

# Children's Grief Awareness Day



## FACTS & STATS

### CHILDREN & GRIEF INFORMATION AND STATISTICS

*"Childhood grief profoundly impacts bereaved youth, families, and communities. The death of an important person in a child's life is one of the most frequently reported adverse childhood experiences. Unaddressed childhood grief and trauma can lead to short- and long-term difficulties including poor academic performance, mental health issues, and early mortality." (Judi's House/JAG)*

#### THE BREADTH OF THE ISSUE

According to the Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM):

- 1 in 12 (or more than 8 percent) of children in the US will experience the death of a parent or sibling by age 18—equating to 6 million bereaved US children and teens.
- This number more than doubles to 14.7 million when the age is increased to 25.
- Nearly 80 percent of those who lost a parent said it was the hardest thing they have ever had to face.
- Looking at bereavement figures for a single year shows that nearly 1,200 children under the age of 18 were newly bereaved every day in 2021.
- Those who lost a parent growing up said it took 6+ years before they could move forward, yet 57 percent reported that support from family and friends waned within the first 3 months following the loss.
- 59 percent of adults who lost a parent growing up say they have experienced more feelings of sadness or depression in their life compared to most adults.

#### THE IMPACT OF COVID

More than 72,000 children in the US lost a parent to COVID-19 and over 67,000 lost a grandparent caregiver in the home, while more than 13,000 children lost their only in-home caregiver.

According to Sociologists at Penn State and the University of Southern California who developed a "bereavement multiplier":

- For every death on average, 9 close relatives are left behind.
- That number includes, for each person who has died, an average of 2.2 bereaved children and 4.1 bereaved grandchildren.
- These numbers do not include extended family or close friends, longtime co-workers or next-door neighbors, many of whom, the study said, are deeply affected, too.
- From April 2020 through June 2021, according to the medical journal *Pediatrics*, 140,000 U.S. children lost a parent or caregiver, with children of racial and ethnic minorities accounting for a disproportionate number of the children who suffered such a loss.
- 70 percent of caregiver loss affected those aged 13 and younger. 50 percent of caregiver loss was among elementary and middle-school aged children, and 20 percent was among those from birth to 4 years old.
- Because of the pandemic, nearly 7 in 10 parents agree that grief support should be a priority for schools. *(Survey by the New York Life Foundation)*
- The number of children who in 2023 will experience the death of a parent or sibling by age 18 increased in 46 states and Washington D.C. compared to 2022 results, reflecting the impacts of the pandemic on childhood bereavement. *(2023 CBEM)*



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### THE CRITICAL IMPORTANCE OF SUPPORT

Bereaved children feel understood and validated when caregivers openly discuss the person and/or the death. *(Shapiro DN, Howell KH, Kaplow JB. Associations among mother-child communication quality, childhood maladaptive grief, and depressive symptoms. Death Studies. 2014)*

Bereaved young children are more likely to be expelled from school, repeat a grade, less likely to be in gifted education programs and to have a disability. *(Weaver, D., Parental Mortality and Outcomes Among Minor and Adult Children (2019) Population Review, Vol. 58, No. 2, Sociological Demography Press p. 23-60)*

The earlier in life a child loses a parent, the more profound the impact. *(Weaver, D., Parental Mortality and Outcomes Among Minor and Adult Children (2019) Population Review, Vol. 58, No. 2, Sociological Demography Press p. 23-60)*

According to the New York Life Foundation's 2017 Bereavement Survey:

- More than two-thirds of educators "always" or "usually" see withdrawal, difficulty concentrating, absenteeism, and a decrease in academic performance after a death in a student's life.
- 7 in 10 teachers currently have at least one student in their class(es) who had lost a parent, guardian, sibling or close friend in the past year.

**Join children, teens and adults  
across the nation and the world  
in helping grieving kids know  
they're not alone!**



**Children's Grief**  
**AWARENESS DAY**  
EDUCATE. EQUIP. HONOR.

