

SIMON Project
(Sudden Infant Mourning Outreach Network)
www.simonproject.org – coming soon

A Peer to Peer Infant Loss Bereavement Support, Resource and Education Program
Serving Vermont & Northern New England
(An Affiliate of First Candle / SIDS Alliance)
www.firstcandle.org

Organizational Meeting – Jan. 12, 2006
Lamoille Family Center – Morrisville, VT.

Attendees:

Sue Jaynes, Jo Romano (Facilitator), Stephanie Crouse, Steve Mason, Amy Hoagland, Steve Smith, Bonnie Waninger, Mindy Parisi, Michelle Legere, Jeff Hunsberger

The Agenda:

- Welcomes / Hellos
- Structure development for the SIMON Project
- Board of Directors – development
- Finance & Development
- Promotion / Marketing
- Education Outreach
- Peer To Peer Outreach Pgm. Development & Recruitment
- Website Development & Start Up
- Simon Kindness Project
- Affiliation with First Candle / SIDS Alliance

We opened the meeting with a description of what the project is trying to accomplish (Jeff) and by remembering those unborn babies and infants who have died related to or remembered by those who attended the meeting and those infants whom were asked to be remembered by others who could not attend the meeting.

Promotion / Marketing:

- How to recruit Parents who can do the Peer To Peer Outreach Program?
Kathy Roosa (Bereavement Group Developer) – Ask her to call and invite those Parents who have been involved in past groups to identify if they are interested in doing Peer To Peer Support Outreach / Matching with newly bereaved Parents as a part of the SIMON Project.
- Development of Parent Loss Databases (miscarriage, stillbirth, SIDS, SUDI, medical, accidental Death). To be kept confidential on Kathy & Jeff's computer's

- Develop Recruitment Packet (RP) – Jeff. This will include a letter inviting Parents to participate in Peer To Peer outreach with newly bereaved parents through facilitated supportive matches. This packet will also include a SIMON Project brochure and reference card. (This packet would be given to key staff at all Vermont hospitals to be sent out or personally handed out to Parents who have experienced a miscarriage or and infant loss – a phone number for either Jeff or Kathy will be included for initial contact.) Mindy Parisi will do this in Central Vermont - Central Vermont Medical Center (CVMC) areas as soon as it is developed. **HELP...! We need to identify other key individuals who can help us in this effort in all locations in Vermont and Northern New England – if you have a suggestion – please call or e-mail Jeff as soon as possible!**
- Develop the SIMON Project brochure / reference card (laminated) - First Candle / SIDS Alliance might be able to arrange printing.
- Develop Logo – **HELP...! We could use a person with artistic abilities to develop some concepts for the Logo for the project, perhaps using a five pointed star.**
- Develop Internet Web Site – Jeff with Bill Clark. Project domain name is already purchased “simonproject.org”. We will schedule a meeting and begin building the site, hyper-links, to include call numbers for Jeff’s home number to begin with. We will include hyper-links to Parent To Parent – Vermont, First Candle / SIDS Alliance, Vermont Dept. Of Health – SIDS / SUDI program & reference pages, Good Beginnings of Central Vermont, etc. Additionally, we will have basic information on the site about the program, further construction info., memorial page development, parent / family stories page, tips for parents related to their rights, funeral / memorial planning, bereavement information etc.
* Note: Parent To Parent – Vermont might be able to take the SIMON Project calls during regular business hours – still need to work out the details with Steve Mason and Staff. We will have a place on the web page that will by an e-mail link to the Web Master / Jeff for comments, suggestions, input, etc.
- Develop and promote “word of mouth” promotion of the SIMON Project.
- Develop Media Ads – develop relationship with radio / TV stations / staff to have on-air promotion of the SIMON Project. **HELP...! Do you know anyone who could help us in this department? Please call or e-mail Jeff with any suggestions.**
- Write letters to the Editors of all the State Newspapers to get initial information out to the Public via newspapers – including the free papers (Transcript, The World, Burlington Free Press, Caledonia Record, Times Argus, Barton Chronicle, Valley News, Rutland Herald, Bennington Banner, News & Citizen – Morrisville, Hardwick, The Bridge – Montpelier etc. **HELP...! We need to know what newspapers to send this info. too. Send in suggestions to Jeff by e-mail or phone.**
- Get SIMON Project info. out to all Maternal Child Health Coalitions statewide. Jeff will ask Kathy Keleher – VDH Nursing Administrator to distribute the information via VDH e-mail.
- Spokesperson – we could consider trying to find a credible personality / figure to do Media spots for us – perhaps a person who has experienced an infant loss. **Help...! Anyone have any suggestions? Send them my way please.**

Training & Support:

- Look into the possibilities of Parent To Parent – Vermont to train peer to peer Volunteers & Good Beginnings Staff. Jeff to discuss with Steve Mason.
- Look into the possibilities of First Candle / SIDS Alliance to train peer to peer Volunteers & Good Beginnings Staff. Jeff to discuss with Program Staff at First Candle.
- Look into RTS training – Mindy has completed this training in bereavement support. Mindy will explore the potential with that organization. (sorry, I don't remember what RTS stands for.)
- Look into the development of a Screening Tool / Application to be used for potential peer to peer volunteers. Jeff to explore with Parent To Parent – VT & First Candle / SIDS Alliance.
- Develop specific trainings for professions i.e.: EMT's, Child Care Center Staff, Birthing Educators, Doulas, Mid-Wives, Physician's, Public Health Nurses, Birthing Center Nurses, Emerg. Dept. Staff, Home Health & Hospice Staff, Clergy, Office of the Chief Medical Examiners Office – First Responders (potential partners), public education, Economic Services staff, AHS employees, Parent Child Center Staff, etc. * Sue Jaynes has volunteered to head this piece of the project up. Sue is a birthing educator, EMT, nursing student, and wonderful person! Thanks, Sue for help out with this! **HELP...! Do you have any suggestions of a group that could use training related to infant loss? Any suggestions for types of training or resources...please call or e-mail Jeff.**

The Simon Kindness Project:

- This is a very low cost but helpful part of the project. Based on the MISS Foundations Kindness Project concepts. www.missfoundation.org

Our concept is to help provide the needed services to a family if they need the help and ask for our assistance.

- Some possible ideas are:
(Gathering teams of volunteers or individuals to do the following)
The project coordinator would develop the outreach event and ask the parent if they would like the service.....
 - * Cut Grass
 - * Wash Cars for funerals
 - * Cook food and deliver food for immediate family
 - * Clean home
 - * Find rooms in peoples homes for family to stay in during funeral services etc. as a low cost alternative to expensive hotels / motels.
 - * Help with child care
 - * Stack wood if needed
 - * Help develop memorial services and provide receptions / staffing
 - * Snow removal & plowing if needed
 - * Transport family to and from services
 - * Refer to additional support services
 - * Building Memory Boxes for families – Local Artists built and decorated.

HELP: We need a coordinator for this part of the project. It has a significant amount of potential. If you are a motivated individual who can get local people together for these types of short term projects – call Jeff and let me know what you can do! Look at the MISS Foundation web site for additional ideas – however, those activities are more related to remembering specific infants, are random acts, and may have a cost associated to the act of kindness. This is a wonderful way to support people either overtly or not. We could use a little more kindness in our communities! Local outreach projects in specific areas could be developed as well.

Additional Programmatic Issues:

- Need to develop Professional Listing of:
 - * Therapists who specialize in infant loss / death
 - * Clergy with specific skills in infant loss / death
 - * Funeral Home recommendations / contacts
 - * Doulas
 - * Childbirth Educators
 - * Lactation Consultants – skilled in helping mother with milk supply
 - * Mental Health Agencies
 - * Web sites associated with grief and loss, remembrances
- The SIMON Project needs a project plan & priorities – to be developed
- We need to develop an internal leadership structure – to be developed

Financial & Capital Development:

- * The Simon Fund (held at the Lamoille Family Center) has approx. \$6500.00 donated in the name of Simon and Simon's Maternal Grandmother – Paulette Forbes who passed away from lung cancer on Nov. 6, 2005.
- * It has been recommended that we NOT spend our core base of money. If we need resource supplies, we should ask organizations to purchase them of us as a donation. Books etc.
- * It has been recommended that we begin the application process to become our own 501c3 non-profit. First Candle / SIDS alliance might be in a position to help us out on this.
- * We need to develop an annual appeal for funding.
- * Jeff will make contacts with Union Bank and Community National Bank to look for some Help in the purchasing books and other resources.
- * How will we make choices about spending money – Board of Directors? LFC Board?
- * First Candle / SIDS Alliance – Annual Fundraiser (Mountain Climber)
- * Raffle

HELP...! We need more expertise in this area of the program. That's why it was suggested that we try to find a person for the Board of Directors who has specific skills in this area of development. Send suggestions or comments to Jeff.

Internal Project Structure:

- Development of a Board of Directors:
 - * Who needs to be on the Board? We brainstormed....
 1. Area Health Education Center – St. Jay – Staff Person
 2. Medical Professional – MD
 3. Bereavement Counselor - Professional
 4. Legislator (Ann Pugh?)
 5. Parent Rep.
 6. Banker / Financial Institution Professional
 7. Attorney
 8. Doula / Child Birth Educator (Sue Jaynes?)
 9. Michelle Legere
 10. Jeff Hunsberger
 11. Lamoille Family Center – Representative

HELP...! Are you one of the above people? Do you know a person that might be interested in serving on our Board? Any and all suggestion....send to Jeff.

* The Next SIMON Project Meeting will be held at the Lamoille Family Center on:
February 22 at 6:00 PM

Questions, comments or feedback....Please call Jeff Hunsberger at 802.635.7696
Or e-mail me at (jahmdl@sover.net)

Michelle and I would like to thank all who attended this meeting and all of you who are interested in being a part of this project. We need your help – in spreading the word and promoting the project and referring people to the project and the website (once it is “live”). Special Thanks To – Jo Romano for facilitating our meeting. And Special Thanks, Love & Light to our baby boy, Simon Jeffrey Hunsberger & Connor Roosa and all the infants, and un-named infants who have given us the energy to put this project together to honor them and help others.

Smile & Be Kind.....In Their Honor.....!