


# Older Loss

The Red Nose Older Loss group offer support to families to help locate where their babies were buried.



If you haven't been able to find your baby, and you are looking for support, our group is available to talk through your experience.

**24/7 Support Line 1300 308 307**

**[communityengagementteam@rednose.org.au](mailto:communityengagementteam@rednose.org.au)**



## Red Nose Bereavement Support Services

We support anyone affected by the loss of a pregnancy, stillbirth or the death of a baby or child.

**24/7 Support Line 1300 308 307**

**[support@rednose.org.au](mailto:support@rednose.org.au)**

**Support Library [rednosegriefandloss.org.au](http://rednosegriefandloss.org.au)**

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# About the Older Loss Group



**The Red Nose Older Loss group was established over 30 years ago by Sands Victoria volunteers. Its aim was to bring together parents of babies who died prior to the early 1980's.**

This was a time when hospitals believed that it was best for families to have no contact with their precious babies who were stillborn or died soon after birth. These babies were then buried in unknown locations, and families were expected to go home with no access to support and told to move on.

**“I felt guilt, so much guilt. I had always expected to see and hold my baby, but it never happened. I had no choice and I was given no options. My trust in everything was broken.”**

– Lynne

Today, the Older Loss Group continue to provide support and assistance to those searching for the resting place of their babies. This helps offer peace of mind and comfort to those bereaved families in our community.



Every year Red Nose receives enquiries from families who are searching for the resting place of their baby. In many cases this is in an unmarked grave at a cemetery where the baby has been buried with other babies who died at a similar time.

**There are several ways that you can start your search for your baby. These include:**

- Contacting the hospital where your baby was born and asking if you can have access to their medical records. It may also be helpful to ask for your own records at the same time as information may have been recorded separately
- Also be aware that medical records may have been lost or destroyed in the time since your baby was born, or that records may not contain burial details. In this case, it may be possible to find out which cemetery the hospital was using for communal burials at that particular time. Again, if the hospital no longer exists, try your state government's health department.
- Searching the cemetery records for information about babies who were buried around the time of your baby's birth. Funeral directors located around the hospital that you gave birth may also have records of your baby's burial if they were used.
- Accessing information through your state or territory Births, Deaths and Marriages registry to check if your baby's birth and death was registered with them.

When families are able to find the resting place of their baby, many families go on to lay a plaque or hold a memorial in recognition of the baby that was taken away from them without a proper goodbye.

**There are also many ways of acknowledging and remembering your baby including:**

- Choosing a name for your baby; If you haven't already chosen a name yet
- Establishing an annual ritual
- Holding a memorial service
- Sharing your baby's and your story with others

It is completely normal to want to acknowledge the death of a loved one and we understand that the loss you have experienced is lifelong. It is normal to have times of reflection and sadness, and the desire to include your baby's life in your family's story.

**“For years I wondered where my baby was buried. When I finally decided to look for him, I didn't want my family to know, because they thought I was over it. I knew they wouldn't want me to get upset by reliving all the pain from the past. I was thankful to Sands for helping me discreetly. And eventually I did talk to my family, when I was ready.”**

– Edith