

Childhood Bereavement: Understanding Prevalance by Cause of Death

October 27, 2022



Learning Objectives

- Quantify national differences in U.S. childhood bereavement rates based decedent's cause of death
- Understand year-to-year trends in childhood bereavement by causes of death most impacted by the COVID-19 pandemic
- Identify opportunities for collaboration and advocacy as well as implications for service provision and supports for grieving children





CHILDHOOD BEREAVEMENT ESTIMATION MODEL

The CBEM is an accessible public health tool that approximates the prevalence of childhood bereavement in the U.S.



CHILDHOOD BEREAVEMENT ESTIMATION MODEL

Key Topic 2022

2022 National CBEM Projected Prevalence

1 in **13**



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

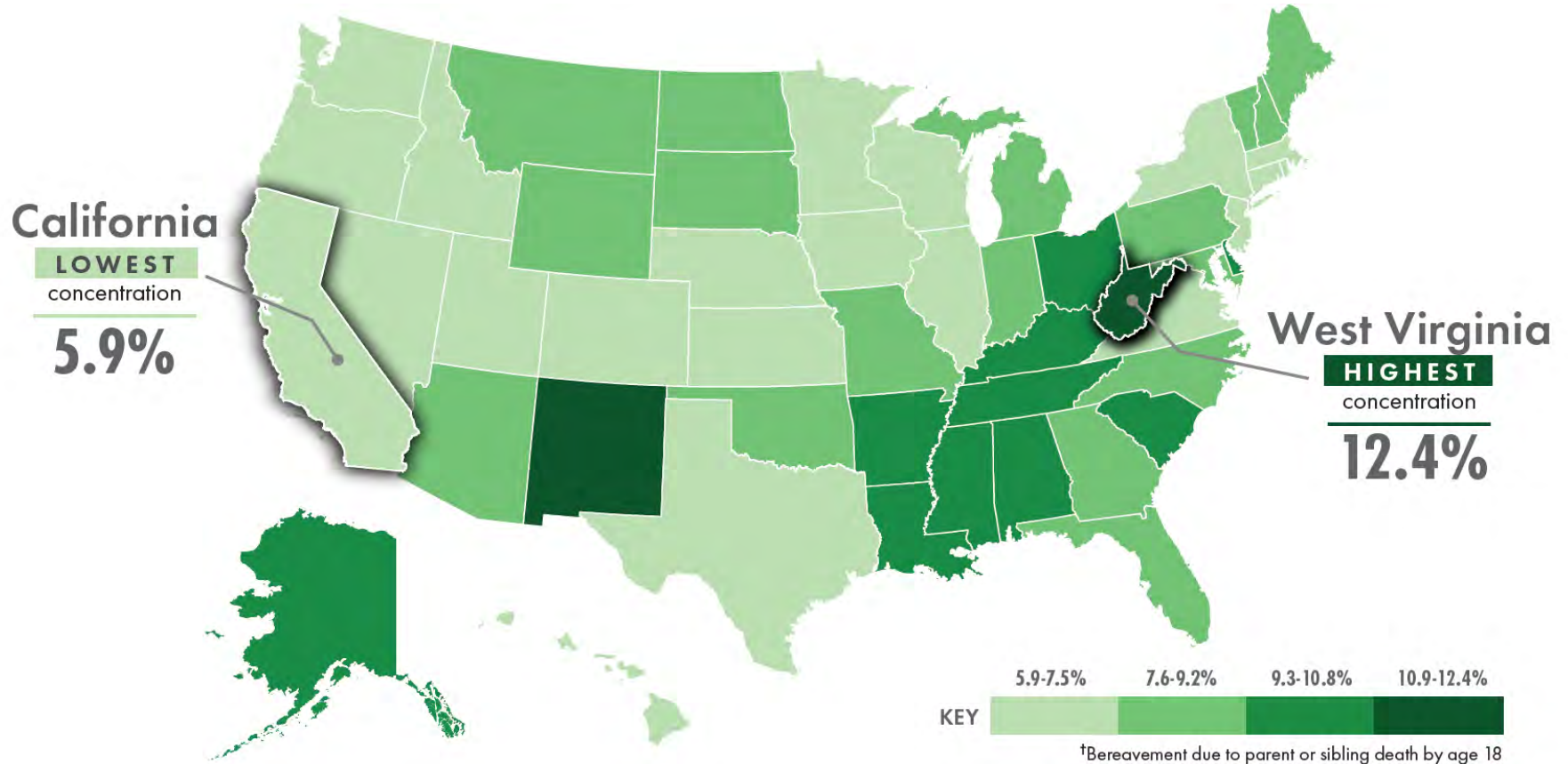
7.7% ~ 5.6M
children will be bereaved by age 18



& MORE THAN
DOUBLES

13.9M
youth will be bereaved by age 25

2022 State CBEM Projected Prevalence



CBEM

Model Results

The **CURRENT** CBEM approximates the number and percentage of youth who **HAVE EXPERIENCED** bereavement.

The **PROJECTED** CBEM approximates the number and percentage of youth who **WILL EXPERIENCE** bereavement.

Source of Bereavement

Death of Sibling

Death of Parent

Death of Sibling or Parent

Geography

National

State

County

Ages

Birth to 18



Birth to 25



Key Topics

Rural-Urban
2018

Substance Related
2019

Race and Ethnicity
2021

Cause of Death
2022

Childhood Bereavement

LEADING CAUSES OF DEATH

National 2022



- Why is cause of death important?
- Children grieving a traumatic or stigmatized death, such as suicide, homicide, or drug overdose, may have more complex reactions.
- Children grieving a death due to a less common cause, such as childhood leukemia or Parkinson's disease, may feel more isolated and misunderstood.
- Cause of death varies significantly by age of the deceased. For example, deaths in infancy account for a large portion of sibling bereavement while medical crises and chronic illnesses are less common.
- Childhood bereavement is best understood when contextualized within systems of care that impact the lives of children, families, and communities. **Examining leading causes of death can identify opportunities for collaboration and advocacy.**

Model Results

The **PROJECTED** CBEM approximates the number and percentage of youth who **WILL EXPERIENCE** bereavement.

Source of Bereavement

Death of Sibling

Death of Parent

Geography

National

Ages

Birth to 18



Key Topics

Cause of Death
2022

New Indicator: Percent of Bereaved Children

Number of children who will be bereaved due to a specific cause

Total number of children who will be bereaved

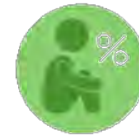
=



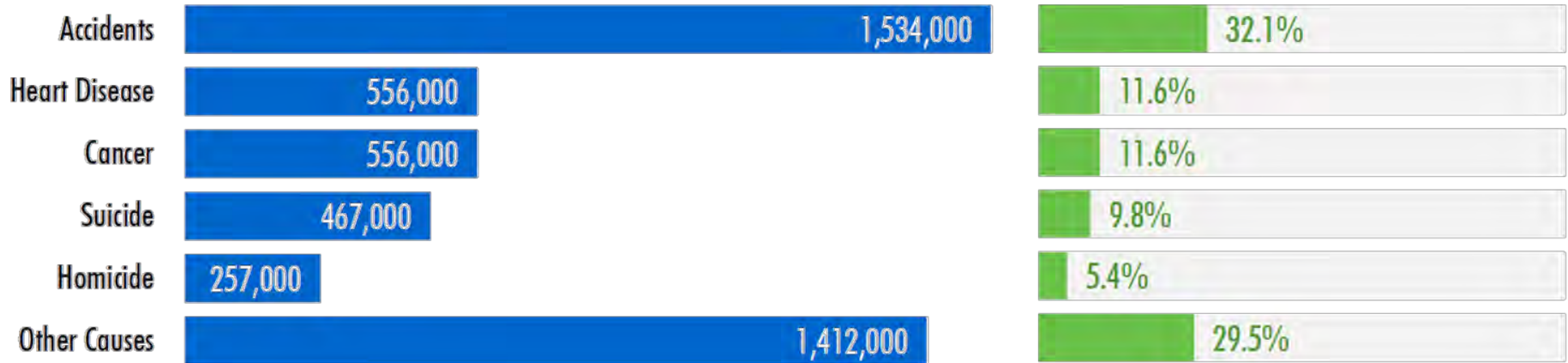
U.S. Projected Childhood Bereavement by Cause of Death of a Parent by Age 18



Number of bereaved children



Percentage of all bereaved children

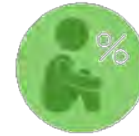


Check for understanding

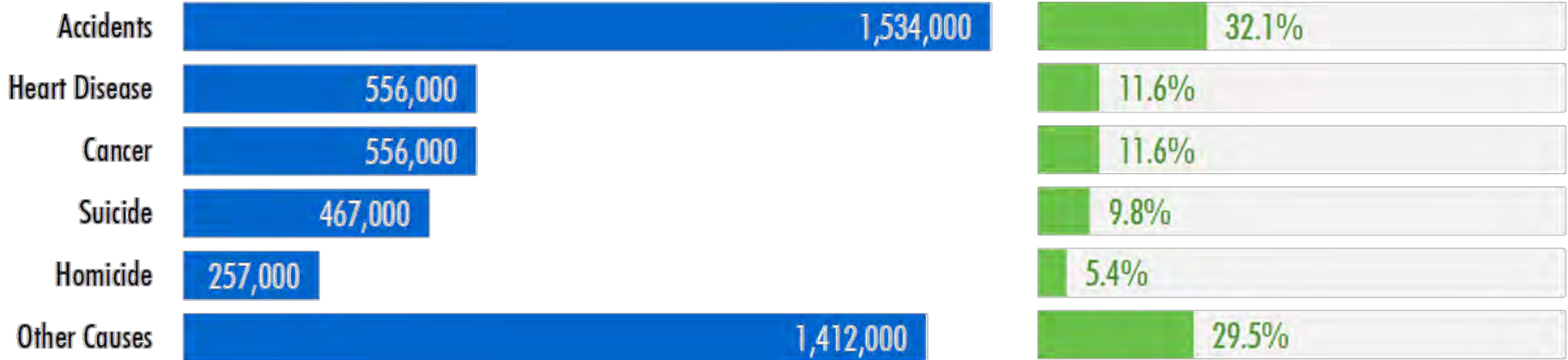
U.S. Projected Childhood Bereavement by Cause of Death of a Parent by Age 18



Number of bereaved children



Percentage of all bereaved children



Children Bereaved Due to Parent Death by Age 18

3^x

Grief following an accident is three times more common than any other cause.





Is this what you see in your community?



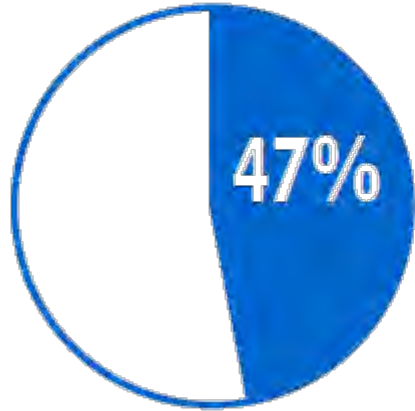
Children Bereaved Due to Parent Death by Age 18

2^x

Grieving a death by suicide is roughly two times more common than homicide.



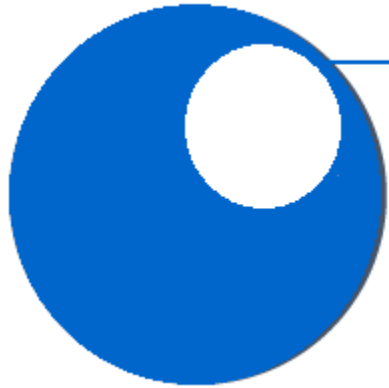
Children Bereaved Due to Parent Death by Age 18



Nearly half will grieve a non-illness related death loss (e.g., accidents, homicide, suicide).



Children Bereaved Due to Parent Death by Age 18



The top five leading causes of death account for nearly three-fourths of bereavement. This excludes deaths due to COVID-19.



U.S. Projected Childhood Bereavement by Cause of Death of a Sibling by Age 18



Number of bereaved children



Percentage of all bereaved children



U.S. Projected Childhood Bereavement by Cause of Death of a Sibling by Age 18



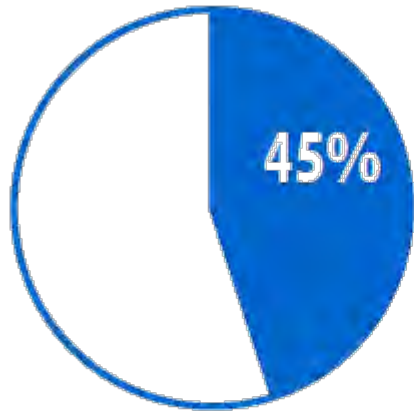
Number of bereaved children



Percentage of all bereaved children



Children Bereaved Due to Sibling Death by Age 18



Nearly half will grieve a death related to birth defects, such as genetic conditions, or conditions related to birth, like preterm birth. In these situations, the deceased sibling is typically under two years of age.



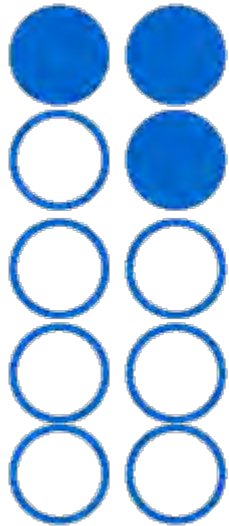
Children Bereaved Due to Sibling Death by Age 18

85_k

More than 85,000 children will grieve a homicide or suicide death loss. Combined, these causes account for nearly 1 in 10 bereaved children.



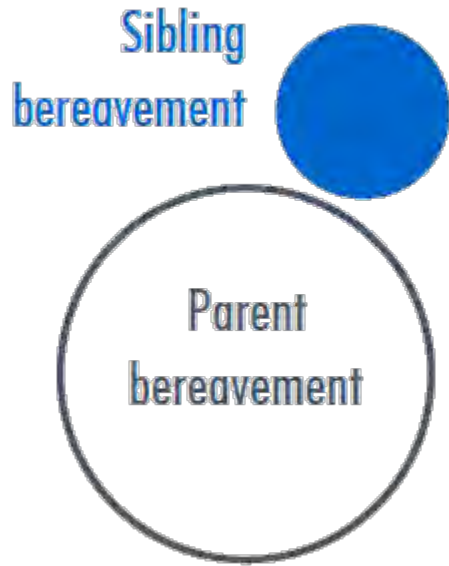
Children Bereaved Due to Sibling Death by Age 18



About 3 in 10 bereaved children will grieve deaths by other causes – a category comprised of more than 100 causes of death.

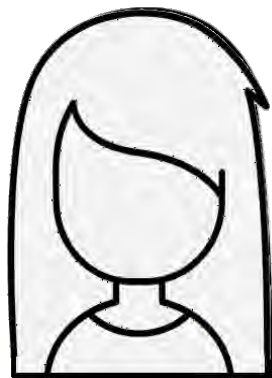


Children Bereaved Due to Sibling Death by Age 18



Sibling bereavement before age 18 is much less prevalent than experiencing the death of a parent – about one-fifth the size – leading to isolation and loneliness.







Think about the family you considered at the start of the presentation. Can you see the family through the lens of this data?



Partnership leads to progress

- American Cancer Society
- American Heart Association
- National Council for Suicide Prevention
- March of Dimes
- National Domestic Violence Hotline
- Occupational Safety and Health Administration
- Partnership to End Addiction



Childhood Bereavement

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTS

National 2022



- While childhood bereavement is not unique to the pandemic, the significant increase in bereavement due to the pandemic is unique.
- Children bereaved due to pandemic-related deaths may experience stigma based on where, when, and how the death occurred.
- Isolation and disruption created by COVID-19 safety measures affected how children grieve, such as interruptions or adaptations made to mourning rituals and practices.



CBEM

Analyses

STANDARD
annual analyses use
aggregated data
inputs from the
most recently
available **five** years

SNAPSHOT
analyses use data
inputs from a **select**
timeframe

Model Results

The **CURRENT**
CBEM
approximates the
number and
percentage
of youth who
HAVE EXPERIENCED
bereavement.

The **PROJECTED**
CBEM
approximates the
number and
percentage
of youth who
WILL EXPERIENCE
bereavement.

Source of Bereavement

Death of Sibling

Death of Parent

Death of Sibling
or Parent

Geography

National

State

County

Ages

Birth to 18



Birth to 25



Key Topics

Rural-Urban
2018

Substance Related
2019

Race and Ethnicity
2021

Cause of Death
2022

Analyses

SNAPSHOT
analyses use data
inputs from a **select
timeframe**

Model Results

The **CURRENT**
CBEM
approximates the
number and
percentage
of youth who
HAVE EXPERIENCED
bereavement.

Source of Bereavement

Death of Parent

Geography

National

Ages

Birth to 18



Key Topics

**Cause of Death
2022**

Childhood Bereavement

COVID-19 PANDEMIC IMPACTS

National 2022



Why focus on parent death only?

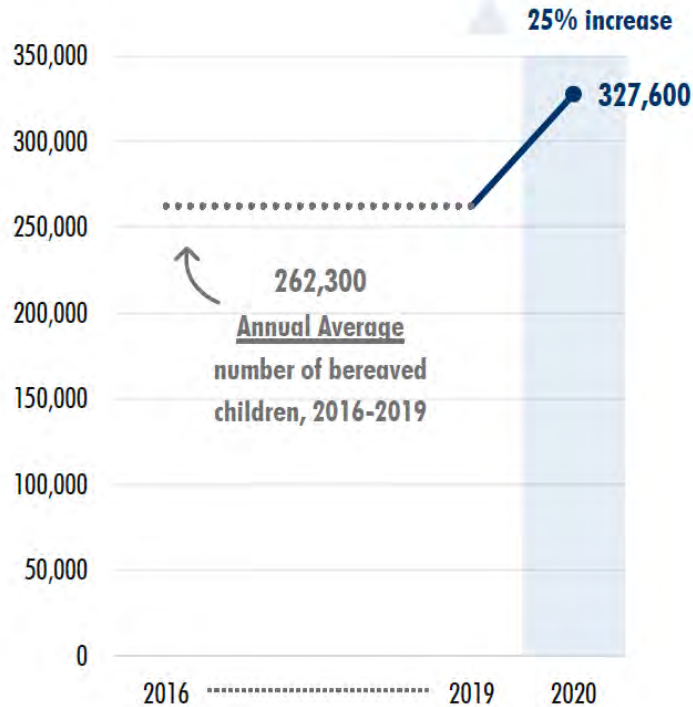
- Children are three to five times more likely to experience the death of a parent in childhood than the death of a sibling.
- COVID-19 deaths for children under age 18 are rare: there were 141 in 2020.





2020 Landscape of childhood bereavement

Children Bereaved due to a Parent death Any Cause



New Indicator: Percent of **Newly** Bereaved Children

Number of children who
were **newly** bereaved
due to a specific cause

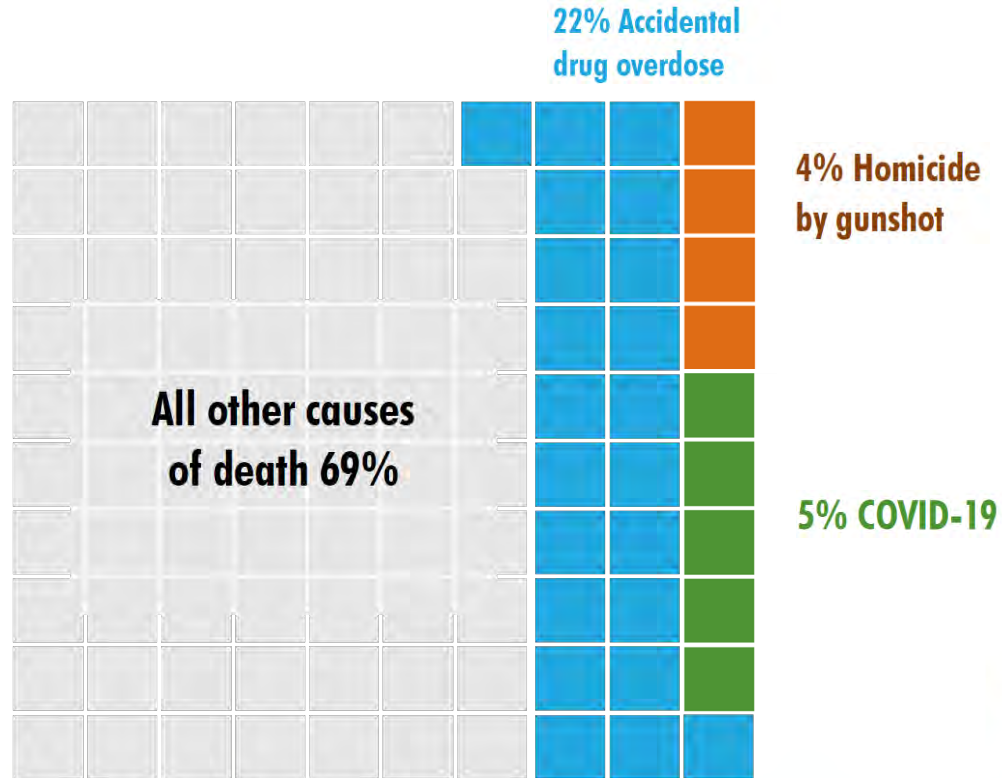
Total number of children
who were **newly**
bereaved

=





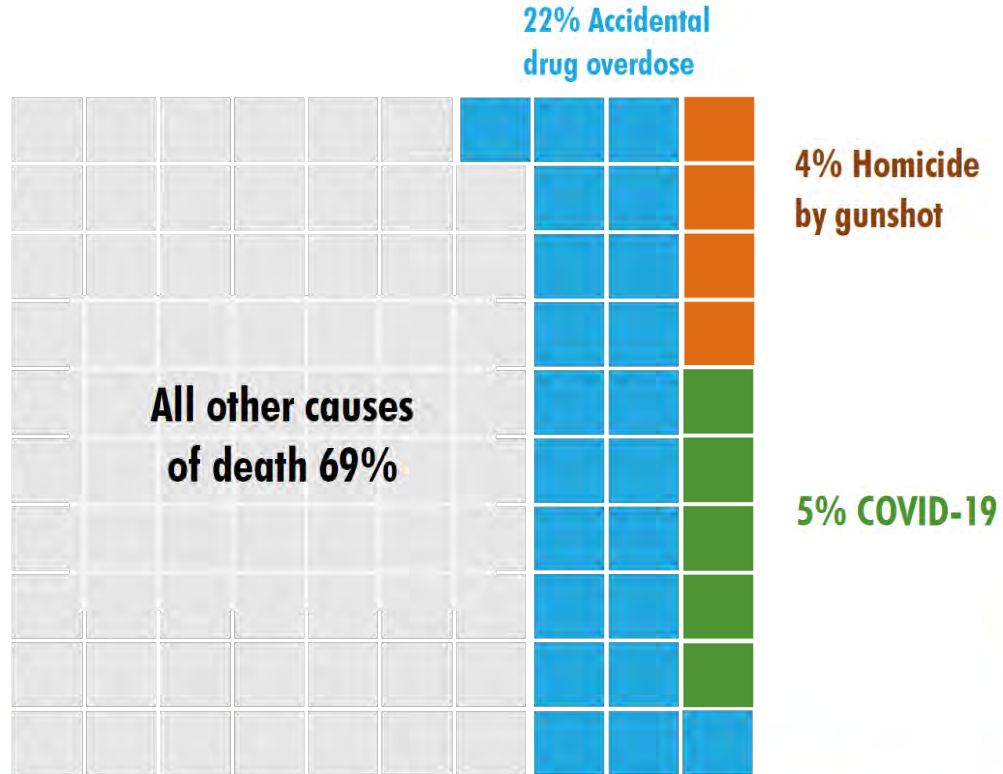
2020 Landscape of childhood bereavement



Check for understanding



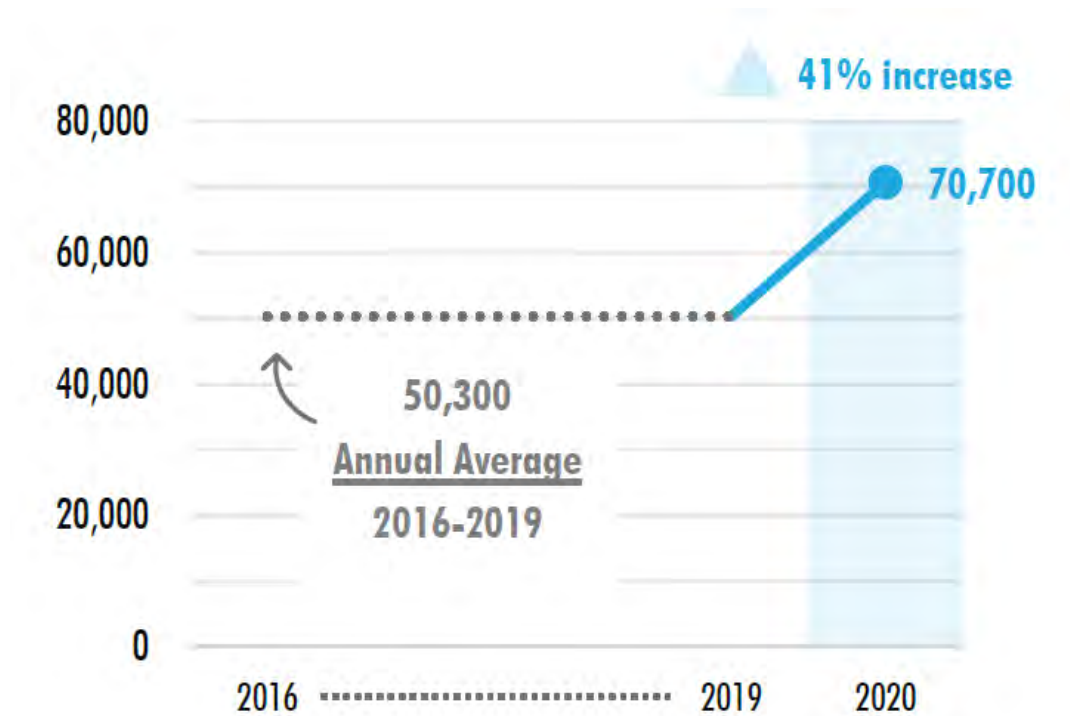
2020 Landscape of childhood bereavement





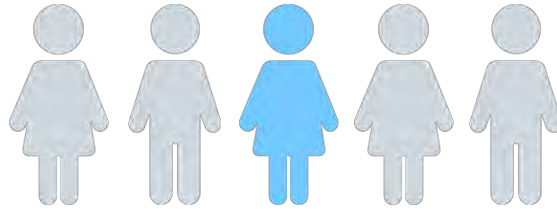
Accidental drug overdoses

Children Newly Bereaved due to a Parent death from an Accidental Drug Overdose





Accidental drug overdoses



1 in 5

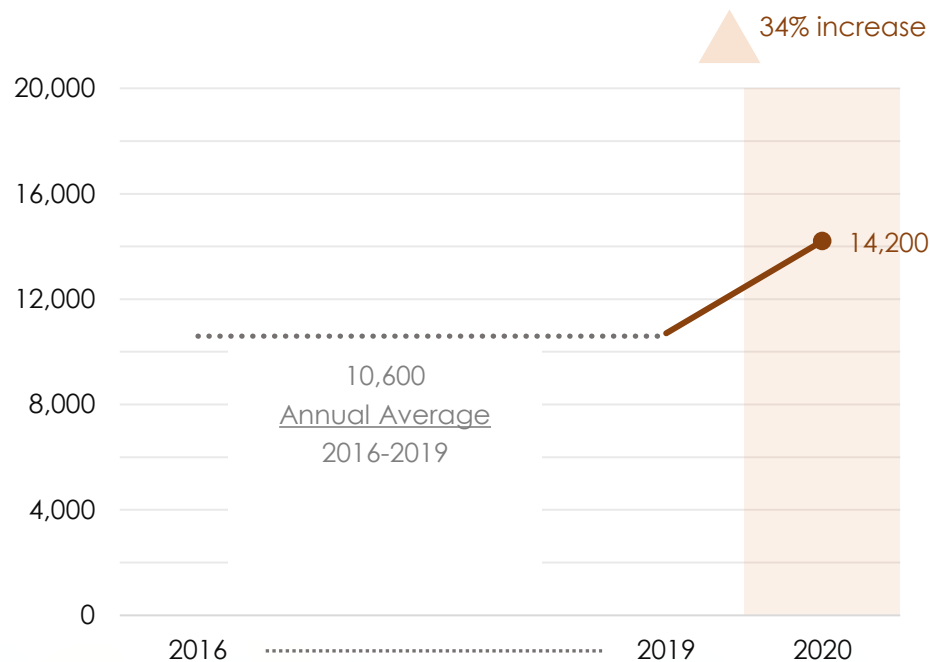
**children newly bereaved by the death
of a parent in 2020 experienced an
accidental overdose death.**





Homicide by gunshot

Children Newly Bereaved due to Parent death from a homicide by gunshot*



*Homicide by gunshot is relatively rare, accounting for 4% of childhood bereavement in 2020.





COVID-19

Data

SNAPSHOT
analyses use data
inputs from a **select
timeframe**

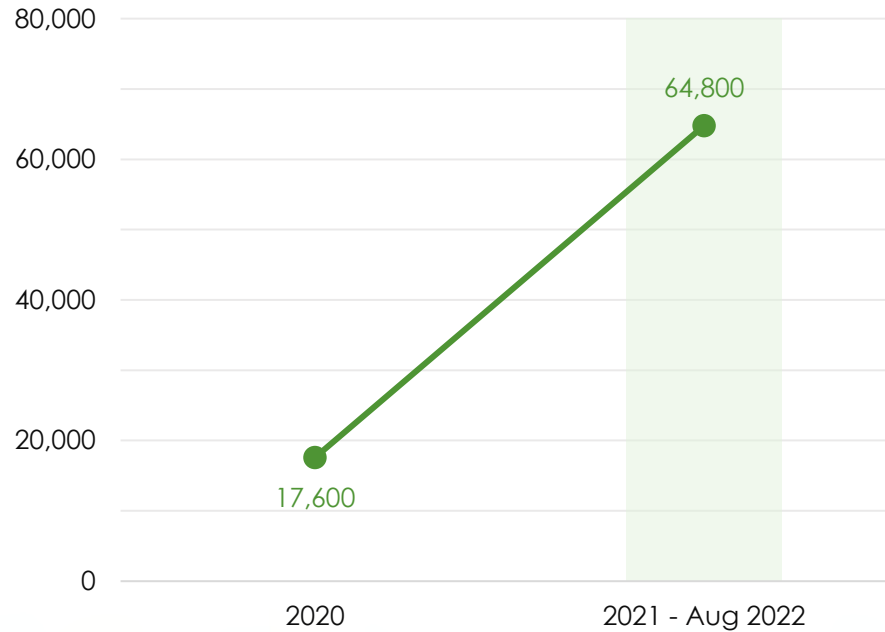
2020 to August 2022





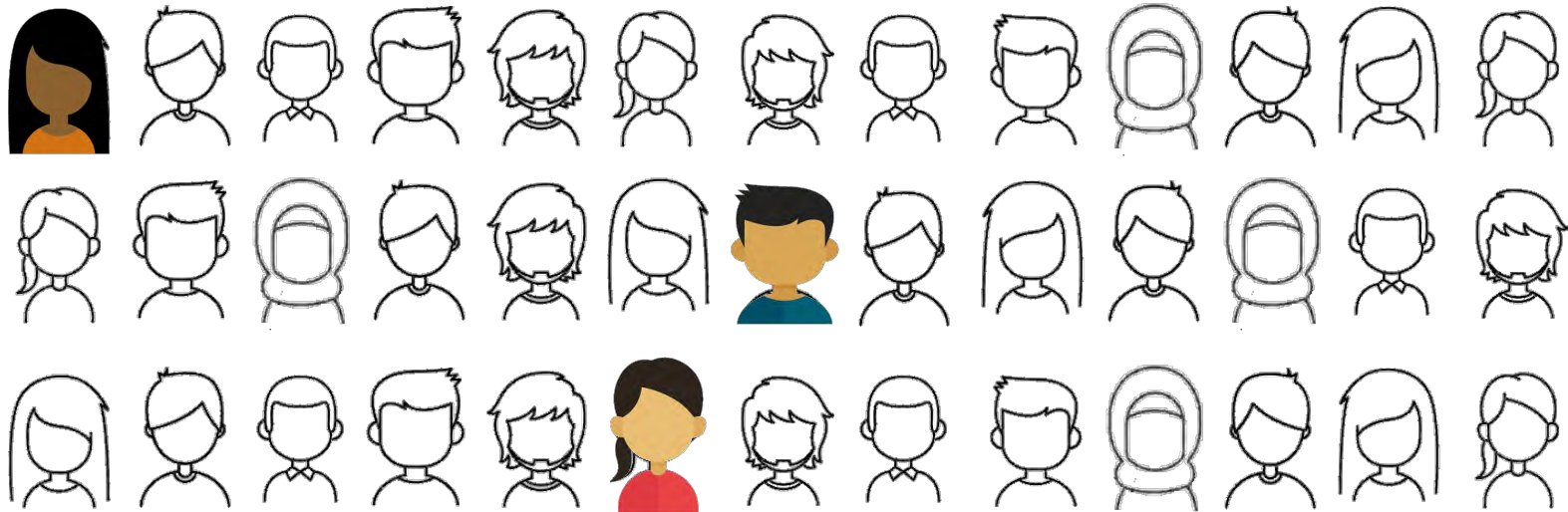
COVID-19

Children Newly Bereaved due to Parent death from COVID



*Parent death from COVID-19 is relatively rare, accounting for 5% of childhood bereavement in 2020.



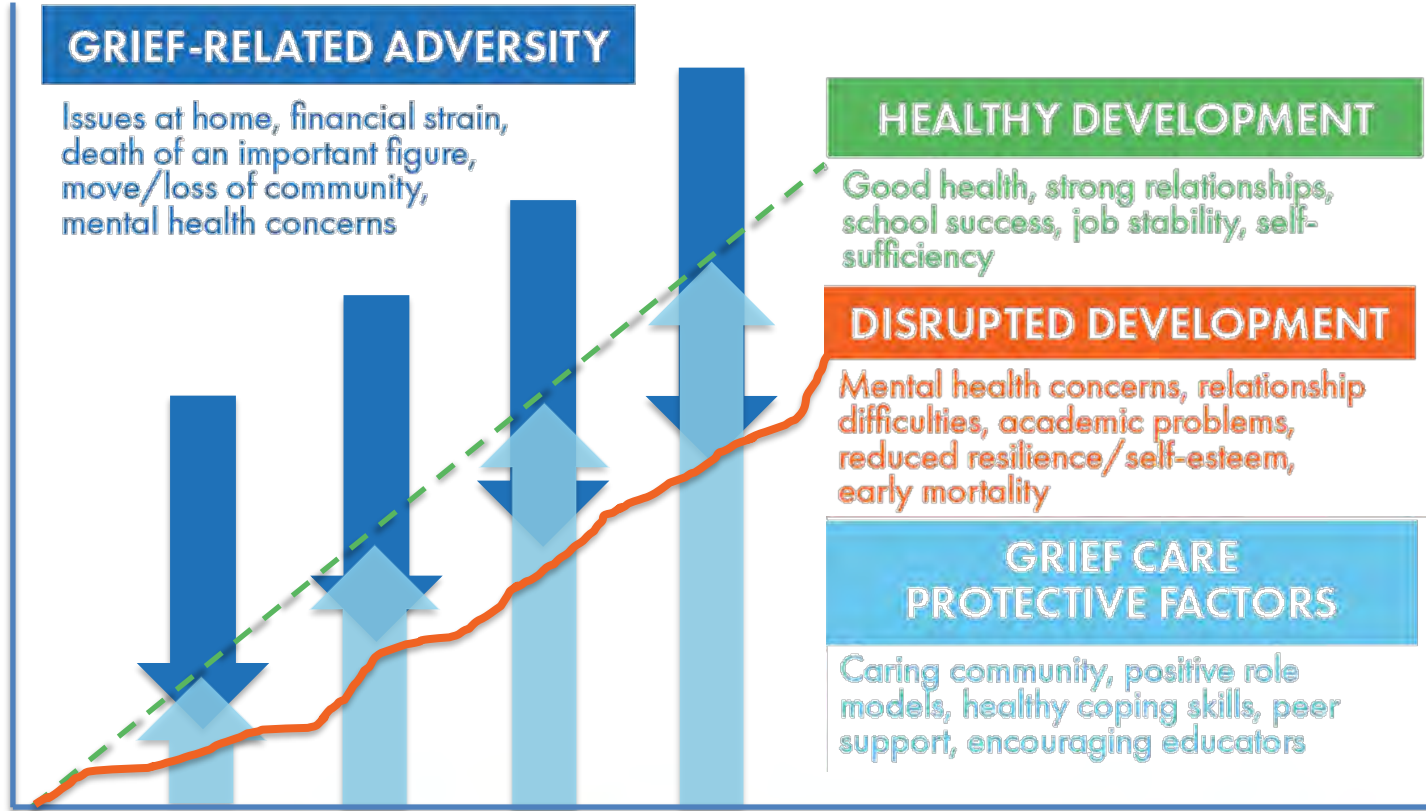


Putting the Pandemic in Perspective

- ✓ Average life expectancy in the U.S. fell sharply in 2020 and 2021, resulting in the largest two-year decline since the early 1920's.
- ✓ While COVID-19-related bereavement dominated news cycles, pandemic stress and isolation contributed to increased mortality in other causes of death that drove up childhood bereavement.
- ✓ Millions of children were bereaved before COVID-19. The pandemic elevated the topic like never before. Childhood bereavement will continue long after the pandemic fades. We must ensure our response outlives the pandemic.
- ✓ As a nation, our approach to addressing the pandemic must include services and support for all grieving children.



Making a Difference



Questions



Thank you!

judi's house JAG Institute
For Grieving Children and Families

CBEM
CHILDHOOD BEREAVEMENT ESTIMATION MODEL

