

remembering a

life



RememberTogether

a Day of Remembrance

A COVID-19 Day of Remembrance Planning Guide



PAUSE. REFLECT.

Remember Together.

**How will you
inspire the
families in your
community to
pay tribute to
people who
have died during
the pandemic?**

To date, millions of people around the world have died of COVID-19, and millions more have died of causes other than COVID-19 since the pandemic began. Their families and friends have experienced unfathomable loss, often compounded by the inability to be with their loved ones when they died. Many more were unable to have a traditional funeral to say goodbye.

This planning guide will help you plan a COVID-19 Day of Remembrance event that honors the losses of families in your community and keeps the memories of their loved ones alive.

NFDA

NATIONAL
FUNERAL
DIRECTORS
ASSOCIATION

remembering a
life

Remember Together is a
program of the National
Funeral Directors Association
and Remembering A Life.



The Tools

NFDA and Remembering A Life make it easy to plan a Remember Together event in your community.



Do It Today!

Explore all the tools at nfda.org/RememberTogether.

The National Funeral Directors Association, as part of its Remembering A Life consumer education initiative, has created a suite of materials you can use, for free, to plan an event that honors the lives of people who have died during the pandemic.

Whether your community is in a position now to hold an event in memory of the people who have died, or if this isn't quite the right time, these Remember Together tools will be ready to use when you are.

All of the Remember Together tools are available at nfda.org/RememberTogether.



nfda.org/RememberTogether

Podcast Episodes

Three Remembering A Life podcast episodes have focused on COVID-19. Each of them can be easily shared on social media or linked to from your firm's website. Links to all episodes can be found at nfda.org/RememberTogether.

- March 2022 - Navigating the Pandemic: Stories of Hope and Resilience
- March 2021 - COVID-19: A Year of Loss, Part One: Remembering Loved Ones
- March 2021 - COVID-19: A Year of Loss, Part Two: Virtual Memorials



Blog Posts

Share one or more of these Remembering A Life blog posts about COVID-19. Find links to these and more blog posts at nfda.org/RememberTogether.

- Never Too Late: Memorial Services After Pandemic
- Loss in a Pandemic: A Year of Mourning
- Loss In A Pandemic: Using Social Media Purposefully
- The COVID-19 Mourner's Bill Of Rights
- Ten Freedoms For Using Ceremony During The COVID-19 Pandemic
- Grieving Alone and Together



Books

"Navigating the Pandemic: Stories of Hope and Resilience," edited by Teresa (Terry) Schreiber Werth, was the Remembering A Life Book Club book of the month for March 2022. Visit RememberingALife.com/BookClub to learn more about Terry Werth's book. Post a link to our book review on our social media, and if you decide to have a book club event of your own, be sure to check out our discussion prompts. They make it easy for you to get the conversation started!



Grieving Alone and Together Booklet

The Funeral Service Foundation, through its COVID-19 Crisis Response Fund, has funded the creation of a booklet that addresses the challenges of grieving the death of a loved one during the COVID-19 pandemic. "Grieving Alone and Together: Responding to the Loss of Your Loved One during the COVID-19 Pandemic" by Sara Murphy, PhD, CT, with a foreword by Alan D. Wolfelt, Ph.D., is available for free to funeral professionals who want to use the booklet as a community outreach tool. We've provided a link to order at nfda.org/RememberTogether. **Also available in Spanish.**



Activity Ideas

Hosting a Remember Together event in your community demonstrates your commitment to helping families connect, grieve and heal.

There are a variety of events you can host in your community, whether at a local funeral home, in a community center or other gathering place.

We've made it easy with resources and tools that help you create a meaningful experience for attendees, whether you plant and dedicate a tree, hold a book club or inspire them to tell the story of their loved ones.

Use the ideas for workshops and events on the pages that follow to begin planning an event in your community.

Keep us posted!

We'd like to know how you're using Remember Together in your community. Fill out our Remember Together Event Form at nfda.org/RememberTogether.

nfda.org/RememberTogether



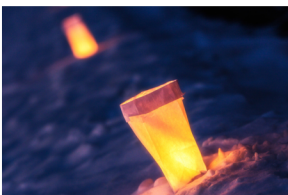
Candlelight Vigil

A traditional candlelight vigil is a wonderful way to gather and remember. Hold your event in a local park, outside your funeral home or in another public space. Pass out candles to those in attendance, light, and invite attendees to share a minute of silence, sing a song, or share stories about a loved one. Gathering outside helps keep attendees safe, but still offer masks and ensure the space is large enough for attendees to physically distance.



Community Concert

Invite local musicians to participate in a concert open to the public. This event allows for the flexibility of an indoor or outdoor event, depending on the level of comfort in your community. Encourage the musicians to perform songs with particular meaning during the pandemic.



Luminary Display

Invite members of the community to come to a designated location (your funeral home, a local park, etc.) and decorate a paper luminary to display outside that evening. Line them up along a path so people can enjoy them as they stroll. Keep it simple or invite a local musician to play some music as people walk through the display - or incorporate a minute of silence.



Community Meal

A community meal is a meaningful way to gather and share stories of people who have died during the pandemic. Invite members of the community to come with a dish to pass and a story to share. This event is scalable, from a small gathering at your local community center, to a larger community event. Some communities close a street and set up tables that span the length of the block, offering an experience that establishes a sense of belonging for the entire community.



Tree Planting/Dedication

A tree is a living reminder of the people we miss. Plant a tree in a park in your community. Invite the community to participate in the dedication. Attendees can write the name of their loved one on a ribbon and tie it to the tree. The ribbon-tying can also be done with an existing tree or an artificial indoor tree.



Bench Dedication

A bench is a lovely place to sit and reflect on the lives of the loved ones we miss. Purchase and dedicate a bench in a local park. Place a plaque on the bench with a dedication to the people who have died during the pandemic.



Minute of Silence

A minute of silence gives participants permission to stop whatever they are doing and spend some time reflecting on their losses. A minute of silence can be incorporated into many of the other activities mentioned in this planning guide.

Story Sharing

Host an open house at a community center. Offer refreshments and invite attendees to share stories of their loved one. This event can be held indoors or outdoors. Invite attendees to bring a photo of their loved one or an object of importance to them. Both of these items are wonderful conversation starters. You may even want to display a large piece of foam core or other material where people can write a special message to their loved one or affix a special photo.





Group Painting Event

Creating a piece of art can be cathartic and give people a meaningful way to honor the life of a loved one, and there are many ways to incorporate painting into your event.

- Purchase Remembering A Life Memory Jars and invite attendees to paint the tops with acrylic paints (pictured).
- Some communities have local "paint and sip" bars that will come to your location and lead attendees in a group painting project. Each attendee leaves with their own personal painting.
- Invite attendees to contribute to a group painting. Purchase a large canvas and invite each attendee to add a splash of color that speaks to them. The finished product will be a beautiful reflection of the community's grief and reflections. The painting can then be donated to a local community center.



Meditation/Aromatherapy Experience

Partner with an aromatherapist to educate attendees about essential oils and how they can use them on their grief journey. Incorporate some meditation exercises to help attendees relax and reflect. The Remembering A Life Essential Oil Roller is available in the NFDA and Remembering A Life online stores.



Book Club

A book club gathering is a wonderful way to start a great conversation. Announce the name of the book a month or so in advance. Then, invite your friends to your home or a community center for a discussion (your event could also be held online!).

We recommend "Navigating the Pandemic: Stories of Hope and Resilience" by Teresa Schreiber Werth. Visit RememberingALife.com/BookClub for a book review - plus, our discussion prompts make it easy to get the conversation started! **Bonus:** Terry Werth was the guest for the March 2022 episode of the Remembering A Life podcast. Share the episode to promote your book club event.



Yard Signs

Yard signs create a sense of unity in a neighborhood or community. Use the Remember Together logo to give people in the community the opportunity to share that someone they cared about died during the pandemic. Yard signs could also be used to promote an event your firm is hosting.



Rock Painting

Rock painting has become a popular hobby and can also be a beautiful way to remember a loved one. Provide rocks and paint pens and invite attendees to paint a rock in memory of a someone who has died. Attendees can take their rocks home or you can display them at your funeral home - perhaps in a community garden.



Sidewalk Chalk Art

This activity is wonderful for people who are young or young at heart. All you need to provide is chalk and the canvas - a sidewalk or driveway. Attendees can then draw meaningful pictures or write messages to their loved ones. This activity also pairs nicely with many of the other activities in this planning guide, and it's a perfect way to include children.



Journaling/Poetry Workshop

It can sometimes be difficult to get started with journaling - and to stay motivated! A journaling or poetry workshop can be just the thing to inspire people to get started and stay inspired. You may want to hire a local writer to guide attendees with ideas and journaling prompts.



Want to go the extra mile?

These activities take a little extra time and effort but have the potential to bring the community together in wonderful ways.



Do It Today!

Start brainstorming. What kind of event would you like to host?

Your Remember Together activity doesn't have to be extravagant, but if you have the time and resources you can take it to the next level with events that bring the entire community together in a significant way.

Whether you create a lasting tribute by coordinating the painting of a community mural, or inspire the community to make a difference by donating time in memory of a loved one, you'll be helping to honor the lives of people who died during the pandemic in meaningful ways.

RememberingALife.com/RememberTogether



Community Mural

A mural is a long-lasting symbol of a community's unity and strength in times of adversity. Find a local muralist to design and sketch out a mural that can then be painted by members of the community. This activity may require some advance planning due to the potential need for permits and/or permission.



Community Proclamation

A community proclamation educates the public about a specific issue and brings attention to a cause, and now may be a perfect time for your community to declare an official Day of Remembrance for COVID-19. Contact your state or local government office and follow the guidelines for submitting a proclamation request.



A Day of Volunteering

Sometimes the most meaningful way we can honor the life of a loved one is by donating time or money to a cause of importance to them. Organizing a day of service and mobilizing members of the community to volunteer for a day can be a beautiful way to do this.

1. Plan a community-wide event (such as a community clean-up) and invite everyone to participate, or...
2. Invite people to choose an organization of their own to support through their volunteer work on the day chosen.



Community Garden

A community garden is a beautiful way to keep the memories of loved ones alive in your community. Invite individuals and families to come to your funeral home (or other location in your community) to plant a flower or vegetable garden. Encourage them to return to the garden to tend it, or simply enjoy it in quiet reflection.



Meaningful Gifts

A thoughtful gift can make attendees feel welcome, appreciated and cared for.

A small gift can be a lovely way to thank attendees for coming to your event and can help them keep the memory of their loved one close long after your event is over.

The sky is the limit when it comes to lovely gift ideas:

- Remembering A Life Essential Oil Roller
- Remembering A Life Memory Jar
- Remembering A Life Candle
- Remembering A Life Journal
- Packet of seeds or a plant
- Book of meaningful quotes
- A small photo frame

Links to purchase Remembering A Life merchandise available at nfda.org/RememberTogether.



Do It Today!
Visit RememberingALife.com/store
for ideas!



nfda.org/RememberTogether



Getting the Word Out

Use these simple tactics to help spread the word about your event.



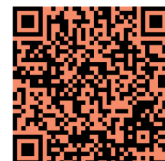
Do It Today!

Download the news release template at nfda.org/RememberTogether.

Once you have planned the details of your event, it's time to spread the word!

Include the following in your communications:

- Date and Time (and rain date if applicable)
- Venue/Address
- Event Details
- RSVP Information (if you need to know the number of attendees in advance)
- Recommended Attire (if applicable)
- COVID-19 Safety Protocols (if applicable: masks, vaccination requirements, physical distancing, etc.)



nfda.org/RememberTogether



Social Media

- Use our Remember Together social media toolkit - simply download and post
- Share Remembering A Life podcast episodes
- Remember to tag **#RememberTogether** on all posts!

Invitations

- Send a letter, postcard or printed invitations to families of people who have died of COVID-19 during the pandemic.

Local Media

- Use the Remember Together news release template to get the word out about your event; send it to the local news media well in advance.
- If you have a relationship with any members of the local news media, contact them personally to tell them about your event.

Targeted Email

- Send an email to the families of people who experienced the death of a loved one due to COVID-19, inviting them to your event.

Word of Mouth

- Never underestimate the power of word of mouth. Start spreading the word among family and friends. This is also a great way to gauge interest in a specific event.

Website

- Post an announcement on the home page of your website.

E-Newsletter

- If you have an e-newsletter, include an article about your event.



Get Started

It's time to arrange all the details for your Remember Together event!



Do It Today!

Use our planning worksheet at the end of this planning guide.

Today

- Explore nfda.org/RememberTogether and learn more about the resources available.
- Begin to brainstorm the kind of activity you'd like to hold.

Start Planning

- Consider the state of the pandemic in your community. Is now a good time to host a Remember Together event?
- Review ideas for Remember Together activities and consider which ones would be effective in your community.
- Use our planning worksheet at the back of this booklet to document the details of your event.
- Create a detailed timeline for event pre-planning and day-of logistics.

nfda.org/RememberTogether





- ☒ **Determine event scale.** Will your event be for the community at large or are you limiting it to the families you served during the pandemic?
- ☒ **Select a date and time.** Make sure to choose a date that gives you plenty of time to plan the event and enough time for attendees to make arrangements to attend. If your event is outside, it's a good idea to choose a "rain date" in the event of inclement weather.
- ☒ **Select a location.** Whether your event is indoors or outdoors, book the venue early, and ensure you have all required permits and permissions. Or, make it simple by holding the event at your funeral home.
- ☒ **Choose an activity.** Use the suggestions we've provided in this planning guide or create your own event.
- ☒ **Arrange for entertainment and speakers.** If your event involves vocalists, musicians, readers or others, make sure you contact them early to ensure their availability.
- ☒ **Establish necessary COVID-19 safety protocols.** Research cases and transmission rates, plus any local or state recommendations or mandates to determine if you need to take any action to keep attendees safe. See the "Staying Safe" section for details.
- ☒ **Get the word out.** Use the Remember Together toolkit to spread the word about your event.
- ☒ **Order supplies.** Order any supplies or giveaways that you might need well in advance of your event.
- ☒ **Order/purchase refreshments.** If you're offering refreshments, make arrangements to have them delivered, or assign the task of picking them up to someone willing to help.



Staying Safe

By following simple guidelines and protocols, you can help ensure the safety of your attendees.



Do It Today!

Research how COVID-19 is currently impacting your community.

The prevalence of COVID-19 cases continues to vary widely around the world. While some areas may be fortunate to see fewer cases, others might still be experiencing high caseloads. When planning a Remember Together event in your community, it's important to be educated about how you can do it safely.

Do Your Research

- Do research on current COVID-19 cases in your area to ensure you can safely hold an event.
- Find out what current COVID-19 safety protocols (required masking, for example) are in place.

Provide a Safe Environment

Considering COVID-19 cases in your area and the type of event you plan to hold, ensure all appropriate safety protocols are in place. These could include:

- Holding the event outdoors
- Requiring proof of vaccination or a negative PCR test
- Requiring masks
- Requiring social distancing

nfda.org/RememberTogether



FAQ

Have a question? We have answers - and we're here to ensure you have the tools you need to hold a beautiful Remember Together event.

When can I hold my event?

It's up to you. You can hold a Remember Together event whenever it is appropriate for you and your community.

May I charge a fee for people to attend this event?

Remember Together events should be free to attendees.

Have other questions?

Email us at info@RememberingALife.com or call (800) 228-6332.

nfda.org/RememberTogether



Planning Worksheet

Type of Event: _____

Date/Rain Date: _____ Time: _____

Location/Venue: _____ Capacity: _____

Budget: _____

Permissions/Permits Needed (if applicable): _____

Invitees (general public, select list, etc.) _____

Participants (speakers, entertainers, etc.): _____

Supplies Needed: _____

Promotional Tactics (social media, news releases, invitations, etc.):

Staff/Volunteer Needs: _____

COVID-19 Safety: _____

This image shows a full page of blank handwriting practice paper. It features multiple sets of horizontal lines, each consisting of three parallel lines: two outer lines and a central midline. These lines are evenly spaced across the entire page, providing a guide for letter height and placement. The background is plain white, and there are no margins or additional markings present.



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