LGBTQIA+ Baby Loss Mini Series



This baby loss mini series is a collection of stories from families who identify as LGBTQIA+ about their experiences of baby loss.

These are real, honest stories of baby loss. Please take care when reading

We are thankful to the families who have trusted us with their stories. Although our charity's focus is on pregnancy after loss, we believe that the care families experience during their loss plays a big part in shaping their experience of pregnancy after loss. By sharing these stories, we are helping to normalise conversation and break down barriers. We hope that these stories will help families know that they're not alone, but also help professionals understand experiences and where care can be improved.

Contact us at: hello@willowsrainbow.co.uk

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Story 1

My name is Hailey, and my partner is Tam. After 13 years of being in love, 1 year of looking for a donor, and 2 miscarriages, we finally found out we were pregnant in August 2020. The test was positive before I even put the stick down! I knew then we had a strong little human on board.
We were so excited, and started buying clothes for our baby immediately.
We found out you were a boy at 14 weeks, and already had your name picked out, before we knew who you were.
Jupiter Wolf. A perfect name for our little free spirit.

We had a perfect pregnancy. Everything went smoothly. We were planning on having a home birth. Your Mum went out of her way to create a beautiful space for you to be brought into the world.
You loved belly rubs, and listening to your Mum talk to my belly. You even kicked her in the jaw once!



At a routine growth scan at 36 weeks, they discovered you were in the 98th percentile. This didn't sound right to us, as you still had so much room to move around.
Our home birth was cancelled, as they were worried about shoulder distocia due to your apparent big size.
We opted to have a water birth at the hospital instead.

At 40 weeks pregnant, after weeks of trying everything natural to get you out, we decided to spend the weekend away at a farm.
Our last holiday as a couple, before we became a family.
I woke up that morning at the farm convinced I would go into labour that day. After having breakfast by the fire, and saying good bye to the animals, we drove home.
It was a painful drive home, as Jupiter was pushing down and causing a lot of contractions. We thought the time was close!

That night, I felt a trickle. I told your Mum my water had broken. I felt a few more trickles before bed. We assumed I would wake up in labour.
I woke up the next morning, still pregnant.
We went into the hospital to get checked out. They did some tests, and concluded that my water hadn't broken, even after everything I told them. We were sent home.

The following week I felt more and more uncomfortable. Lots of cramping and pain and feeling generally tired. We were told this was all normal, and labour was around the corner.
Despite this, I booked two stretch and sweeps and an induction, all two days apart.
We finally had a day set in stone. You would be here by 12th of May at the latest! We were so excited.

At 3.45pm on the 9th of May, Mothers Day, I went into labour. By midnight the contractions were consistent. We had midwives come and check us over the next 24 hours as I laboured at home. Your Mum took care of me, and we talked about what you would be like.
We were told by the midwife that you were a happy, healthy baby, coping with labour. Just before midnight on the 10th of May, my water broke, after four very strong contractions.
I noticed meconium straight away and rang the hospital to inform them. They didn't seem worried, and told us to come in.

We arrived just after midnight on the 11th of May. The midwife strapped me up to a CTG machine. She tried a few times, and then said she would get someone else to try, as the machine was playing up.
You Mum and I looked at each other nervously.
The next midwife also found silence, but told us she would get another machine.

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A DR came in with an ultrasound machine.
After scanning for a few moments, she shook her head. Her voice broke when she told us you had no heartbeat.
We couldn't believe it. We were in shock, and absolutely heartbroken. We were given some time together, while the DRs made arrangements.

Your Mum and I pulled together and reassured eachother through the whole time at the hospital.
After another 27 hours of labour, our beautiful son was born at 3.15am on the 12th of May.
He weighed 7pound 11ounces, and was 54cm long.

We were able to spend a little bit of time with you. We were so scared to hold you. You were so perfect, we didn't understand what happened. Over the next weeks, we were able to spend a few more hours with you, making memories, while the hospital did tests. It was so healing, to be able to hold you for a while.
The hospital failed to treat Tamika as an equal parent for our entire stay. She was not offered care fit for a parent who had just lost their son. She was treated as a friend, not as my fiance, and mother to our beautiful son.
All questions were aimed at me, and her wishes were not taken into account. In 2021, experiencing homophobia at our most vulnerable only added to the upset.

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The test results came back two months after you were born. My waters had actually broken the first time we went into hospital. You contracted a horrible infection, that made you very sick. The placenta stopped the infection from entering my body. We had no idea you were sick.

Our perfect boy, so loved and so wanted, could have been saved, if they had just listened to us that day. He gave us a Fathers day, a Christmas, a Birthday each, an Easter and a Mothers day. His favourite song was Don't Worry Be Happy by Bob Marley. He loved sunflowers, swimming in the ocean and dark chocolate, and any food with potato!

He would now be a year old.
He has since sent us a little sister, who is now 10 weeks old. We were able to use the same donor. She looks so much like her big brother, and shares his middle name.
She has brought a bit of joy back into our home. She will grow up knowing all about her big brother.

Without my beautiful partner, I don't know how I would have gotten through the last year. It has made us even stronger, and I love her even more, when I thought that wasn't possible.
Our son is, and always will be included in our family.

Much love to all families going through the same thing.

Story 2

Ruth and Allison Cooper lost baby Giles at just 16 hours old.

“Our utter sadness and despair at losing Giles has been joined by anger and hurt as we now know that human error contributed to his death,” they said. “We should have come home with our baby – we will grieve for him for ever.”

They shared a link with us to their story in The Guardian about their experience. You can read their story by scanning the QR code below.

Story 3

My name is Claire and my partner is Cassie, we have been together 13 years and married for 3. We started our journey to becoming parents soon after we got married knowing we would need help but assuming naively that we could get pregnant, we hit a hurdle early on finding that actually this wasn't the case and that actually I needed further investigation. Surgery confirmed the fertility clinics thoughts and I had to have both fallopian tubes removed which was a shock.

Fast forward to post surgery, once recovered we went back to the fertility clinic ready to start again.
After deliberating on the best package for us (cost wise as treatment is expensive and we were not entitled to anything on the NHS free of charge #postcodelottery) we threw ourselves into the first round of IVF which was a rollercoaster of emotions and more information to absorb than we ever thought possible. Sadly our first round failed before it even finished, we had no fertilised eggs which was devastating and a loss in its own right.

Our second round of IVF followed shortly after and we were delighted to find out we were pregnant. Going through IVF you become very aware of milestones so we controlled our excitement until after our 7 week scan where we saw our babies heartbeat for the first time.

The first trimester was so exciting, filled with a lot of nausea but we were so excited for the future, we were already in love, we were already parents. Our pregnancy wasn't a smooth one unfortunately, our 12 week scan left us underwhelmed as measurements were unable to be taken as the sonographer couldn't get a clear enough look and they dated us 5 days below where we should be but as they didn't seem concerned, neither were we.

It was a blood test at 16 weeks that started our downwards spiral, something seemed to be wrong and our 20 week scan was moved forward to 18 weeks, where we were referred then to a fetal medicine unit for future care. Our baby was small, really really small and medical professionals were concerned. We found out here that we were having a girl, which to us was no surprise, we were already adamant our lovingly nicknamed baby P was a girl. We had scans weekly from there where we were given options, the likelihood of a happy ending for us was low, but there was a chance and for us that was enough – we were going to try our very best and hope. Hope we made it to a weight deemed viable (500g) so that we could book a c section and let the medical professionals take over.
I remember both of us saying to the consultant "we are not giving up on our daughter." It became
more and more obvious it was an issue with my placenta, and this was causing some quite concerning blood pressure readings for me!

We were told in no uncertain terms that my health came first, and that if necessary the pregnancy would have to be ended to keep me safe. Words that I am sure rocked Cassie more than me, not only was our daughter unwell, but so was I. Our world crumbled at our final growth scan just over 23 weeks. “I am so sorry”, words that I replay over and over again, hearing the consultants voice in my head. In reality she didn’t need to speak,
We knew. The black screen said it all. P had lost her fight. I remember the words and the screen but a lot of that day is a blur. We were looked after brilliantly by the team at Manchester who gave us time in a private space, and talked us through what would happen next. I was going to be booked into a different hospital to be induced and to give birth. We were both terrified, but one thing I remember so clearly, and am so glad about is the consultant saying ‘your baby will be perfect’.

We went home, tried to sleep (unsuccessfully) before being admitted to hospital the next day where I was to stay until after birth as due to my blood pressure they wanted me kept under a very close eye. We had a private bereavement suite and every single member of staff at the hospital treated us with upmost respect and dignity but you could see the sadness in their eyes, everyone knew who we were and why we were there.

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I was induced on Sunday 12 th September and gave birth to our perfect P 4 hours later – silently, hoping everyone was wrong and we would hear a little cry. She weighed just 300g and was 23cm long, tiny but perfect with the cutest little nose and beautiful feet. With the help of a cuddle cot we got to spend 2 days with our daughter, holding her, taking pictures of her, filling a lifetime of memories into just 48 hours. The saddest few days of our lives but also ones filled with love. I am so grateful to 4louis who through their funding gave us the gift of time with our daughter.

She would now be nearly 10 months old, playing with her cousins and my friends children. Our support network are amazing, and will ensure that she will be included always. She existed, she was and still is so loved. She didn't get to have her voice, but we are dedicated to making sure we are her voice now, and have dedicated our time since she was born planning to raise as much money for 4louis and the bereavement suite at the hospital we used, as we can to ensure other families in this devastating situation are able to do what we did, spend time with their child and to keep telling her story and spreading awareness to others.

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Story 4

I'm 48 years old. I am married to a trans man. We have 2 children a boy and a girl. I always knew that I wanted to have children but growing up gay, I wasn't sure whether it was going to be an option and if so, I knew that it wasn't necessarily going to go the same way as everyone else that I knew. When I met my husband and he told me that he also wanted to have children, I was delighted. We knew that for us the only way that felt right was to start a family through a fertility clinic and that's what we did. I didn't have any fertility issues but we needed a sperm donor.

Our daughter came first. It was only our first attempt at IVF and so I definitely felt lucky and the pregnancy went well, no issues at all. And then when she was 18 months old we decided to try again for another child. I can't remember how long it took before I got pregnant again and I was very shocked to discover that I was carrying triplets. I had no idea how we were going to cope but we were still delighted.

Because we had gone through a fertility clinic, we found out this quite early on. I had a 2nd scan at 8 weeks and was told that they were developing well. I then had another scan the following week at the local hospital and they couldn't find any heartbeats. They had all died at the same time and they couldn't give us an explanation to why this had happened.

One day I had been planning a life with another 3 children and the next it was over. It was a very hard thing to get my head around. However the staff at the fertility clinic were fantastic and helped me deal with everything. I think that I was having counselling before I had time to think too much about any of it or to dwell on what had happened.

Then, COVID struck and life as we know it went on hold. I think that helped me come to terms with what had happened a lot quicker than it would have taken otherwise . If I hadn't had my miscarriage, I would have had triplets at the start of a pandemic with nobody other than my husband for support. It made me almost feel relieved for my experience, however hard it had been.
The fertility clinic closed for a few months when COVID hit but because of my age, (I was 42 at the time) I was one of the first to be offered treatment when they opened again. So I had IVF again and got pregnant straight away with my son.

I don't know how to describe what it felt like being pregnant again after suffering from a miscarriage. It's natural to feel worried and to think about what had happened previously, however I think that I was in a far better place to deal with everything because I knew that I had the support of the staff at the clinic.

I never felt alone and I am extremely grateful for that. It sounds strange but I almost feel grateful for being gay and having the choice to start a family with a fertility clinic. I think that my experience would have been very different if I had conceived and then suffered a miscarriage at home. It's such a difficult thing to go through. I am certain that it would have felt so much harder without the support that I received from day 1.

Of course I was still scared when I was pregnant with my son, it's only natural to feel that way but I also felt really positive as well. I don't think that I had to fear miscarriage in the same way because I had come through it once before. I felt in a far better place to deal with everything mentally and I guess that made me relax a bit more and enjoy the pregnancy. I think that I was actually more worried about being pregnant with everything that was happening with COVID at the time than I was about what had happened previously.

So the pregnancy went well and then I gave birth unexpectedly at 31 weeks. Luckily he was healthy and he came home 6 weeks later.