

I am writing in support of the application to the Wellcome Foundation for the play Anything is Possible.

For Sands, Anything is Possible is an incredibly important play, bringing to the stage a subject that is often seen as taboo. The focus for Sands Awareness Month this year in June 2019, was “Finding Your Way”, with a primary emphasis on support for bereaved dads, who are often even more isolated than bereaved mothers, due both to self-imposed and also societal pressures. Anything is Possible is so powerful. It allows us to hear the voices of bereaved parents, thus breaking some of the silence that surrounds stillbirth and neo-natal death.

By supporting and promoting the play, we also hope to raise awareness within communities we currently do not reach, in addition to bereaved dads, who have increased risk of stillbirth and neo-natal death. Women from Black and Asian communities are at significantly higher risk of stillbirth, as are young mothers and those from lower socio-economic groups; as yet the reasons for these increases remain unclear.

Each year around 5,300 babies die before, during or shortly after birth. There are approximately the same number of stillbirths as there are deaths of children under 5. There remain significant gaps in understanding as to why the majority of babies die and what more can be done to prevent deaths. Research could offer answers to these questions, however research in this area has been fragmented and poorly resourced compared with other medical fields, such as childhood cancer or coronary heart disease. Over £10million was spent on Sudden Infant Death Research resulting in a 70% drop in mortality. Stillbirths and neo-natal deaths result from many different causes and research needed is wide-ranging, but there is huge potential to make a difference.

Anything is Possible will bring stillbirth to a wider audience in an extremely powerful and engaging way, opening conversations and empowering those who have been silent about their experiences to feel supported to have a voice.

Sincerely

Jen Coates

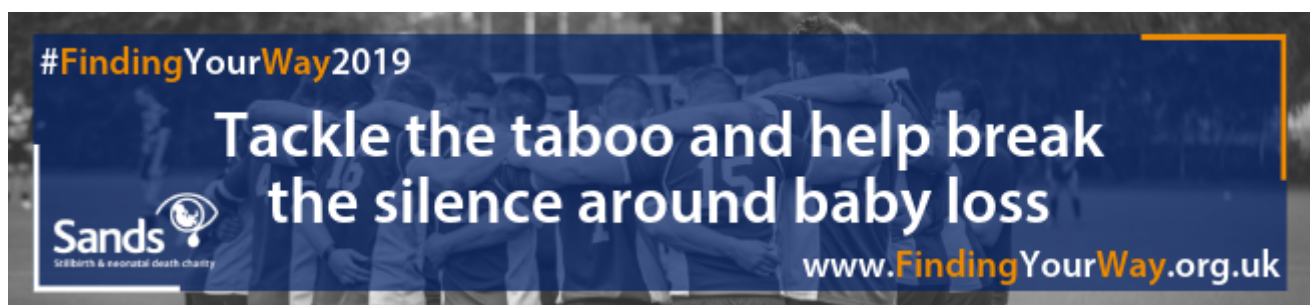
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Sands Finding Your Way campaign aims to tackle the taboo around baby loss and to help bereaved men get the support that's right for them. Visit www.findingyourway.org.uk or follow [#FindingYourWay2019](https://twitter.com/FindingYourWay2019)



Sands supports anyone affected by the death of a baby, works to improve bereavement care and funds research to save babies' lives.