

## ***Each life, no matter how brief, forever changes the world.***

Most people don't know that Hinds Hospice provides grief support to anyone in the community who experiences a loss. Thanks to community support, we are available to help anyone cope with their grief, heal, and celebrate their loved ones regardless of how their path leads them to Hinds Hospice. Annette and Victor Dominguez did not have a connection to Hinds Hospice when they contacted us, but they say that phone call changed their lives.

In April 25, 2014, Annette and Victor lost Baby Immanuel Victor Dominguez, at the 20-week mark.

"We had two girls, and this was the little boy we were waiting for," remembers Victor. "A co-worker was pregnant at the same time; In fact, our babies were born on the same day. After Immanuel died, my co-worker really struggled because now she had a baby and we didn't. She didn't know how to talk to me, and didn't want me to see pictures of her newborn because she thought that it would be too hard for me." Even tougher, most people close to them didn't want to mention Baby Immanuel. "Even family didn't know what to say, so they didn't mention him. We were really, really struggling after his death. We didn't have anyone to talk to."



Fortunately, another co-worker told Victor about the Angel Babies Program at Hinds Hospice where support specialists help families process their loss. "We were having a really difficult time and even though it was a weekend, we called anyway and someone actually answered the phone. We explained our situation, and they were understanding and said they would pass our information along. We thought we would hear from someone the following week, and were very surprised when they called back within the hour. It was such a relief for us. We felt a partnership right then, and knew they could help us."



Annette and Victor met with Candice Wilkins, MSW, who introduced them to the Angel Babies Support Group. "They were nervous, but felt they needed to give it a try," says Candice. Victor remembers the first meeting. "We knew it was going to be tough, tough topics, but we trusted Candice. She was so caring, and she told us what to expect. Angel Babies became a place where we could talk and feel safe. Of

course, at first we didn't know anyone in the group. We all started as strangers and then we became a little family. We are still close with people in our group. We know their story and they know ours. We all got better together and we've been friends ever since."

The couple's daughters, Sarah, now twelve, and Sophia, now nine, also attended Hinds Hospice Circle of Friends, a special program created over thirty years ago for children age three to fourteen who have experienced a loss. Over 1,500 children have been through the program. "They really liked the Circle of Friends, and it helped them a lot," says Victor. "Even though Sophia was very young, she remembers Hinds Hospice. She still points to the building when we drive by."



The Dominguez family went to their first Angel Babies Walk/Run in 2015. "This event celebrates the memory of our son. Each year, we order a marker in memory of Immanuel. After the walk/run, we take the marker off the post and we place it on a wall in our home next to pictures of him. This year we'll be adding Immanuel's sixth marker."

Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, Hinds Hospice's 16<sup>th</sup> Annual Angel Babies Walk/Run became a virtual event. Please see the enclosed letter for ways you can help us meet our fundraising goal for Angel Babies.



Hinds Hospice thanks Dignity Memorial for their support as a Hinds Hospice We Care Partner. The We Care partners are comprised of organizations that step forward to underwrite a year of Hinds Hospice outreach publications and electronic communications. This support of our outreach costs frees resources for Hinds Hospice to fund other community work.

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