletter, sponsor support group, conduct educational programs and participate in research. These donations were received as of 7/25/19.
Facebook Campaigns Make Positive Impact on Foundation Services

The Iowa SIDS Foundation continues to be humbled by the number of people hosting AND contributing to online Facebook fundraising campaigns. In 2018, $12,213.15 was donated to the ISF through on line campaigns to assist in providing bereavement support and safe educational materials across the state of Iowa!!

Special thanks to the individuals, listed directly below, for hosting a Facebook fundraiser during the second quarter and for those donors in the gray box that donated to one of those campaigns. Your kindness and support are a great gift!

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*The above hosts & donors were reported from Facebook as participating or making a transaction from 3/1/19-7/25/19.
Fall Newsletter Deadline: October 18, 2019

General Submissions
The Iowa SIDS Foundation offers all parents, grandparents, relatives, childcare providers and friends the opportunity to submit information for the newsletter. This may include letters, poems, sharing your family’s story or perspective, or highlights of events held in your local community to benefit the Foundation or to bring awareness to SIDS and SUID. Please note that due to space limitations, submitted material may have to be edited or held until a later newsletter.

It is our hope to give as many parents and family members the opportunity to share. To submit an article or for more information, please contact the Iowa SIDS Foundation by calling 515-965-7655 or by email at info@iowasids.org.

New Arrivals
Congratulations on your newborn! If you are interested in sharing your new family member with our readers, please provide your baby’s name, birthdate and parents’ names to the office.

Remembering Our Babies
If you would like to honor your baby in our Remembering Our Babies section of the newsletter, we do require a written parental consent to be on file. Consents may be printed from our webpage or may be requested to either be mailed or emailed to you. Contact our office by phone or email to request a parental consent.

UNSUBSCRIBE: If you would like to have your name removed from the Iowa SIDS Foundation mailing database, please notify us at 515-965-7655 or info@iowasids.org.

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