

The SIMON Project
Sudden Infant Mourning Outreach Network
(A Parent to Parent Bereavement Support, Resource, and Training Network)

April 6, 2006

Happy Spring! I hope this e-mail newsletter finds everyone shaking off the chill of winter and enjoying (at least the thought of) warmer weather. As I look out The SIMON Project's main office window (in our home) there is still a couple of inches of snow on the ground. We all got a chance to do some early spring clean up before this last burst of winter – and my guess is that we really haven't seen the last of it just yet.

The April 11th Meeting is CANCELLED! Little progress has been made these past six weeks or so, in the interest of everyone's valuable time and competing activities – I think it best to schedule a meeting in late May. If you have any suggestions, please let me know ASAP. We were going to meet at the Lamoille Home Health & Hospice location & I'll check with Amanda to switch things around for a May date.

Instead of the meeting – I'll do an e-mail up-date for you now.

- 1.) The SIMON Project Web Site is not yet up and running. Although our plans and (my) hopes were to have the site up by the end of February there was a problem. Our Web Master designed the opening page and upon trying to up-load it onto the site – it was lost. He assures me that he can duplicate it but needs the time to do so. So we will continue to be patient and await the arrival of our cornerstone project. When it is actually available – you can bet that I will send you all the announcement immediately. We will need your help to review the site and give us tips on design, navigability (is that a word?), check to see if our links work etc. When you respond to the web page contact it will be directed to me, Kathy Roosa and our web master (Bill - the Emerg. Planning Grant King of VT!). We will correct and fix any issues or problems ASAP.
- 2.) I have held off designing and producing the RP (recruitment packets) because I want to refer people to our web site for more information etc. I also have not developed the laminated info. brochure for the same reasons. I really want to be consistent with the look of our materials and connection to a tangible product.
- 3.) On a positive note – I met with several Fletcher Allen Health Care Management staff this past Tuesday to give them The SIMON Project overview and vision / mission. They are very supportive and are on-board with our work as we will do everything we can to support them in their work on internal processes / training of staff and support of bereaved parents and families. Thanks to Angie Marano – COO FAHC & Board Member of First Candle / SIDS Alliance.
- 4.) The Burlington Office of the Vermont Dept. of Health (Sara Lane, RN) is participating in a Chittenden Cty. work group to develop a bereavement support group. This group has already taken several steps in gathering a good representation of people – including parents who have experienced an infant death. They are well on their way to addressing issues related to developing a support group and are looking for funding to build it and maintain it. Sara attended the Maternal Child Health Coalition meeting held at FAHC back in February when Kathy Roosa and I attend to introduce The SIMON Project. Great Work Sara and Team! Let's build this system together!
- 5.) Copies of "The SIDS & Infant Death Survival Guide" were distributed to each of the 12 VT. Dept. of Health District Offices in February. We are discussing how to reach all VT. hospitals to give them a free copy of the book – so far we have given one to FAHC, CVMC, & Gifford Hosp. Along with the book – I want to send out The SIMON Project info. so we are holding for the moment.
- 6.) No word yet from First Candle / SIDS Alliance about the Peer to Peer Training dates. Again, as soon as I hear, I'll get it out to everyone.

- 7.) I have received (today) the First Candle / SIDS Alliance Training information regarding EMT Training – Called: “SIDS & Infant Death – Skills up-date for First Responders, Emergency Medical Technicians, Paramedics and Emergency Department Personnel” I also received the Training packet related to “Health Care Professionals’ Guide to Bereavement Support” – “Helping Bereaved Children” – “Practical Grief Concepts” – “Effective Grief Support” – “Skills Practice” – related to the peer to peer outreach skills – “Resources” – “SIDS / SUDI Fact Sheets” – “Reducing The Risk” – “Miscarriage & Stillbirth Facts & Statistics.” Several additional packets are arriving via snail mail with more goodies. These are all in power point formats and are easily usable for our needs and purposes. Oh Sue Jaynes.....are you ready to get together and review these? This is top quality stuff – fresh and in a great format – Our Collective Thanks to First Candle / SIDS Alliance!
- 8.) Grant Up-date.....We won’t hear from the CJ Foundation until June but it was submitted and received on time. (remember, that was for start up costs and infrastructure support. My request is for \$25,000.00. I also applied for a Kinney Drug Grant – asking for an additional \$25,000.00. No timeline on that one.....anything would be greatly appreciated.
- 9.) I will be attending a national certification program course in Montpellier in a couple of weeks run by our very own Franne Whitney Nelson. The course - if I pass - is a certification as a Sudden Death Trauma Specialist. Thanks to Franne – I received a scholarship and will be paying the rest out of my own pocket. I hope it will help me bring back to the project some new skills and perspective. Franne is a wonderful person who came to our house just after Simon died and taught us about grief and what to expect – she was (and still is) a great support. She is an educator not a counselor or therapist. She is keeping abreast of The SIMON Project via e-mail and hopefully we can invite her to provide training and support for our work in the future. Anyone interested in her work should contact her directly at Death Education Consulting (802)-223-7872 or at legacyhill@pshift.com
- 10.) Any referrals to The SIMON Project can be sent to Jeff at jahmdl@sover.net or (802) 635-7696. Parents looking for resources or peer to peer support or parents who want to be a part of the project in any way should call or e-mail me.

Lastly, I want to thank you for your interest, ideas, energy, participation and support of The SIMON Project. This is our work to honor all of our miscarried or unborn babies, stillborn babies, or infants who have died from SIDS / SUDI or any medical / accidental situation. All of this work is in their memory, and no matter how much energy you have to put into this or any other outreach work – know that your love and energy is felt by all of us. Be at peace, know that you are not alone, smile and be kind, the gentle breezes of spring on your cheeks are the light touches of our babies spirits coming to remind us they are with us always and forever.

My Best, Jeff Hunsberger