

Mental Health Statistics - Did you know?

- Child survivors of suicide had elevated rates of psychiatric disorders, including major depressive disorder, posttraumatic stress disorder, and panic disorder...[they] experience more social maladjustment including problems with peers, siblings, school, and leisure activities compared to control subjects.¹
- Bereavement can increase the risk of suicidal behaviour in the children and adolescents of families suffering a suicide death.¹
- The death or loss of a parent in infancy, early childhood, latency or adolescence is a traumatic event with the potential for long-lasting intrusive effects on the personality development and functioning of the child.²
- An estimated 3.5% of children under age 18 (approximately 2.5 million) in the United States have experienced the death of a parent...Reviews of the literature indicate that parental death places children at risk for many negative outcomes including mental health problems, traumatic grief, lower academic success and [lower] self-esteem.³
- Several factors can be important foci of clinical work with bereaved families, including providing education about the grief process...teaching techniques for increasing self-esteem...positive coping, and support for emotional expression.³
- Reactions to grief might include...mental lapses; decreased energy; difficulty in making decisions; anxiety; helplessness; an inability to concentrate; preoccupation; social withdrawal; disturbance of identity; loneliness; negative health effects; mortality; disrupted social functioning and isolation; role disruptions; and difficulties with new relationships.⁴

¹ Sethi, S. and Bhargava, S.C. (2003). Child and adolescent survivors of suicide. *Crisis* 24(1), 4 – 6.

² Freudenberger, H.J and Gallagher, K.M. (1995). Emotional consequences of loss for our adolescents. *Psychotherapy* 32(1), 150 – 153.

³ Haine, R.A., Ayers, T.S., Sandler, I.N., and Wolchik, S.A. (2008). Evidence-based practices for parentally bereaved children and their families. *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(2), 113-121.

⁴ Vickers, M. H. (2006). A guide to grief in public administration, *Administrative Theory & Praxis*, 28(2), 245-261.

Mental Health Statistics (cont'd)

- According to Health Canada, hospital care costs for mental disorders in Canada totaled \$2.7 billion, one and a half times more than hospital care costs for cancer.⁵
- Despite the enormous personal and economic costs of mental illness, Canada spends relatively little, just 4%, on funding research into its causes and treatments.⁵
- The death or loss of a parent in infancy, early childhood, latency or adolescence, is a traumatic event with the potential for long-lasting intrusive effects on the personality development and functioning of the child. In many ways these findings would suggest the presence of a chronic post-traumatic stress disorder.⁶
- One of the primary ways clinicians can facilitate child and parent adaptation following the death is to provide information about the grief process...[which] may decrease thoughts that may lead to serious adjustment problems.⁷
- The use of active coping strategies and coping efficacy have been associated with more positive adaptation following the death of a parent.⁷
- According to the World Health Organization (WHO), someone around the globe commits suicide every 40 seconds.⁸
- People with mood disorders are at a particularly high risk of suicide.⁸
- In Canada, only 1 out of 5 children who need mental health services receives them. Once depression is recognized, help can make a difference for 80% of people who are affected, allowing them to get back to their regular activities.⁸

⁵ The Economic Costs of Mental Disorders and Addictions, www.heretohelp.bc.ca

⁶ Freudenberger, H.J. and Gallagher, K.M. (1995). Emotional consequences of loss for our adolescents, *Psychotherapy*, 32(1), 150-153.

⁷ Ayers, T.S., Sandler, I.N. and Wolchik, S.A. (2008). Evidence-based practices for parentally bereaved children and their families, *Professional Psychology: Research and Practice*, 39(2), 113-121.

⁸ Canadian Mental Health Association, March 2006, www.ontario.cmha.ca.