

Pediatric Organ Donation

Pediatric donation is an even more difficult subject. The loss of a child for any parent or guardian is devastating and tragic. At the cusp of parents' immediate loss comes the potential decision for their child to be an organ donor. To learn more about pediatric organ donation statistics, visit <https://www.donatelife.net/statistics/>.



Pediatric Organ Donation Statistics at Glance (donatelife.net)

- Nearly 1,900 children under the age of eighteen are on the national transplant waiting list.
- More than 1,700 children received a lifesaving transplant in 2020.
- More than one hundred pediatric organ donors in 2020 were less than twelve months old.
- The organs children need most vary by age:
 - Most children under the age of one year are waiting for a liver or a heart.
 - Most children ages one to five are waiting on a kidney, heart, or liver transplant.
 - Most children ages eleven to seventeen are waiting for a kidney, followed by a heart or a liver.



Congenital Heart Defects and Organ Donation

Congenital heart defects (CHD) are the most common type of birth defect in the United States, impacting nearly one in one hundred births per year. Congenital heart defects affect nearly 1 percent of all births, approximately forty thousand babies a year according to the CDC.

CHDs are present at birth and can affect the structure of a baby's heart, blood flow, and ultimately how the heart functions. Of the fifteen possible CHDs, some are mild, and others are severe.

According to the CDC, about one in four babies born with a heart defect has a critical CHD. A baby with a critical CHD will require surgery or other procedures in the first year of life. In other cases, children are born with a congenital heart defect that is not discovered until later in the child's life.

Treatments for CHDs vary and depend on the severity of the defect. For children born with the most severe and complex congenital heart defects, heart transplantation and placement on the organ transplant list may be their best path forward. The average life expectancy currently of a transplanted heart is seventeen years, and one in four transplants will fail largely due to organ rejection. Therefore, research is another essential component of organ donation and longevity for children born with CHDs who become transplant recipients.

Enduring Hearts is an organization that funds often- overlooked, but critical research with the mission to provide every child a chance at a lifetime. The research will help eliminate organ rejection, prevent life-threatening complications, and reduce the risk of a second transplant.

Enduring Hearts shares, “While there are many organizations funding research in the cardiac space, pediatric heart transplantation research comprises just 0.001 percent of all clinically funded trials.”

To learn more about this life-changing organization and ways you can partner with them to save other children’s lives, visit [www. enduringhearts.org](http://www.enduringhearts.org).

For further information, statistics, and data, here are a few good sources:

- Center of Disease Control <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/heartdefects/index.html>
- Conquering CHD: (<https://www.conqueringchd.org/learn/facts-statistics/>)
- Enduring Hearts: (www.enduringhearts.org)