

December 15, 2008

Dear friends,

While Omaha seems to have several formal grief support groups, there are not any specifically for people that lose their spouse at a young age. General grief support groups for widows/widowers can be helpful, but they tend to focus more on grieving after spending a whole life together. There are different feelings when you haven't had the chance to live out the life together that you had planned.

When my wife passed away in July of 2007, I searched for people that could understand what I was feeling. There was a group called Young Widows and Widowers of Omaha listed as a support group in the World-Herald and various websites. That group was very helpful to me, but was winding down their activities after more than ten years.

After that group disbanded, I was looking again for others in my situation. I found a posting on Craig's List asking if there were any young widows/widowers in the area that would like to get together. I along with a half dozen others responded to that posting, and formed a new group. We started with conference calls, and then started setting up social events at least once a month. We have not set limits on what is considered a "young" widow or widower.

We are not attempting to be a formal counseling group or a dating group. We just hope to provide support for each other in a more social environment, including conference calls every couple weeks. We get together as a group for dinners, movies and other nights out. We also support each other informally by being "someone to call" when needed.

We are growing slowly via word of mouth. As each new member joins us, we hear again that there is a need for this group. We would like to make sure it is available to anyone in the broader community. Therefore, we have started a Google Groups website with appropriate security to maintain everyone's privacy, and we have created the attached fliers to help get the word out that we are here.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact us at: [OmahaYoungWids@gmail.com](mailto:OmahaYoungWids@gmail.com) . Anyone interested in joining, can go to the group website: <http://groups.google.com/group/omahayoungwids> .

Please pass these fliers along to anyone that would find them helpful. I can provide more printed brochures, or can e-mail more for you to print and share.

Thank You,

Brian Maass