

Contributing to a Grief-Sensitive World



Taking action to create a more grief-sensitive society is an essential step in reducing the stigma around bereavement and increasing access to grief support services for grieving children in the United States.

Grief is a common adverse childhood experience with potential to impact development in areas of mental health, academic performance, relationship-building, and long-term wellbeing. Providing key support to children grieving a death can mitigate negative outcomes and help keep kids on track.

COVID-19 compounded already alarming bereavement rates. In 2021, 383,000 children under age 18 became newly bereaved due to a parent's death - a nearly 50% increase compared to 2020. While deaths due to COVID-19 account for part of this increase, other causes such as accidental drug overdose, homicide by gunshot, and suicide also contributed. Due to the stigmatized nature of these deaths, families grieving these types losses often experience reactions such as guilt, isolation, and uncertainty.

Working together to create a more grief-sensitive society helps ensure that grieving children receive the unique care and support they need to return to a healthy developmental trajectory. Implement the following recommendations to increase grief-sensitivity in your community.

Your Action Steps

- Read the [2023 CBEM Key Topic](#) report to learn more about the prevalence of childhood bereavement due to stigmatized deaths in the U.S.
- [Advocate for grief education](#) workshops in your local schools or workplace.
- Start conversations about grief and [share community resources](#) that positively support grieving people.
- [Distinguish between helpful and hurtful comments](#) to use when talking with people in your life who are grieving.
- Share Judi's House/JAG Institute resources available at judishouse.org/pandemic-impact.
- [Donate to a local or national organization](#) that walks alongside bereaved children and families in your community.