

Hope Realized

The accomplishments of Memory Books for children.



In 2011, Founder Tamara Faris was asked, "Aren't you interested in the outcome of Memory Books, that it is actually accomplishing what you intended?" The question prompted a research trip to South Africa where nearly 150 orphaned children had been using Memory Books since 2005. Tamara, along with two professors of nursing, conducted extensive interviews, with truly remarkable findings. The following is a short and edited excerpt from the resulting research accepted for publication in The Journal of Pediatric Nursing, July/August 2014 edition :

Most of the children interviewed in South Africa had lost one or more parents and siblings, and often the entire extended family unit. Prior to the receipt of their Memory Book in 2005, they were no longer exhibiting expressive responses of mourning, such as crying, instead hiding the presence of their grief from staff and caregivers. A child's grief is intertwined with lifelong developmental phases, such as trust, autonomy, industry, and independence and experiencing loss and grief risk paralysis in their development when they are not compassionately accompanied in their grief journey (Kir-

win & Hamrin, 2005; Wolfelt, 1996; Zhao et al., 2011; Schuurman, 2003).

When the children were given a personal Memory Book, they were prompted to express their thoughts and feelings to better understand what had happened when they lost their loved ones.

It is well researched that preserving memories is an important part of the grief journey. Creating a memory book to collect and preserve memories, mementos, thoughts and feelings about an individual's life story allows for the possibility of greater insight,



...helping children preserve and tell their stories...

truthful perspective, and even positive growth as a child grows and matures (Scaletti & Hocking, 2010; Schuurman, 2003; Tedeschi & Calhoun, 2004). The Memory Book offers a format to capture these drawings and stories and allows the children to retell their story, to real or imagined audiences.

The interviews revealed that children value preserving and telling the story of circumstances surrounding their life experiences. It gives children an opportunity to capture a glimpse of their earlier childhood personal memories prior to the loss of biological parents.

During interviews, children remembered those they had lost as well as new relationships cultivated. Drawings helped to facilitate more effective communication with children who lacked words and language skills to communicate what they were truly feeling. The Memory Book offered time to ruminate about traumatic events, and discussion with adults and peers fostered an enhanced understanding of the details of their loss.

Conclusions

The study findings offer evidence for supporting orphaned children's grief and loss recovery through

the preservation of their memories. Additionally, children gain understanding of their situation and hope for their future when provided the opportunity to tell their story. Children's comments about keeping their books forever parallel Crenshaw's (2006-2007) view that for youth who have lost so much, something that can't be taken away becomes 'all that more priceless.'

Study findings have the potential to guide further development of Memory Book resources and interventions by orphaned children's nurses and others who serve in the role of caring for children.



...leading children to know grace through Jesus Christ...



Mark Your Calendars

Mid Summer Night's Dream Celebration & Fundraiser

August 1, 2015, 7-11 PM,
Gresham, Oregon -
Save the date! An evening of
music under the stars ben-
efitting millions of children
with a Memory Book.



Book Release

The book, "I AM SOMEBODY, Telling Your Story Mat-
ters" by Tamara Faris, will soon be available to the
public August 2015.

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...teaching children the truth that "I am somebody!"...

April
2015

Memory Books For Children



Teaching children the truth that God has a loving plan and purpose for their lives

Dear Friends,

What an amazing year for Memory Books for Children. God has blessed this ministry with exciting months ahead. I am honored to share in this newsletter our published clinical findings of the impact Memory Books are having on children's lives. The research confirms that Memory Books are teaching children that God has a loving plan and purpose for them.

The new Memory Books are here! They are ready to ship to Thailand, Indonesia, and Bangladesh, where there are orphanages and refugee camps eager to start their personal Memory Books and Memory Book Clubs. We thank

God for His bountiful provision and opportunity to serve.

Finally, we hope to see you on August 1st, 2015 for our special evening event and concert, *A Mid Summer's Night Dream* - a benefit to gift children with a Memory Book. Together we will celebrate what God has done through the giving of your time, prayers, letters, and donations. It will be a night to remember.



With Deep Appreciation,

Holly Faris,
Executive Director,
Memory Books for Children



...gifting vulnerable children worldwide through Memory Books...