

June 2010

UNDERSTANDING THE COSTS OF ADOPTION

The purpose of this study is to encourage families to adopt children by understanding the full range of costs and subsidies associated with child adoption. We hope to identify the supports that might encourage adoption and better understand how families use existing supports. Understanding the costs and subsidies of adoption will help public and private adoption organizations to better serve potential adoptive families. Survey results may also reveal important implications for policy. As an adoptive parent and researcher, I am hopeful that the results of this study will help children find loving families.

With this survey, we are asking you as an adoptive parent to tell us about the various costs and subsidies associated with your **most recent adoption**. We are also asking you to provide information about the child(ren) involved in that adoption and about your family. We ask these questions because the costs and subsidies associated with adoption are, in part, related to the needs and characteristics of the child(ren) as well as the characteristics of the adoptive family. The information on costs and family income will help us to understand the burden of expenses associated with adoption. The questions regarding special needs, ethnicity, color, country of origin, and age of your adopted child(ren) will help us understand some of the characteristics that may affect the costs and subsidies associated with adoption.

This research is a collaborative effort between Michigan State University's Social Work and Economics programs. One objective of this unique collaboration is to improve policies that guide the placement of children with families. We also welcome any comments you have about this study.

When a university conducts research, there are standards that are designed to protect the people who participate by completing the questionnaire. Your confidentiality will be protected to the maximum extent allowable by law. Along these lines, this survey includes no unique identifiers and is, therefore, completely anonymous. We note that there are some potentially sensitive and/or private questions included in the survey that may seem inappropriate and/or intrusive. Please be assured that our intention is to contribute meaningfully to an important discussion about adoption in the United States. There are no foreseeable risks of your participation in this study, and your participation is completely voluntary. You may choose not to participate at all, or you may refuse to answer certain questions or stop your participation at any time. No harm will come to you if you choose not to participate.

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There is no direct benefit for you if you choose to participate. However, your participation in the research study may contribute to the understanding of policies regarding foster care and adoption.

You indicate your voluntary agreement to participate in our research study by completing and returning our questionnaire. We appreciate your time and thank you for your willingness to share information about your adoption experience. The survey will take approximately 15–20 minutes of your time. Please use the enclosed envelope to submit your completed survey.

If you have concerns or questions about this study, such as scientific issues, how to do any part of it, or to report an injury, please contact Professor Mark Skidmore, at 517-353-9172, Fax 517-432-1800, or e-mail mskidmor@anr.msu.edu or regular mail at 208 Agriculture Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824-1039.

If you have any questions or concerns about your role and rights as a research participant, would like to obtain information or offer input, or would like to register a complaint about this research study, you may contact, anonymously if you wish, the Michigan State University Human Research Protection Program at 517-355-2180, Fax 517-432-4503, or e-mail irb@msu.edu, or regular mail at: 207 Olds Hall, MSU, East Lansing, MI 48824.

Sincerely yours,

Mark Skidmore, PhD
Morris Chair in State and Local Government Finance and Policy
Michigan State University

Enclosure – Understanding the Costs of Adoption Survey