Sands Helpline to open on Christmas Day and New Year to support bereaved parents

Wednesday 7 December, 2016

Sands (Stillbirth & neonatal death charity) knows that the festive period may be a particularly sad and upsetting time for parents who have experienced a stillbirth or whose babies have died neonatally.

That's why the charity has extended the opening hours of its Helpline to cover the holiday period every day including Christmas Day, New Year's Eve and New Year's Day.

The confidential telephone Helpline provides a safe place for anyone affected by the death of a baby to talk about their feelings. The charity's experienced Helpline team is there to listen and provide information.

Dr Clea Harmer, Chief Executive of Sands, said: "Bereaved parents tell us that Christmas can be highly emotional for them as they spend time with their close friends and families and remember their babies who have died. So we have responded by extending the opening hours of our Helpline at a time they may need us the most.

"I would urge anyone who has been affected by the death of a baby to get in touch if they want to talk to us over the festive period. We are dedicated to providing emotional support and information right from the early hours after a baby's death, through to the weeks, months and years ahead."

The Sands Helpline will open during the following hours:

Christmas Eve (Saturday 24 December) 10am-3pm, 6pm-9pm.

Christmas Day (Sunday 25 December) 10am-3pm, 6pm-9pm.

Boxing Day (Monday 26 December) 10am-3pm, 6pm-9pm.

Tuesday 27 December - Friday 30 December normal helpline hours -9.30am-5.30pm.

New Year's Eve (Saturday 31 December) 7pm-12am.

New Year's Day (Sunday 1 January) 10am-3pm.

Monday 2 January 2017 10am-3pm.

Tuesday 3 January 2017 normal helpline hours resume (Monday to Friday: 9.30am-5.30pm
Tuesday and Thursday evenings: 6pm-10pm).

The Sands Helpline number is: 020 7436 5881. Bereaved parents and their families can also email the Helpline if they would prefer at: helpline@uk-sands.org

For further information visit: www.uk-sands.org/support/how-we-offer-support

or follow the charity on Twitter at: www.twitter.com/sandsuk

Notes to editors

For further information, please contact Lee Armitt, Press and PR Officer in the Sands press office on 0203 598 1959 or 07587 925411 or media@uk-sands.org

About Sands

Sands is the leading stillbirth and neonatal death charity in the UK. They work nationally to reduce baby deaths through promoting better maternity care and funding research. They have a programme of training and a wide range of resources designed to support professionals to improve the bereavement care they provide following the death of a baby, and they provide a comprehensive bereavement support

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service both nationally through their helpline and locally through around 100 regional support groups based across the UK. Further information can be found at www.uk-sands.org.

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