

Biography

Dr. Ruth Westheimer

Dr. Ruth Westheimer (maiden name Karola Ruth Siegel) was born in Germany on June 4, 1928. She lived in an apartment in Frankfurt, Germany with her parents and grandmother, where she grew up as an only child in an Orthodox Jewish family. She remembers attending synagogue services weekly and having 13 dolls and a pair of roller skates.



When Ruth was ten years old, she remembers that violence toward Jews was becoming extremely dangerous in Germany. Ruth's mother and grandmother decided that Nazi Germany was no longer a safe place for Ruth to live and sent her on the *Children's Transport*, also known as the *Kindertransport*, to a children's home in Switzerland. For six years Ruth remained at this orphanage. To this day she remains thankful that she was kept safe during this challenging time.

After the war, Ruth learned that both of her parents had died during the Holocaust. When Ruth was 17 years old, she decided to emigrate to British Palestine (now known as the country of Israel) where she studied to be a teacher. She later moved to New York City and completed her education, married, and had two children and four grandchildren. Today, Dr. Ruth is a well-known famous media personality, therapist and author. Her story of survival is also highlighted in her new short animated film, *Ruth: A Little Girl's Big Journey*. She was interviewed on June 8, 1998, in New York, New York.

Map of Dr. Ruth's Journey: Frankfurt, Germany to Heiden, Switzerland



Map courtesy of Google Maps, modified by USC Shoah Foundation.

3-2-1 Activity

3 CHALLENGES Ruth faced on her journey:

1.

2.

3.

2 EXAMPLES from Ruth's journey where you think she demonstrates **courage**:

1.

2.

1 THING from Ruth's journey that connects to you or your own journey:

1.