

## About the Speaker

Carol McMurrich, BA, EdM, founded Empty Arms Bereavement Support in 2007, nearly four years after the death of her daughter Charlotte during labor. A sociologist and educator by training, after her loss Ms McMurrich became passionate about the creation of community surrounding pregnancy and infant loss in a society that marginalizes death to an astounding degree.

Empty Arms Bereavement Support was founded on the principles of first and foremost serving the families of the Pioneer Valley whose babies have died during pregnancy or after birth, and secondly providing the support to caregivers who will be instrumental in those families experiences of loss.

McMurrich shares, "Grief is a constant evolution for all people, but for parents whose babies have died their grief rests on a foundation which is the brief window of opportunity they have to experience their pregnancy, their birth, and their baby. Care providers are often the only knowledgeable people present who are able to carefully help families shape this foundation, at a time when families are often deeply in shock and unaware of the lasting effects of the decisions they will make."

McMurrich's professional trainings are based on her extensive training with Share, Pregnancy and Infant Loss, Inc, her own research, and her eight years of work with hundreds of bereaved families across Western Massachusetts and beyond.

## Our Organization

Empty Arms Bereavement Support, Inc., recognizes the devastation that the loss of a baby can cause in a family's life and seeks to provide a variety of supportive environments where parents can speak truthfully about their experiences and emotions.

We believe that healing comes through understanding what we have been through and what lies ahead, which allows us to begin to integrate our losses into who we are.

We respect that each person's journey is uniquely challenging in its own right. We embrace the many forms that grief can take: whether that be sadness, anger, confusion, or intermittent peace. We believe each person should follow the path that is right for him or her.

We believe that as a community of bereaved parents, we can help each other to find the inner wisdom and courage we need to survive such tragedy.

A critical way we carry out our mission is to provide professional development opportunities to those dedicated care providers who will be present with families at the time of loss. It is our honor and privilege to ensure that those providers enter into loss situations confidently and competently, emerging with the knowledge that they have given each family the best start to their grief journey.

Empty Arms Bereavement Support is a chapter of  
Share Pregnancy and Infant Loss, Inc.,  
[www.emptyarmsbereavement.org](http://www.emptyarmsbereavement.org)

# Speaking and Professional Development



When it comes to  
Pregnancy and Infant loss  
few of us feel as if we're  
experts...

And, it's possible that's because there are no experts. When we're working with families under the most difficult of circumstances, often the best thing we can hope for is to enter each situation armed with a tool kit of sorts that can help us work with each individual family in their own unique situation. See how Empty Arms can help you develop your set of tools....

# Some examples of possible Empty Arms Professional Trainings...

## Training #1 : Shaping the Journey of Bereaved Families in the Birth Place

As health care providers, we often struggle with the “right” way to interact with families when their babies have died or are expected to die. Our apprehension can be our greatest stumbling block entering into situations of loss.

In this training, we will look closely at the grief journey a family walks after the death of a baby and the ways in which the birth experience and the time a family spends with their baby shapes the road that will follow.

In this presentation, our speaker will look to spin our perspective on working with the bereaved to see that it is a unique privilege to accompany a family during the brief window of time they will have with their baby. We will discuss the ways in which we present information and options to families at the time of loss and learn a myriad of strategies for helping families make the choices that are best for them at that time.

The presentation will offer space for audience participation and will feature a panel of bereaved parents to offer their own unique perspectives.

## Training #2: Memory Making when a Baby Dies

There are many things that we can do to create tangible memories for families whose babies have died. From thoughtful, creative photography, to precise hand and foot casting, to carefully collecting the items that the baby and family touched during their time together, as care providers we are often solely responsible for giving families their “tools” for their grief process. In this training care providers work together to learn some of the hands-on techniques of memory making as well as think through the importance of all of these items to a family who is grieving.

## Training #3: Supporting Early Loss in the Office

It's no secret that within a busy obstetrical office, early loss can sometimes be overlooked. Many practices wish to change that, and in this training we will examine the way that information is presented to women who are experiencing early pregnancy loss and the ability we have to help them through this process. We will share resources and techniques to empower women who are miscarrying and help them to feel well supported through the process.

## Training #4: In-Services Customized for your Staff or Workplace

Perhaps you have become aware that there are people in your workplace who have gaps in their knowledge about how to care for the bereaved.

Or, perhaps you're extending your services to a new population of people and you're aware that your staff needs more information on bereavement support.

Or, perhaps you've become aware that it would benefit your staff and the families you serve if everyone were on the same page when it comes to bereavement care.

Whatever your need, your staff can work with Carol McMurrich to design the program and provide you with the materials you need to be sure that your staff has the training they need to execute the best care possible for the families you serve.

All of our programs are priced to be as inexpensive as possible to make them as accessible as we can to those who need them. Please email us for more information at [emptyarmsbereavement@gmail.com](mailto:emptyarmsbereavement@gmail.com)