



Noseletter

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Your research update

By
Lacey Fitzgerald,
Prevention and
Research Manager

Tragically, over 2,000 babies are stillborn each year – that's six families devastated by the loss of their baby every single day.

And while not every stillbirth is preventable, many are.

Research has already identified that many stillbirths are caused by an ageing placenta that slowly reduces the nutrients and oxygen a baby needs to survive.

Placentas age at different rates, just like people do. As the pregnancy advances and the placenta ages, stillbirth becomes more likely.

Your generous support has been funding ground-breaking research looking to develop a blood test that will predict stillbirth, allowing doctors to intervene before the unimaginable happens.

Led by Laureate Professor Roger Smith AM, along with Professor Craig Pennell and Dr Kaushik, this exciting research is already making headway in the fight to save little lives.

In the last two years, our researchers have been busy developing a specialised method for testing donated placentas and analysing their exosomes, tiny particles that a placenta releases into a mother's blood stream.

Excitingly, researchers have confirmed that these exosome particles can indeed measure how well a placenta is working – the first step to predicting some stillbirths!

The next step for Professor Smith and his team, is to work out how to find and test these exosome particles in a sample of a mother's blood, and how to interpret those results to identify which pregnancies are at a higher risk.

Research projects like this one are incredibly exciting, helping to build a future where doctors can prevent a stillbirth from happening – and it's all possible because of you!



Support the next step in stillbirth prevention by donating here rednose.org.au/donate

Remembering little lives

By
Fiona Jordan, Red Nose Bereavement
Communications Manager



Remembrance services are a vital part of the grieving process for many parents. These events are a safe space to express love for your child and connect with other bereaved families, helping everyone feel less alone in their pain.

Your generosity has once again enabled us to hold our National Remembrance Service, helping hundreds of grieving families connect and honour their precious children.

This year the Service was again held virtually, ensuring that bereaved parents across the country, whether separated by state, rural areas or even lockdown, could all attend together.

Through poems, songs, lighting of candles, and simply being together, this year's Remembrance Service was the bittersweet comfort needed and cherished by families across the country.

Thanks to your support, this year we acknowledged the names and special dates of over 460 babies and children who have died.

I too have experienced the heartbreak of losing a child, after the miscarriage of my first pregnancy. I truly know the importance of the connection and comfort events like this bring grieving parents.

Opportunities to reflect on our love for our missing children, speak their names aloud, and to connect with other parents who truly understand is simply priceless.

Although our babies and children are no longer with us physically, they will be in our hearts, souls and memories always.

From the bottom of my heart I want to thank you for making this very special Remembrance Service possible, and for supporting parents who've had to say that final heartbreaking goodbye to their baby or child.



Thanks to you, families across Australia came together to remember their children.

Read more about this year's special Remembrance Service at rednose.org.au/news

He was *perfect* in every way



Your generosity supports hundreds of bereaved parents like Liz each month.

By
By Liz Clements, Mother of Four

Jayden was so beautiful and so tiny, only 660 grams and perfect in every way. But he was born still.

The hospital gave us Red Nose support brochures and tried their best to help me prepare for the overwhelming grief I would experience.

But I fell into a deep depression.

I wish I'd used Red Nose more in those early days. I closed myself off from so much support and I know now that it would have been so much easier to feel held in a place of safety in my grief.

After Jayden was born, I was diagnosed with a rare disease.

I blamed my body for betraying both Jayden and me, and I had to work so hard to overcome this undeserved guilt.

My husband and I also had to work hard to support one another as we both grieve so differently. At times it was a sense of real discord.

Thankfully, Red Nose helped us be more aware of each other's mental states, and to acknowledge when we need help.

Jayden is buried near one of my favourite spots in the hills and we have some lovely family rituals to ensure he is never forgotten.

We always speak openly about Jayden, carrying on his name and letting our children know they have a beautiful big brother in heaven.

We celebrate his birthday with a cake and we sing and have a nice dinner - we imagine what his favourite birthday dinner would have been.

No matter how uncomfortable it can be, we have to talk about the death of babies.

It's important to break down the stigma surrounding stillbirth and grief, and help parents find the support they need to keep moving forward.

I'm so very grateful for Red Nose's bereavement support services and I want to thank you for making it all possible, and for being there for families like mine.

Helping dads feel less *alone*



By
Janelle Marshall, Red Nose Peer Support Manager

After the heartbreaking loss of their child, many dads struggle with how to grieve 'the right way', feeling a different societal pressure that can complicate their grieving.

Thanks to your support, our latest Ways to Be Ok Forum focused on supporting dads after the devastating loss of their child.

Many bereaved dads feel weighed down by the expectation to focus energy on supporting their partner or to get back to work and normality – often resulting in ignoring their own need to grieve.

Of course everybody grieves differently, but the different expectations on mum and dad can impact their relationship and make the grieving process even harder.

Our recent online Ways to Be Ok Forum created a safe space for men and their families to discuss their grief and learn new strategies to connect during heartbreak.

A panel of bereaved fathers led the discussion, sharing experiences on how they navigated their grief, what supports they put in place and how best to relate to partners during this difficult time.

Sharing personal stories of losing their babies, one year, eight years and sixteen years ago, our brave panel of dads helped normalise and validate men's grief and gave hope to those whose losses were still fresh.

Attended by both dads and mums, parents commented that the Forum was such a comfort and contained many helpful tips for themselves and their partners.

Your generosity helps heartbroken dads find support when they need it most.



It helped me feel less alone. My wife and I now feel comfortable to sign up for an online support group too.

Your generosity helps ensure no dad has to walk the lonely path of grief alone. Through our forums, suite of online resources, counselling and peer supports, every parent has the tools they need to cope after the heartbreaking loss of their baby or child.

For more resources for grieving fathers visit
rednosegriefandloss.org.au/fathers-of-loss

Safer choices in a world of online influencers

By
Jane Wiggill, Red Nose Chief Midwife



Thanks to the ever growing popularity of online shopping and an explosion of social media advertising targeting new parents, we've seen a flood of unsafe baby products landing in Aussie homes.

Because many products are expensive and they're endorsed by online influencers, parents often make the mistake of assuming they're safe – which is not always the case.

Thanks to your support, our latest Facebook Q&A session specifically focused on how new parents can cut through online marketing to make safer choices for their baby.

Today parents are bombarded on Facebook and Instagram with beautiful images containing products to make life easier and baby more comfortable – feeding into a new parent's desire to have the perfect nursery.

And so many of these products are marketed for 'better sleep' but have had no safety testing – while some even go directly against our evidence-based Safe Sleeping advice.

Instagram Influencer and Red Nose Ambassador Amie Rohan and I were privileged to reach over 16,000 parents in our recent online Q&A, as we debunked unsafe products and urged parents to think critically about an influencer's credibility – and when in doubt to ask Red Nose!

Hearing from Red Nose on this important topic ensured that as first time parents we understood safe practices and that 'pretty' isn't the goal – having a safe environment and a healthy baby is!

Thanks to your generosity, we can put on vital Q&As like this one to help arm every parent with the knowledge they need to keep their baby safe.

Visit the Safe Sleep Advice Hub at rednose.org.au/safesleep

Your support helps new parents make safer choices for their baby every day.



Support research and help save *little* lives

Every day, our researchers, educators and staff work tirelessly to create a future where ZERO babies and children die suddenly and unexpectedly during pregnancy, infancy and early childhood.

And your past support has already funded over \$18 million in research into sudden infant deaths and stillbirth – **saving over 11,357 babies' lives.**

But with nine babies and children still dying every day, there's a lot more work to do to reach ZERO in our lifetimes – *and we need your help to get there.*

For as little as \$35, you can help us reach Target ZERO.

Your \$35 helps save little lives today by funding:

- The development of a blood test to help predict and prevent stillbirth.
- Research on how to support side sleeping for pregnant mothers reducing the risk of stillbirth.
- Red Nose's National Scientific Advisory Group, who help determine the future of SIDS research.



I support research in memory of my precious little granddaughter, who I never got the chance to meet.

Linda, bereaved grandmother

Yes, I will help reach Target ZERO!

- ☐ **\$35** can help fund the glass slides, tubes and pipette tips researchers need every day
- ☐ **\$70** can help fund a centrifuge used to prepare samples for testing
- ☐ **\$105** can help fund an electron microscope used to look for risk markers in blood samples
- ☐ I'd like to give \$ to help save as many little lives as possible

Donate online at:
rednose.org.au/donate

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