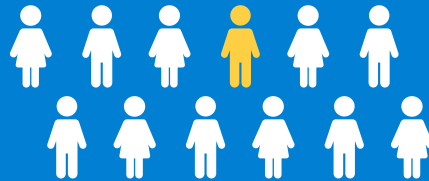


The Childhood Bereavement Estimation Model (CBEM)¹ approximates rates of U.S. children and youth who will experience the death of a parent or sibling by the time they reach adulthood. Results from the CBEM are updated annually using national, state, and regional vital statistics.² Except where noted, this report **uses data from 2017 to 2021**, the five most recent years of data from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.*

Childhood bereavement is a critical issue and an increasingly important national priority. The death of a parent, sibling, or other important person in a child's life is one of the most frequently reported disruptive childhood experiences^{3,4} and without appropriate support, can lead to adverse health and welfare outcomes.⁵ Understanding the number of children impacted by death is essential to help every bereaved child find hope and healing.

1 in 12



children in the U.S. will experience the death of a parent or sibling by age 18

8.3% ~ 6.0M
children will be bereaved by age 18



& MORE THAN
DOUBLES

14.7M
youth will be bereaved by age 25

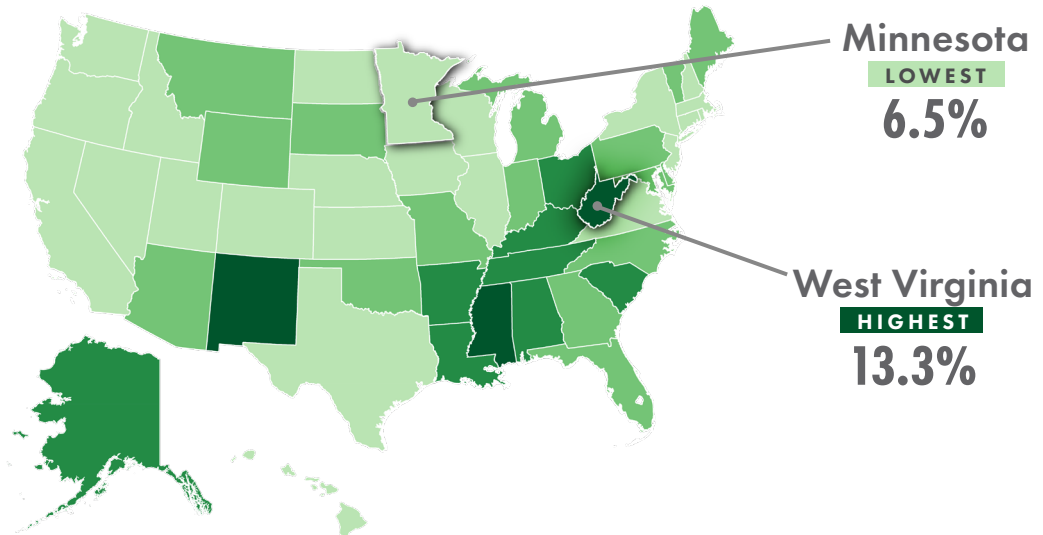
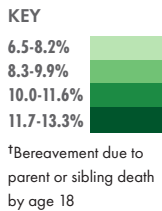
Projected CBEM Results

Projected CBEM results presented above combine estimates of a) the number of children who are already bereaved and b) the number of children who will experience the death of a parent or sibling by ages 18 and 25.

Projected results help individuals and organizations center childhood bereavement as a public priority by:

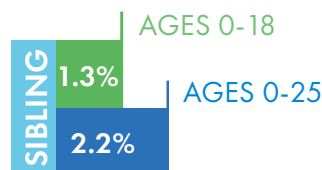
- Forecasting service and systems demands
- Engaging in advocacy and policy efforts
- Building workforce capacity
- Cultivating public awareness and engagement
- Evaluating best practices
- Securing financial support

Childhood Bereavement Rates by State[†]



Death of a Sibling & Death of a Parent

The CBEM provides separate, independent estimates for youth who will experience the death of a parent or of a sibling.



CBEM Leading Cause of Death

The CBEM can produce bereavement estimates by cause of death. Projected CBEM results approximate the number of children under 18 who will be bereaved due to the death of a sibling or the death of a parent by each of the five leading causes of death for youth and adults respectively. Projected CBEM results for death of a sibling and death of a parent are presented below.

Childhood Bereavement by Cause of Death by Age 18

Death of a Sibling[†]

Rank	Sibling Cause of Death	Number of Bereaved Children	Percentage of All Bereaved Children [§]
#1	Birth Conditions	286,000	30.1%
#2	Accidents	148,000	15.6%
#3	Birth Defects	142,000	15.0%
#4	Homicide	47,000	5.0%
#5	Suicide	43,000	4.5%
	All Other Causes	283,000	29.8%
	Total	949,000	100.0%

Death of a Parent^{||}

Rank	Parent Cause of Death	Number of Bereaved Children	Percentage of All Bereaved Children [§]
#1	Accidents	1,685,000	32.4%
#2	Heart Disease	571,000	11.0%
#3	Cancers	550,000	10.6%
#4	Suicide	477,000	9.1%
#5	Homicide	277,000	5.3%
	All Other Causes	1,640,000	31.6%
	Total	5,197,000	100.0%

Sources

1. Burns et al. (2023). *Frontiers in Pediatrics*, 11.
2. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics, CDC WONDER.
3. Nickerson et al. (2013). *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 5(2), 119-127.
4. Pynoos et al. (2014). *Psychological Trauma: Theory, Research, Practice, and Policy*, 6(Suppl 1), S9-S17.
5. Bergman et al. (2017). *BMC Palliative Care*, 16 (39).

*Please see the [CBEM Technical Appendix](#) for additional information.

† Sibling results are based on data for those ages 0-17 for 2017-2021.

§ The percentage of bereaved children is the quotient from dividing the number of children who will be bereaved due to a specific cause by the total number of children who will be bereaved.

|| Adult results are based on data for those ages 27-46 who are most likely to have children 0-18 years old for 2017-2021.