

The Rights of Parents *Who Experience a Pregnancy Loss*

Parents who have suffered a pregnancy loss, whether an early miscarriage or a full term stillbirth, should have the opportunity:

- ❖ To contact their partner or other support persons immediately.
- ❖ To have any medical procedures explained to them and to be offered the one the parents believe best suits their needs.
- ❖ To be given the choice to see their baby, no matter how small.
- ❖ To be reminded that their baby may be tested and examined, even if the loss occurs at home.
- ❖ To be given a keepsake of their baby to take home or for the hospital or doctor's office to keep on file, such as a sonogram picture or a positive pregnancy test result for an early loss, or foot prints, photos and a lock of hair for later losses.
- ❖ To receive compassionate, well-informed pastoral care.
- ❖ To name their baby if they wish to.
- ❖ To receive information on burial, funeral or memorial services and the options concerning the disposition of their baby's remains no matter how small.
- ❖ To have the grieving process explained and to be provided with written information on bereavement, especially the telephone number of a local pregnancy loss support group.
- ❖ To receive guidance on how to help their children at home cope with the pregnancy loss.
- ❖ To have a phone number of a staff person to call if medical questions arise or if the parents need emotional support or referral information for further help.
- ❖ To receive follow-up appointments for medical tests and genetic counseling or to review lab test results.
- ❖ To be asked about their feelings concerning their loss. This is a comforting gesture which encourages the parents to talk about their loss if they wish to.