

Child murder

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For practices of systematically killing very young children, see [infanticide](#). For the killing of one's own children, see [filicide](#).



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Child murder or **child homicide** is the [homicide](#) of an individual [under the age](#) of 18. In 2008, there were 1,494 child homicides in the United States. Of those killed, 1,035 were male and 452 were female.^[1] Child [manslaughter](#) can result in an aggravated charge in some jurisdictions such as the State of [Florida](#).^[2]

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Punishment[[edit](#)]

Several U.S. states have included child murder to their list of aggravating factors making a murder punishable by the [death penalty](#), but the victim's age under which the crime is a capital crime varies between them. In 2011, Texas raised this age from six to 10.^[3]

By other children[[edit](#)]

In most countries, there are very few cases where children are killed by other young children. According to the U.S. Department of Justice statistics for 1996,^[*citation needed*] one in five murders of children are committed by other children. Several murders by children have gained prominent media exposure. One was the killing on 12 February 1993 of the almost three-year-old boy [James Bulger](#) by two ten-year-old boys in [Bootle, England, UK](#). He was beaten and stoned before his unconscious body was left on train tracks to give the impression that a train had hit him. Also, in 1968 in [Newcastle upon Tyne](#), England there was the trial of 10-year-old [Mary Bell](#). She was convicted of [manslaughter](#) due to diminished responsibility in the deaths of toddlers Martin Brown and Brian Howe. She was released in 1980 at the age of 23.^[4] In 1998, 8-year-old Madelyn Clifton was killed by 14-year-old [Josh Phillips](#).

Media coverage[[edit](#)]

In 1992, after the fatal shooting of 7-year-old [Dantrell Davis](#) as he left the [Cabrini–Green public housing](#) project for school, the [Chicago Tribune](#) put every child murder on the front page (generally no murders were front page news). 62 child murders were reported that year.



18th century illustration of William York, age 10, murdering Susan Matthew, age 5, on 13 May 1748, from [The Newgate Calendar](#).

Multiple deaths in one incident, such as the 1999 [Columbine High School massacre](#) and the 2012 [Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting](#) tend to gather the most media attention but are statistically scarce.

Genocide and child soldiers[[edit](#)]



A child soldier of the [Sudanese People's Liberation Army](#) (2007).

Main article: [Military use of children](#)

The military use of children refers to children being placed in harm's way in military actions, in order to protect a location or provide propaganda. This is sometimes referred to as child sacrifice, though not equivalent to the religious variety. It may also refer to the use of children as child soldiers or saboteurs.

[Red Hand Day](#) on 15 February is an annual commemoration day to draw public attention to the practice of using children as soldiers in wars and armed conflicts.

"Muti killings"[[edit](#)]

[Medicine murder](#) (often referred to as *muti killing*) is a practice of [human sacrifice](#) and [mutilation](#) associated with traditional medicinal practices, such as [Muti](#). Victims of muti killings are often children. Organs and/or body parts are usually taken while child is still alive. An unknown child (referred to as [Adam](#)), whose decapitated torso was found in the [River Thames](#) in [London](#) in 2002 is believed to have been the victim of a muti killing.^[5]

Murdered children of royalty[[edit](#)]

- [Alexander IV of Macedon](#), 323–309 BC
- [Hieronymus of Syracuse](#), 231–214 BC
- [Caesarion](#), June 23, 47 BC – August 23, 30 BC
- [Julia Drusilla](#), summer of AD 39 – 24 January 41
- Gisald (son of [Sigismund of Burgundy](#)), † 1 May 524
- Gondebaud (son of [Sigismund of Burgundy](#)), † 1 May 524
- Théodebald (son of [Chlodomer](#)), c. 521-531

- Gunthaire (son of [Chlodomer](#)), c. 523-531
- [Edward V of England](#), November 2, 1470 – c. 1483
- [Richard of Shrewsbury, Duke of York](#), August 17, 1473 – c. 1483
- [Feodor Godunov](#), 1589 – 10 or 20 June 1605
- [Louis XVII of France](#), March 27, 1785 – June 8, 1795
- [Grand Duchess Anastasia Nikolaevna of Russia](#), June 18, 1901 – July 17, 1918
- [Tsarevich Alexei Nikolaevich of Russia](#), August 12, 1904 – July 17, 1918

See also[[edit](#)]

- [Amber Alert](#)
- [Bloody Mary \(folklore\)](#)
- [Cinderella effect](#)
- [Kidnapping](#)

References[[edit](#)]

1. [Jump up](#) ^ United States Department of Justice, Federal Bureau of Investigation. (2009). Crime in the United States: Uniform Crime Report, 2008. Retrieved from "[Archived copy](#)". Archived from [the original](#) on 2010-08-19. Retrieved 2010-08-27.
2. [Jump up](#) ^ [The 2015 Florida Statutes](#)
3. [Jump up](#) ^ "[AN ACT relating to the murder of a child as a capital offense.](#)". *legis.state.tx.us*. Retrieved March 24, 2016.
4. [Jump up](#) ^ "[Child killer Mary Bell becomes a grandmother at 51: But all I have left is grief, says victim's mother](#)". 9 January 2009.
5. [Jump up](#) ^ "[Torso murder reward offered](#)". *BBC News*. 21 December 2001. Retrieved 28 April 2010.

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