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Child Death in the United States: Productivity and the Economic Burden of Parental Grief

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Abstract

This article examines the economic

consequences associated with the death of a child. The economic costs (funeral and medical expenses and productivity losses) of child death 6 months following the death were estimated based on 213 parents who had experienced the death of a child (usually unexpectedly and predominantly mothers). Findings suggest that productivity losses associated with child death comprise most of the costs and that the economic effects are substantial. Costs associated with on-the-job productivity losses (“presenteeism”) outweigh the costs associated with absenteeism. To date, no research has empirically measured both absenteeism and presenteeism following bereavement.

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