



Did You Know?

Children and Grief Statistics

- 1 in 5 children will experience the death of someone close to them by age 18. *(Kenneth Doka, Editor of OMEGA, Journal of Death and Dying)*
- In a poll of 1,000 high school juniors and seniors, 90% indicated that they had experienced the death of a loved one. *(nahic.ucsf.edu/downloads/Mortality.pdf)*
- One in every 1,500 secondary school students dies each year. *(nahic.ucsf.edu/downloads/Mortality.pdf)*
- One out of every 20 children aged fifteen and younger will suffer the loss of one or both parents. These statistics don't account for the number of children who lose a "parental figure," such as a grandparent or other relative that provides care. *(Owens, D. "Recognizing the Needs of Bereaved Children in Palliative Care" Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing. 2008; 10:1)*
- 1.5 million children are living in a single-parent household because of the death of one parent. *(Owens, D. "Recognizing the Needs of Bereaved Children in Palliative Care" Journal of Hospice & Palliative Nursing. 2008; 10:1)*
- Mortality rates for adults in their 40s and 50s in the past two decades have risen dramatically, making it more likely that younger children will experience the death of a parent, or a classmate's parent. "Kids are encountering death more often and at a younger age—it's just inevitable," says Gerald Koocher, chief of psychology at Boston's Children's Hospital. *("Early Grief" Wall Street Journal, Feb. 18, 1999)*
- It is estimated that 73,000 children die every year in the United States. Of those children, 83 percent have surviving siblings. *(Torbic, H. "Children and Grief: But what about the children?" Home Healthcare Nurse. 2011;29(2):67-79)*

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- In a study of 11- to 16-year-olds, 78% reported that at least one of their close relatives or friends had died. (*Harrison and Harrington, 2001*)
- Reviews of studies from various countries on childhood bereavement following parental death report that children in this situation do experience a wide range of emotional and behavioral symptoms. . . . The child often experiences an increase in anxiety with a focus on concerns about further loss, the safety of other family members, and fears around separation. (*Dowdney, 2000; Haine et al., 2008*)

Key Results of Childhood Bereavement Study completed by Comfort Zone Camp (2009)

- 56% of respondents who lost a parent growing up would trade a year of their life for one more day with their departed parent.
- 72% believe their life would have been “much better” if their parent hadn’t died so young.
- 69% of Americans who lost a parent growing up still think about their parent frequently.

Grieving in Schools: Nationwide Survey among Classroom Teachers on Childhood Bereavement Conducted by New York Life Foundation and American Federation of Teachers, 2012

- Classroom teachers report that students who have lost a parent or guardian typically exhibit:
 - Difficulty concentrating in class (*observed by 87% of teachers*)
 - Withdrawal/disengagement and less class participation (*observed by 82%*)
 - Absenteeism (*observed by 72%*)
 - Decrease in quality of work (*observed by 68%*)
 - Less reliability in turning in assignments (*observed by 66%*)
- 7 in 10 teachers (69%) currently have at least one student in their class(es) who has lost a parent, guardian, sibling, or close friend in the **past year**.