

Going Green

If you would like to receive this Newsletter via email, please contact us at lbates@peds.umaryland.edu or call 410-328-4641. If you can't give up on paper just yet and would like to continue to receive it, give us a call. The Center is looking for better ways to serve you and save the environment at the same time.

Parent's Corner

It is hard to believe that it will be almost four years since my son Bennie Joshua passed away from Sudden Unexpected Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS). It almost seems like the death never happened, that it was just a dream; but every time I remember that day in December, I realize that my dream was indeed a reality. It was December 23rd and I had just returned home to my parent's house from shopping for my son's first Christmas and my daughter's second. My son was napping when I returned, but almost 30 minutes after I returned home, my son was still asleep. This was very unusual for him because he suffered from eczema and would normally only take a nap for 20 minutes at a time. I asked my dad to check on him and when he did, what he found I will never forget. My son was blue in the face and had stopped breathing. The ambulance arrived within five minutes, but by the time I arrived at the hospital, the doctor informed me that there was nothing they could do, my son had passed away. Shortly after losing my son, I receive a call from the Center for Infant & Child Loss offering comfort, resources and support. Over the next two weeks, I received tons of support. Phone calls, emails, money, and words of encouragement poured into my house on a daily basis, but after those two weeks, all of that seemed to end. I went to a few counseling sessions as well as support groups over the next few months, but I decided that the best way to deal with my loss was to forget about it, so over the next three years, I buried myself in my job, my daughter, my marriage, and going back to school. It was not until a deployment to Iraq in 2010 that I actually began to grieve. I had just finished hosting a fundraiser to raise awareness about



Bennie Joshua
09/09/07 - 12/23/07

Center for Infant & Child Loss Memory Quilt

Many of you have seen the beautiful quilts displayed at the annual memorial services and events each year. These quilts have individual squares created by families of loved ones to remember their child. If you would like to add a quilt square please follow these guidelines:



- Size 8x8
- Material – cotton or cotton/poly blend
- Design – individual taste and creativity

Mail to the Center for Infant & Child Loss at the address on this newsletter.

SIDS, and two days after the event, I noticed that I was very emotional. I cried for three days straight and could not eat or sleep. My supervisor noticed the changes in my behavior and recommended that I talk to a counselor. During my counseling session, I asked the counselor why it took me over three years to really grieve, and she explained to me that with such a tragic loss, the grieving would never end.

It will be four years in December since my son passed away. I am still going to counseling sessions every now and then, but what I really want people to know is that the grieving never stops. People tend to think that after two weeks, everything will be back to normal, the mother will go on with her life and everything will be just the way it was before the loss; but it never is and never will be. A mother never stops grieving for her child and it will always be an ongoing struggle for me on a daily basis to cope with the loss of my son. The Center for Infant & Child loss has helped me a great deal with support, reading materials, and checking up on me from time to time to see how I am doing. Again, know that it is normal to grieve, and support should not end after two weeks, it should continue on years after a mother has experienced the loss of a child. So, if you ever encounter someone that has lost a child, don't just be there for them in the first few weeks, continue to show your support months even years after the event because even though you may not know what they are going through, it helps to always know that someone is out there who cares.

~ Roweena Arasah