



empty
arms
VERMONT



Empty Arms Vermont

Empty Arms Vermont provides peer support to individuals and families whose babies have died through miscarriage, stillbirth, early infant death, or termination for medical reasons.

- 20-25% of all pregnancies end in a loss
 - **1 in 4 pregnancies end in grief**
- Risk of suicide and substance abuse increases after perinatal loss.
- The existence of mental health problems is also an added risk factor for poor fetal outcomes during a subsequent pregnancy.

- Social support plays a role in buffering the effects of trauma in mediating stress after bereavement.

- Any intervention that allows birthing people to express their emotions and retell their stories helps to decrease depression, self-blame, and trauma.



Bereaved birthing parents have

4X greater odds of major depression and seven times greater odds of post-traumatic stress disorder than non-bereaved birthing parents.

2
0
2
3



50
support groups
8
facilitators



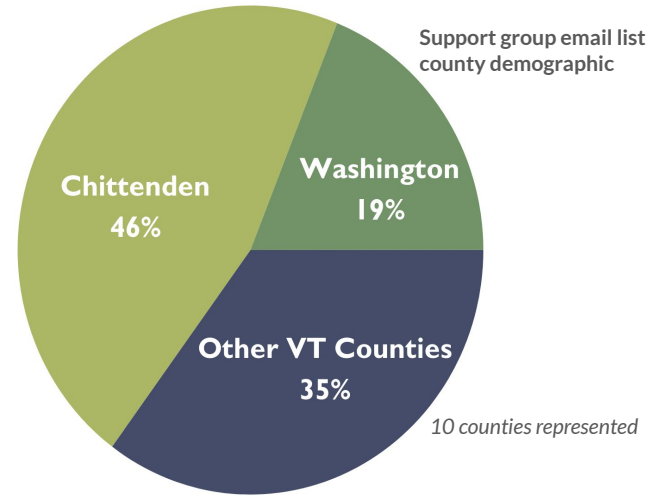
61
unique support
group participants



10
yoga classes
32
unique participants



35
mailed care packages
100
miscarriage support bags





Strengthening Peer Support for Pregnancy & Infant Loss

“Mental health services for pregnancy loss in Vermont are inadequate and there are no statewide funded supportive programs for perinatal loss. Currently, Empty Arms Vermont is the only organization offering statewide virtual and in-person supports for perinatal loss.” (*VDH Maternal Mortality Review Panel 2024 Report*)



Legislative Funding Proposal: To secure one-time funding of \$40,000 for two years to expand operational capacity so that we have the personnel resources and time to scale up programs and develop a long-term plan for sustainable funding.



Update: Our budget request was given the highest priority by the House Human Services committee but ultimately was not included in the House budget. We are advocating in the Senate for this one-time request to be added to the budget.

Senate Appropriations

- Sen. Jane Kitchel, Chair
- Sen. Andrew Perchlik, Vice Chair
- Sen. Richard Westman, Clerk
- Sen. Robert Starr
- Sen. Dick Sears Jr.
- Sen. Philip Baruth
- Sen. Virginia "Ginny" Lyons

Senate Health and Welfare

- Sen. Virginia "Ginny" Lyons, Chair
- Sen. David Weeks, Vice Chair
- Sen. Ruth Hardy
- Sen. Martine Larocque Gulick
- Sen. Terry Williams



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