

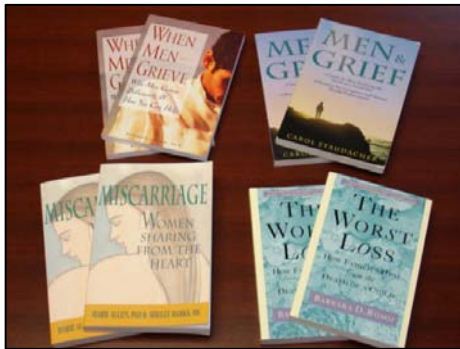
Our Chapter's Journey with the Loss Network

By: Gail Moore, Temiskaming Multiple Births

Temiskaming Multiple Births is a small MBC Chapter isolated in northeastern Ontario. Small, in numbers, because our membership fluctuates around the 20 families mark and has since it was first established in 1985, however our geographic area is large. Large, in size, because our gatherings can be anywhere from Temagami to Kirkland Lake, which according to Goggle is 144 km – which is about 1 hour 58 minutes if you follow the speed limit. We overcome this hurdle by staying connected through email.

In 2007 there were a lot of emails flying back and forth. A quarter of our members had just given birth or were expecting in 2008. We shared remedies for leg cramps and talked about how to pick a good stroller. We journeyed together as six families counted down to their due dates. Then, one of the expectant Dads called. He asked that they be taken off the email chain because their babies had recently died in their mother's womb and reading the messages from all the new multiple-birth Moms was hard on them. We quickly deleted their names from the chain, sending them personal messages of sympathy.

The loss was a learning experience for our Chapter. Unlike other families who had losses, this family stayed connected because they needed to feel the kinship we had as multiple-birth families. They knew we understood what they had lost, and so they turned to us for grief support. We immediately connected them with Lynda Haddon who is a true angel to the Loss Support Network. Using her many years of experience, she tried to guide them through their pain. When Lynda suggested they read a few books on grief, they tried to borrow them from the local library, but were told that our small community library did not have them to lend.



locally.

In my 15 years of being involved with Temiskaming Multiple Births, it had never dawned on me to see what resources were available in our public libraries for families suffering loss. On occasion, we have purchased MBC's Bereavement Support Kit that includes Fact Sheets, Loss Reading List, Bereavement Resource Organizations, three Loss booklets and related multiple-birth statistics, but we had not ever reviewed that reading list to see if these books were available

We quickly filled this need, ordering books recommended by Lynda Haddon online through Indigo and Amazon. The titles include: *Men and Grief: A Guide for Men Surviving the Death of a Loved One* by Carol Straudacher, *Miscarriage: Women Sharing from the Heart* by Marie Allen, PHD and Shelly Marks, MS, *The Worst Loss: How Families Heal from the Death of a Child* by Barbara D. Rosof, and *When Men Grieve: Why Men Grieve Differently and How You Can Help* by Elizabeth Levang, Ph.D. The books have now been donated to our libraries, and our members are hoping that over the years they will bring some peace and enlightenment to its readers.

On another note, at the 2008 MBC National Conference, Lynda Haddon is offering a workshop entitled "Losses in Multiple Birth: How Caregivers can provide appropriate support". Hope to see you there!