

Valued Members of Baby's Breath,

It is my pleasure to report to you today on behalf of the Board and Foundation, and to share some brief comments with regards to initiatives undertaken during the year 2017.

In 2017, we continued to build our Baby's Breath brand and reputation across Canada. You may recall at the end of 2016 we had mailed information packages to over 800 funeral homes in Canada, providing details about our organization and what we do. These were well received and opened communication pathways with funeral directors with whom we have continued to provide information and resources as needed.

In January, we were invited to present to the Ontario Government Standing Committee on Finance and Economic Affairs in order to make recommendations on provincial funding allocations related to Bill 141. This meeting put us in front of MPPs from all across the province of Ontario. We advocated for the needs of the SIDS community, ensuring that they were included in Bill 141 initiatives. Our presentation was well received and our recommendations were shared with the health critics in Ontario.

In early 2017, we sent a letter to the Public Health Agency of Canada (PHAC), addressing concerns we had regarding the omission of what we felt were critical details in the Safe Sleep for Your Baby resources. While the response we received did not result in a change to their publication, it was the catalyst for us to create a new resource which was released in 2018. Our opinion and advice was also widely sought on "baby boxes" due to concerns with their overall safety. We hope it has provided new parents with some additional resources.

We continued our e-newsletter in 2017 providing subscribers with 6 editions. These newsletters inform members, donors and supporters on the activities and projects ongoing within our organization, as well as on events that are relevant to our cause. We have maintained a mailing list of over 500 individuals for each mail out.

We continued to be very active on social media, mainly Facebook last year. The community that follows our Facebook page has grown to over 600 individuals and more than 400 on Twitter. These numbers are up significantly from 2016. We also sent out 12 bereavement kits in 2017 and provided Peer Support to 5 individuals.

Baby's Breath was fortunate to have the support of several large third party events in 2017. The SIDS Snowmobile Rally hosted a Charity Dinner and donated \$3500 to Baby's Breath. The 11th Annual Kieran's Walk for SIDS took place in October and raised \$1400, bringing their event's cumulative total to over \$28,000 in 11 years. A church group from Essex County, Ontario started a Baby Steps Walk to Remember event and raised \$2000 for our organization. We were thrilled when they shared that this will be an annual event. A group of Royal Roads University students did a school project for our organization, created the Seeds for SIDS fundraiser and sold floral seeds resulting in a donation of \$735 to Baby's Breath. Towards the end of the year, we began to discuss a Group Grief Counselling Teleconference fundraiser. The goal of this fundraiser is to raise the funds to start a monthly telephone support group, led by a grief specialist. To date this fundraiser has raised \$730. We require just over \$2000 in order to run a trial of this program for one year.

After success in 2016 with the Canada Summer Jobs Grant we applied again for the summer of 2017. Unfortunately, our request was denied in 2017 due to an increased number of requests and not enough available funding.

Dorel Safety First has been a dedicated supporter of Baby's Breath for years but decided not to continue with their October SIDS Awareness donation in 2016. Previously, they donated between \$1 and \$5 per mattress sold in October to Baby's Breath. They reported that this promotion did not result in an increase in business for them so they chose not to continue it in 2017. Baby's Breath board and staff are working at ways to reengage this business in 2018.

The Edmonton Council of Baby's Breath made a final donation of over \$56,000, before shutting down their operations nearing the end of 2017. This volunteer group has been representing Baby's Breath within the community, providing peer support and fundraising for well over 20 years. They have provided a great pillar of financial strength and support to Baby's Breath over the years. On behalf of the organization I send our sincere gratitude for all their hard work and dedication.

Baby's Breath sent out a direct mail campaign during SIDS & Infant Loss Awareness Month, featuring a story from one of our Board of Directors, Lori Hickey, who lost her son to SIDS. The campaign reached out to donors who have not given in a number of years. In total the campaign raised close to \$1000.

On November 23rd, 2017 Baby's Breath launched a new website in both French and English. This new website offers more in depth information on SIDS, SUDC and stillbirth. It provides resources and access to support for individuals and families. All memorials that were submitted to the old website were transferred to the new site so that the tributes continue to live on. The new site has resulted in an increase in visitors and individuals spending more time on the website.

A number of additional projects were started in 2017 and have carried into 2018. This includes a new bereavement kit package that we will send out to grieving families, a SIDS & Reducing the Risk Brochure, a grant application to the Calgary Flames Foundation, and a mass information package mail out to Victim Service locations across the country.

I wish to extend my most sincere thank you to our board members, medical advisory committee members and all our volunteers for their expertise and work through the year. Your support and advice are invaluable. In particular, I would like to thank Ellen Stotland who served on our board this past year, helping us during a critical time when we were short board members. Ellen is leaving our board after this AGM so please join me and extending our utmost thank you to her.

In addition, I would also like to thank all of the volunteers and individuals who have helped raise money for the Foundation in 2017 through third-party fundraising events and independent donations.

It has been an honour and pleasure to serve as chair for this past year, and I look forward to continuing my work with the foundation. We are already off to a great start in 2018. We have a number of new and exciting projects that we are undertaking and look forward to continuing our work of advocacy, support and education.

Sincerely,
Dr. Wendy Potter
Chair