

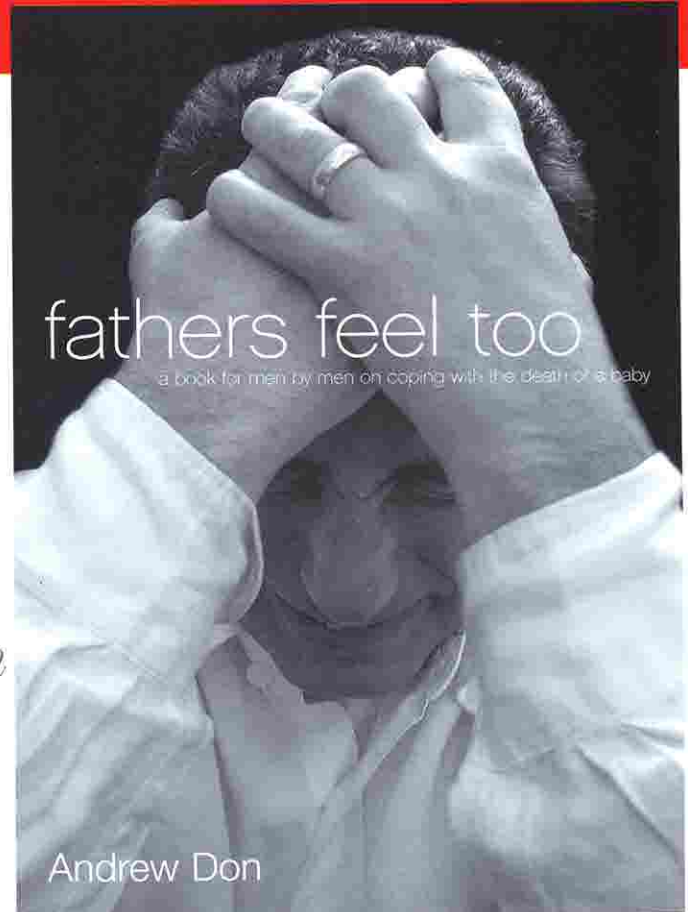
Andrew Don's world was shattered when his longed for baby daughter, Lara Jean, died suddenly at five months gestation.

But he was stunned when many of the condolences his wife received did not even mention him. "That no one acknowledged or even seemed interested in what was the worst pain of my whole life made me feel as though I was worth absolutely nothing," he remembers.

Andrew was left with the strong message that it's OK for women to grieve and seek support, but as a man he was expected to be strong for his partner, to have a stiff upper lip, and to keep his anguish and rage to himself.

That was something Andrew wasn't prepared to accept. "I wanted to do something specially for men, to tell them, it's okay to cry, it's fine to head-butt the wall, you're allowed to give yourself space to crumble – yes, men are allowed to feel, too."

*The result was *Fathers Feel Too*, a book comprising the powerful stories of 10 men whose babies have died. Their experiences reveal how bereaved fathers do suffer terrible grief and pain when their baby dies, but that it's possible to survive and find that life can be worth living again.*





In the UK, 16 babies a day are stillborn or die within the first twenty eight days of life; a devastating bereavement for the parents and for their family and friends.

SANDS (Stillbirth and Neonatal Death Society) is a UK charity which was set up in 1978 to support parents when their baby dies before, during or soon after birth. SANDS offers support through:-

***NATIONAL HELPLINE (020 7436 5881)** where bereaved parents, family members and health professionals can talk in confidence to an experienced support worker.*

***SUPPORT GROUPS (020 7436 7940 - for contact details)** which are run by and for bereaved parents at a local level in many parts of the UK.*

***INFORMATION RESOURCES (020 7436 7940)** which includes publications and leaflets on the many emotional and practical issues which parents face.*

***WEBSITE (www.uk-sands.org)** The website consists of wide-ranging and separate sections for bereaved parents, for SANDS Groups, and for health and social care professionals, together with detailed information on how the services that SANDS offers can be accessed.*

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