



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*)

Did You Know? *Children and Grief Statistics*

- 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.