

2017 Stillbirth Summit Takeaways, "Parenting in Pregnancy" for expectant families, and all the latest from the NY Metro Chapter!

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**STAR LEGACY**  
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NY Metro Chapter



## Stillbirth Summit 2017: Takeaways

What an incredible privilege it was for several of us from the NY Metro Chapter to attend June's **Stillbirth Summit**. The Summit is hosted every few years by Star Legacy Foundation to bring together the world's leading researchers on stillbirth with families of stillborn babies and medical professionals (including several from our area - pictured above! - who were sponsored by our chapter). We were absolutely blown away by the passion and dedication of the researchers and medical professionals in attendance, all of whom are pioneers and renowned experts in their fields.

From cord issues and sleep studies to prevention strategies and bereavement support, we were so impressed with every single presenter's expertise and, most importantly, their eagerness to share their knowledge with their colleagues and garner feedback to further the impact of their work.

We learned so much about so many different topics. Some highlights:

- It is of critical importance for expectant moms to know what's normal for *\*your\** baby's movement (not just an arbitrary "10 kicks in X amount of time"). We actually watched video of a pregnant belly moving, and even the experts all counted a different number of "kicks." Instead, we need to know our individual baby's schedule, patterns, and *\*quality\** of movement, and see a doctor immediately if there is any change in frequency, strength, or type of movement (including decreased OR increased/"wild" movements), as any of these can be a sign of a baby in distress.
- There is no biological basis for how having a sugary or cold drink could possibly cause a baby in utero to move, as the placenta does not permit the transmission of temperature differences or sugar. This popular advice is NOT a sound substitute for medical attention; NEVER waste time doing this if you are concerned about your baby's wellbeing - just go straight to the hospital.
- Physicians need to listen to a pregnant mother's intuition about the wellbeing of her unborn baby, just as pediatricians have found it invaluable to listen to a mother's intuition about her infant. The majority of loss moms (and even many grandmas!) report having a feeling that something was wrong well before finding out their baby was in trouble.
- There have now been several published studies confirming that the risk of stillbirth in the third trimester is greatly increased for mothers who sleep on their back as opposed to their side. Sleeping on the side (especially the left) improves bloodflow to the baby, and can make a significant difference for a baby who is struggling - and since unfortunately we don't always know yet who those babies are, side sleep is best for everyone!
- In many international countries, it is becoming standard practice to prescribe regular doses of aspirin in certain pregnancies to support placental function (of course, only under the supervision of a doctor!).

better support families who lose a baby.

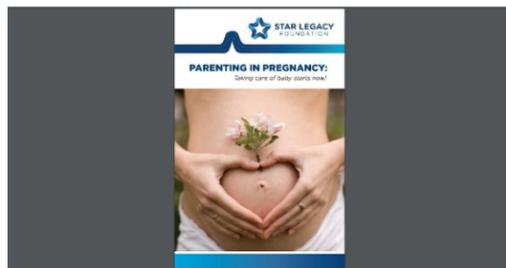
- The stillbirth advocacy organization Tommy's in the UK is doing a public service campaign to encourage expectant moms to pay attention to their baby's movement and seek medical attention if they have any concerns about their baby. [#alwaysask](#)

- Parents of stillborn babies have a big voice in driving the research to determine causes and prevention of stillbirths! Much of the research done for the last STARS study came out of suggestions from parents, and at the end of the last session led by Dr. Jane Warland and Susanne Pullen, we were asked to upload the questions we still had about our stillbirths to the Summit app so that the researchers could consider what else they should look into during the next STARS study. Your experiences are valuable - speak up!

Overall, we were elated to see that there are so many smart, driven people who are working so hard to find answers for all of us who have lost a child to stillbirth and to stop this horrific tragedy from happening to others. We all left the Summit feeling even more excited and honored to be a part of Star Legacy Foundation and this fantastic community of people!

If you're interested in learning more about any of the above, please [reach out to us](#) and we will point you toward the latest resources!

*Also check out SLF Executive Director Lindsey Wimmer's reflections on the 2017 Stillbirth Summit [here!](#)*



## IMPORTANT: For Expectant Parents

Did you know that Star Legacy's "See Me, Feel Me" stillbirth prevention guidelines for expectant parents recently got a major overhaul? Introducing SLF's updated pregnancy guide, **Parenting in Pregnancy!**

Pregnancy is an exciting and beautiful time when parents prepare to welcome a new life into their family. But one thing many new parents don't realize is that your parenting duties begin *now!*

This comprehensive, research-based guide is designed to teach expectant families best practices for a **healthy pregnancy**.

The booklet covers **pregnancy basics** such as living a healthy lifestyle before and during pregnancy and seeking prenatal care, but also features recommendations based on **emerging research** that expectant mothers are not likely to hear elsewhere, including recognizing risks to mom and baby, the importance of learning to know your baby, and safe sleep practices.

Instructions for monitoring your baby are provided, including a pull-out 3rd trimester movement record, and there is a discussion on when you should be concerned and what will



## NY Metro Updates & Achievements

The NY Metro Chapter has been hard at work making progress in several areas! Here's a quick roundup of some of our recent accomplishments:

### -- Let's Not Be Still! NY 5Ks --

Two events in Long Island & Westchester raised over \$110,000 with 500+ participants!! A HUGE thank you to all who contributed. View photos from the events on our [Facebook page!](#)

### -- Partner Outreach Underway --

We've made MASSIVE strides in our outreach efforts to potential partners in our area, including hospitals, doctors, and grief support organizations.

We recently established relationships with **Winthrop University Hospital, Newark Beth Israel Medical Center, Valley Health System, Putnam Hospital Center, the Partnership for Maternal and Child Health of Northern NJ, and the Nassau County Perinatal Services Network** consortium. We are in the process of reaching out to several other partners in the New York metropolitan area!

*Training via videoconference is available for any chapter members who wish to reach out to their own*

The booklet also debunks **common myths** such as "babies slow down at the end of pregnancy" and "drink something cold and sugary to get your baby moving" - **NOT TRUE!**

If you are expecting or know anyone who is, **we strongly encourage you to read and share this booklet!** Get your FREE copy in [PDF](#) or [print](#) today!

#### -- New Chapter Chair --

We are thrilled to introduce [Christine Chang](#) as our new Medical Co-Chair! Welcome Christine!!

#### -- Yoga & Meditation Retreat --

Congrats to chapter member Kristin Ferriggi who recently hosted a yoga & meditation mini-retreat to benefit Star Legacy, raising over \$4200!



## Your Help Needed!

If you haven't already, please take a moment to review Star Legacy Foundation at [Great Nonprofits](#). Our 5-star rating is incredibly important toward qualifying for grants to continue our life-saving work!



### Star Legacy is Growing!

Did you know that there are several new chapters already in operation (red dots above) and many more (yellow) in formation? Learn more at [starlegacyfoundation.org/chapters](http://starlegacyfoundation.org/chapters)!

### Want to Get Involved?

Our chapter is growing, too! If you'd like to get more involved, we have volunteer opportunities available in several areas: Peer Companions (training session coming soon!), 5K event planning, hospital/partner outreach, legislation efforts, and more. Please [email us](#) if you're interested in pitching in, and keep an eye out for an email coming soon to chapter members about an upcoming Chapter Social planned for October (details TBA)!

Best wishes,

Hilary, Samantha, Theresa, Amanda, Eleni, Christine & Bobbie



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