

'Grief Has No Expiration Date': The Comfort Cub to Donate 1,000 Weighted Therapeutic Bears to 9/11 Families

A quarter-century after 9/11, the donation recognizes that profound loss can affect both emotional and physical health for decades.

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, September 1, 2026 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Twenty-five years after teddy bears became a symbol of compassion for families devastated by the September 11 terrorist attacks, that tradition of comfort will return — this time with a weighted therapeutic purpose.

This September, [The Comfort Cub](#), a nonprofit dedicated to providing essential support to people experiencing profound grief, trauma and loss, will donate 1,000 weighted therapeutic bears to 9/11 families participating in the VOICES 25th Anniversary NYC Symposium and Commemorative Luncheon.

The Comfort Cub team will arrive in New York on September 8, ahead of anniversary events taking place September 9–11, to personally help distribute the Comfort Cubs to families who lost loved ones on 9/11.

The milestone [donation](#) carries a message at the heart of the nonprofit's mission: Grief has no expiration date.

"This September 11th, on the 25th anniversary of the terrorist attacks, we are so very grateful that The Comfort Cub organization will be joining us at the Voices Center for Resilience Symposium to distribute their weighted therapeutic bears to family members who experienced the loss of a loved one that tragic day," said Mary Fetchet, Executive Director of Voices Center for



The Comfort Cub bear, a weighted, therapeutic teddy bear to help soothe Broken Heart Syndrome, from grief caused by profound loss, and trauma.

Resilience.

For Marcella Johnson, founder of The Comfort Cub, the anniversary reinforces something she understands through her own devastating experience with loss: time does not eliminate grief, and emotional and mental health support can remain essential years — even decades — later.

“Twenty-five years can never erase the absence of someone you love,” Johnson said. “Grief changes over time, but it does not simply disappear. It is an incredible honor to place a Comfort Cub into the arms of these 9/11 families and remind them that their loss is remembered, their loved ones are remembered, and they are not alone.”

More Than a Bear: The Physical Weight of Grief and The Science

While its familiar form may resemble a traditional teddy bear, The Comfort Cub is a weighted therapeutic bear originally designed for adults experiencing profound grief, trauma and loss. Children naturally gravitate toward its comforting form, but The Comfort Cub was created as a mental and emotional health tool — not a toy.

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Marcella Johnson, The Comfort Cub founder

resembling a heart attack.

Comforting touch and deep pressure can help engage the body's calming response and are



Marcella Johnson, founder of The Comfort Cub, nonprofit, holding a weighted therapeutic Comfort Cub.

Its intentional weight provides deep-touch pressure and the physical sensation of a comforting embrace when held closely against the chest, offering tangible comfort during periods of intense grief, trauma and emotional distress.

That distinction matters because grief is not only emotional. Profound stress can have physiological effects on the body, including the heart. Extreme emotional or physical stress can trigger stress-induced cardiomyopathy, medically known as Takotsubo syndrome and commonly called “Broken Heart Syndrome.” It can be deadly if not soothed. The condition temporarily affects the heart’s ability to pump normally and can cause symptoms

associated with neurochemical systems involved in bonding, mood, safety and emotional well-being. That mind-body connection is central to The Comfort Cub's belief that comfort is not simply sentimental; supporting emotional and mental health is an essential part of caring for the whole person through profound loss.

Johnson created the original Comfort Cub following the death of her infant son, George, after experiencing firsthand the overwhelming physical and emotional effects of grief. Her experience became the foundation for a mission to give others something tangible to hold when words are not enough.

A Symbol of Comfort Comes Full Circle:

Teddy bears hold a meaningful place in the history of Voices Center for Resilience. In the days and months following September 11, 2001, they became symbols of comfort for children and families coping with unimaginable loss.

A quarter-century later, 1,000 Comfort Cubs will carry that tradition forward — honoring the compassion extended to families in the aftermath of 9/11 while providing a weighted therapeutic resource for the grief many continue to carry today.

"A special thank you to Marcella Johnson, founder of The Comfort Cub, for providing these beautiful bears to families who lost a loved one," said Bonnie McNamara, Chair of the Voices Board of Directors. "They offer a tangible reminder of weighted comfort, compassion and hope during an incredibly difficult time — a small ray of light in the midst of profound loss."

For Johnson, supporting families 25 years after one of the darkest days in American history goes far beyond the donation itself.

"Whether a loss happened yesterday, five years ago or 25 years ago, the need for emotional healing and support remains essential," Johnson said. "Grief has no expiration date — and neither should comfort."

To support The Comfort Cub's donation efforts please go to its website.

MEDIA INTERVIEW OPPORTUNITIES



Woman holding a weighted therapeutic Comfort Cub after experiencing grief and loss.

Live and virtual interviews are available with The Comfort Cub founder Marcella Johnson, as well as cardiac and palliative care physicians who can speak to the physiological effects of profound grief, Broken Heart Syndrome (Takotsubo syndrome), and the science behind deep-touch pressure and weighted therapeutic comfort.

To coordinate interviews about The Comfort Cub's 9/11 donation before the team departs California or on-site in New York City, please contact Danica McAdam, McAdam PR, at 818-388-1889 or Danica@McAdamPR.com

About The Comfort Cub

The Comfort Cub is a 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to providing essential comfort and support to people experiencing grief, trauma and loss. Founded by Marcella Johnson following the death of her infant son, George, The Comfort Cub provides weighted therapeutic bears originally designed for grieving adults to offer deep-touch pressure and the physical sensation of a comforting embrace when words are not enough. While children also benefit from and naturally gravitate toward The Comfort Cub, it was created as a mental and emotional health tool rather than a traditional toy.

The organization has provided Comfort Cubs to individuals, families, first responders and communities affected by tragedy, trauma and loss across the United States.

Danica McAdam
McAdam PR
+1 818-388-1889
[email us here](#)

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