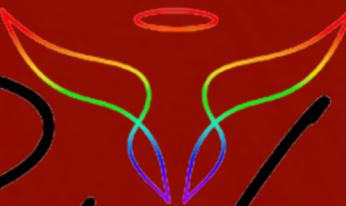
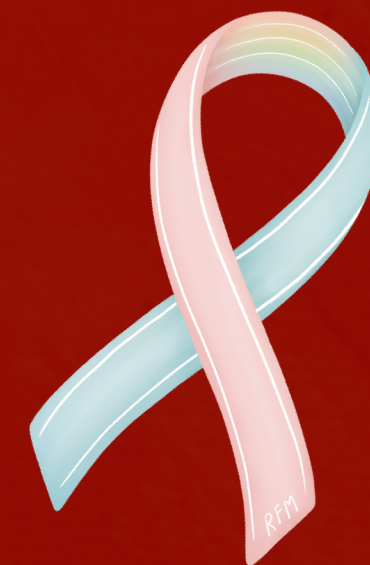


Deck the Halls

...or don't

Supporting your loss mom through the holidays


Rainbows
for Makenna



Supporting your loss mom

As a support person it's hard to know what to do and what to say. Everything feels wrong because *it is*. Babies are not supposed to die before their parents. Parents are not supposed to outlive their children.



Supporting your loss mom

Here are some things every loss mom needs to get through the holidays:

1. Your presence: there is no fix; she just needs to know you are there.
2. Validation: acknowledge the holidays are hard without trying to fix it
3. Flexibility: traditions may be hard for her. Understand her feelings and plans may change last minute.
4. No expectations: her whole world has been turned upside down and she may not be able to show up the way she used to. Keep your expectations low and allow her to tell you what she needs.





Supporting your loss mom

Practical ways to show up:

1. Send a text to let her know you are thinking of her and her baby.
2. Light a candle for her baby and send her a picture.
3. Send a card that includes her baby's name.
4. If she asks her friends and family to do something specific to help her honor her baby through the holidays, do your best to participate.
5. Invite her with no pressure to come.
6. Offer specific help: grief groceries are always a good idea





Supporting your loss mom

Tip: use her baby's name throughout the holiday season whenever possible. It is not going to remind her that her baby is dead; it is going to remind her that her baby lived and that people remember them.





Supporting your loss mom

What not to do:

- Silence: This is isolating and makes her feel like her baby has been forgotten.
- Grief clichés: *everything happens for a reason, be grateful for what you have, your baby would want you to be happy, etc*
- Don't force participation in holiday traditions.
- Don't take it personally if she can't show up or has to leave early.





Supporting your loss mom

Gift ideas for the loss mom in your life:

- Windchimes
- Personalized ornament with baby's name
- A handwritten card or letter for her baby's stocking
- Personalized garden flag
- Personalized candle
- Garden stone
- Sun catcher
- Tshirt/hoodie from a pregnancy and infant loss nonprofit
- Donation in baby's name
- Baby's birth flower
- Family portrait that includes baby that died

