



ORPHAN STATISTICS - THE FACTS

What is the need?

- Over 130 million children have lost one or both parents.¹
- Every 18 seconds another child becomes an orphan, without a mother or father.²
- At least 16.2 million children worldwide have lost both parents.³
- Every 14 seconds a child loses a parent due to AIDS.⁴
- Conflict has orphaned or separated 1 million children from their families in the 1990s.⁵

Where are they?

- 43.4 million orphans live in sub-Saharan Africa, 87.6 million orphans live in Asia, and 12.4 million orphans live in Latin America and the Caribbean.⁶
- 1.5 million children live in public care in Central and Eastern Europe alone.⁷
- At any given point there are over 500,000 children in the U.S. Foster Care system.⁸
- In some countries, children are abandoned at alarming rates, due to poverty, restrictive population control policies, disabilities or perceived disabilities, and cultural traditions that value boys more than girls.⁹

What about AIDS?

- More than 14 million children under the age of 15 have lost one or both parents to AIDS, the vast majority of them in sub-Saharan Africa.¹⁰
- By 2010, the number of children orphaned by AIDS globally is expected to exceed 25 million.¹¹
- AIDS is more likely than other cause of death to result in children losing both parents.¹²
- As the infection spreads, the number of children who have lost parents to AIDS is beginning to grow in other regions as well, including Asia, Latin America and the Caribbean and Eastern Europe.¹³

What happens to the children?

- Children are profoundly affected as their parents fall sick and die, setting them on a long trail of painful experiences often characterized by: economic hardship, lack of love, attention and affection, withdrawal from school, psychological distress, loss of inheritance, increased physical and sexual abuse and risk of HIV infection, malnutrition and illness, stigma, discrimination, exploitation, trafficking, and isolation.¹⁴



- Orphaned children are much more likely than non-orphans to be working in commercial agriculture, as street vendors, in domestic service and in the sex trade.¹⁵
- Unaccompanied boys are at high risk of forced or 'voluntary' participation in violence and armed conflict.¹⁶
- Orphanages, children's villages, or other group residential facilities generally fail to meet young people's emotional and psychological needs.¹⁷

What about foster care?

- On average, children stay in foster care for 30 months, or 2.5 years.¹⁸
- 118,000 children were waiting to be adopted on September 30, 2004.¹⁹
- On average, those children waiting for adoption have been in foster care for 43.8 months, almost 4 years.²⁰
- Each year, an estimated 20,000 young people "age out" of the U.S. foster care system. Many are only 18 years old and still need support and services. Of those who aged out of foster care:²¹

Outcome²²

- Earned a high school diploma: 54%
- Obtained a Bachelor's degree or higher: 2%
- Were unemployed: 51%
- Had no health insurance: 30%
- Had been homeless: 25%²³
- Were receiving public assistance: 30%

Sources

¹ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund and the United States Agency for International Development, *Children on the Brink 2004: A joint report of new orphan estimates and a framework for action*, Population, Health and Nutrition Information Project for USAID, Washington, D.C., July 2004, p. 7. http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_22212.html.

² Based on the numbers found in Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund and the United States Agency for International Development, *Children on the Brink 2004: A joint report of new orphan estimates and a framework for action*, Population, Health and Nutrition Information Project for USAID, Washington, D.C., July 2004. http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_22212.html.

³ *Ibid*, *Children on the Brink 2004*, p. 29.

⁴ UNICEF, Press Release: As G8 leaders discuss global poverty, UNICEF puts spotlight on children in poor countries. http://www.unicef.org/media/media_21421.html

⁵ UNICEF, Aug 2006. From website, "Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse." http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_orphans.html

⁶ *Ibid*, *Children on the Brink 2004*, p. 3

⁷ UNICEF, Aug 2006. From website, "Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse." http://www.unicef.org/protection/index_orphans.html

⁸ Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) #11 data submitted for the FY 2004, 0/1/03 through 9/30/04. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report11.htm



⁹ Human Rights Watch. Easy Targets: Violence against Children Worldwide . New York: Human Rights Watch. 2001, pp. 25-26. <http://www.hrw.org/reports/2001/children/>

¹⁰ Global Partners Forum convened by UNICEF with support from UNAIDS. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS , July 2004, p 5. Global Strategic Framework: <http://www.ovcsupport.net>

¹¹ Global Partners Forum convened by UNICEF with support from UNAIDS. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS , July 2004, p 5. Global Strategic Framework: <http://www.ovcsupport.net>

¹² Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund and the United States Agency for International Development, Children on the Brink 2004: A joint report of new orphan estimates and a framework for action , Population, Health and Nutrition Information Project for USAID, Washington, D.C., July 2004, p. 11. http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_22212.html

¹³ Global Partners Forum convened by UNICEF with support from UNAIDS. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS , July 2004, p 7. Global Strategic Framework: <http://www.ovcsupport.net>

¹⁴ Global Partners Forum convened by UNICEF with support from UNAIDS. The Framework for the Protection, Care and Support of Orphans and Vulnerable Children Living in a World with HIV and AIDS , July 2004, p 9. Global Strategic Framework: <http://www.ovcsupport.net>

¹⁵ United Nations Children's Fund, The State of the World's Children 2006 . Dec 2005, p. 50. http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_30398.html

¹⁶ Ibid, UNICEF, Aug 2006. From website, "Child Protection from Violence, Exploitation and Abuse."

¹⁷ Joint United Nations Programme on HIV/AIDS, United Nations Children's Fund and the United States Agency for International Development, Children on the Brink 2004: A joint report of new orphan estimates and a framework for action , Population, Health and Nutrition Information Project for USAID, Washington, D.C., July 2004, p. 20. http://www.unicef.org/publications/index_22212.html .

¹⁸ Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and reporting System (AFCARS) #11 data submitted for the FY 2004, 0/1/03 through 9/30/04. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report11.htm

¹⁹ Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and reporting System (AFCARS) #11 data submitted for the FY 2004, 0/1/03 through 9/30/04. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report11.htm

²⁰ Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and reporting System (AFCARS) #11 data submitted for the FY 2004, 0/1/03 through 9/30/04. http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/afcars/tar/report11.htm

²¹ National Foster Care Month, Facts about Children in Foster Care , 2006 Fact Sheet. <http://www.fostercaremonth.org/FactsAndStatistics/>

²² Young adults ages 18-24 years old 2.5 to 4 years after leaving foster care: Cook, R. (1992). Are we helping foster care youth prepare for the future? Children and Youth Services Review. 16(3/4), 213-229. Cook, R.; Fleishman, E., & Grimes, V. (1989). A National Evaluation of Title IV-E Foster Care Independent Living Programs for Youth (Phase 2 Final Report, Volume 1). Rockville: Westat, Inc.

²³ Cook, R. (1991). A national evaluation of title IV-E foster care independent living programs for youth. Rockville, MD: Westat Inc. <http://www.cwla.org/programs/fostercare/factsheetafter.htm>