

Adoption Advocate

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Parent Recruitment and Training: A Crucial, Neglected Child Welfare Strategy

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Abstract

Despite an increase in the number of adoptions following the implementation of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997, and a decrease in the overall number of children waiting to be adopted, the number of youths aging out of the foster care system reached a record high of 24,407 in 2005. Considering the poorer life outcomes that correlate with aging out of the foster care system, each of these emancipations represents a personal tragedy that should have been avoided.

To understand the reasons behind this worrisome development, we first examined the latest available research on the effect of ASFA and similar state-level legislation on child welfare outcomes. Research suggests that ASFA has been successful in moving a large number of easy-to-adopt children out of foster care, leaving a more difficult-to-place population in the system. We also estimated the emphasis that states are giving adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services by examining their allocation of federal child welfare funding, as reported on their federally mandated Child and Family Services (CFS) 101 forms. **We found that while 22 percent of children in foster care are waiting to be adopted, states are spending, on average, 1.2 percent to 1.3 percent of available federal**

funds on parent recruitment and training services. In addition, states are spending nearly twice as much federal funding on independent living services designed to assist youth who age out of the foster care system, despite the fact that only six percent of children in foster care have a case goal of emancipation.

States' decision to allocate relatively paltry amounts of federal funding toward parent recruitment and training services results in children aging out of the system unnecessarily. Increased emphasis among the states on parent recruitment and training is necessary to build on the success of ASFA and improve outcomes for children in care.

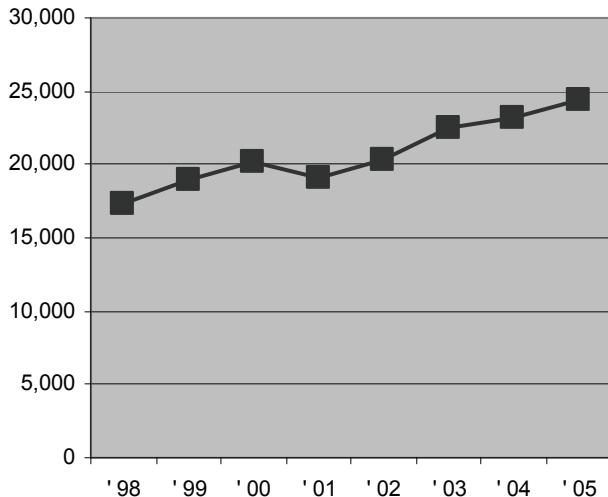
An Emerging Child Welfare Crisis: Record Number of Youths Aging out of the Foster Care System

In 2005, a record 24,407 youths aged out of the foster care system, never having experienced the type of loving, permanent family that is every child's birthright. As Figure 1 on the following page shows, there has been a consistent upward trend in the number of emancipations from the child welfare system since 1998, the year the federal government first required that states report such statistics.¹

1. United States Department of Health and Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 -13)." Available online at http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs.cb/stats_research/index.htm#afcars

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Figure 1. Number of children aging out of the foster care system by year

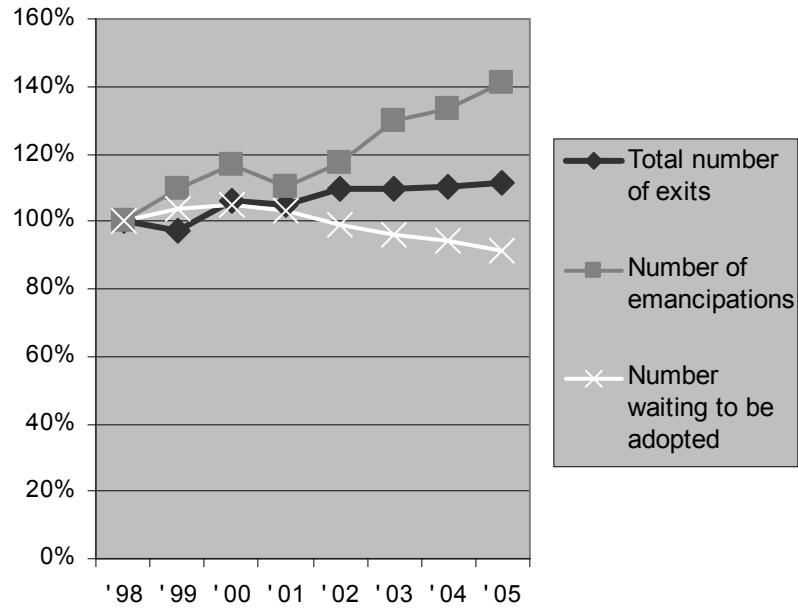


Emancipations also account for a growing percentage of all exits from the child welfare system. In 1998, seven percent of all children who exited the foster care system did so through emancipation. By 2005, that figure had climbed to nine percent.² Thus, while more children have been exiting the foster care system since 1998, the increase in emancipations is not caused by a higher number of children exiting the system overall. This is shown clearly in Figure 2, which juxtaposes the increase in emancipations with those in the total number of exits for each year from 1998 – 2005 relative to the 1998 baseline. For each year, the relative increase in emancipations outstrips that in total exits from the system. When we include a line to represent the number of children waiting to be adopted for these years relative to the 1998 baseline, an interesting scenario emerges. Relative to the 1998 baseline, the total number of children exiting the system has increased, the total number waiting to be adopted

has decreased, while the number emancipated from the system has increased significantly.

These figures are troubling as emancipation typically represents the worst possible outcome for a child whose parents' parental rights have been terminated. Youths who are emancipated have often never experienced the sense of permanency, human connection, and well-being that families provide. With no history of healthy, intimate relationships to draw upon, many emancipated youths have difficulty integrating into society. Numerous studies confirm that youths who age out of the foster care system fare much worse economically, have lower levels of educational attainment, and exhibit higher rates of delinquent behavior relative to their demographically matched counterparts.³

Figure 2. Total number of children exiting the child welfare system, number of children emancipated from the system, and number waiting to be adopted for 1998 - 2005 relative to the 1998 baseline



2. Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 - 13)."

3. For further information on outcomes for youth who age out of the foster care system, see Courtney, Mark E., et al, (May, 2005) *Midwest Evaluation of the Adult Functioning of Former Foster Youth: Outcomes at Age 19*, Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children. Available online at http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1355.

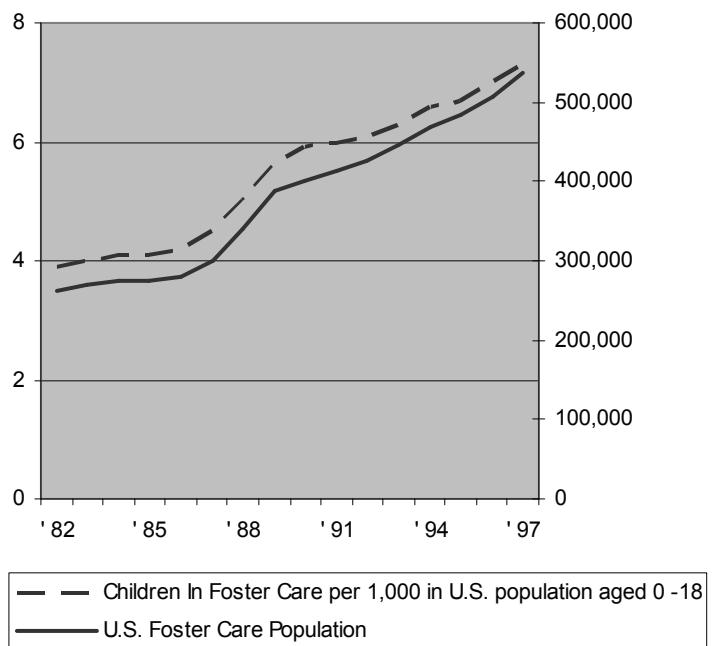
These figures are also counterintuitive, at least at first glance. One would expect the number of children aging out of the system to decrease in tandem with the number of children waiting to be adopted, as the ratio of adoptable children to prospective adoptive parents falls. At worst, one would expect the number aging out to rise at the same rate as the number of total exits. Yet the number of emancipations has not only increased between 1998 – 2005, it has done so at a significantly higher rate than has the total number of exits. Our explanation for this scenario begins with a brief history of the state of the foster care system over the past several decades.

Foster Care in the 1980s and 1990s: Explosive Growth and the Government's Response

The 1980s and 1990s saw a remarkable increase in the number of children 18 years of age and under in the United States foster care system. In 1982, approximately 262,000 children in the United States were in foster care. Fifteen years later, that number had soared to 507,000 children. As Figure 3 shows, a parallel increase during the same period in the rate of children in foster care per 1,000 members of the U.S. child population indicates that this explosive growth cannot be attributed to an increase in the nation's child population.⁴

Concern over the increase in the number of children in foster care led to various foster care reform efforts among the states. On the federal level, foster care reform efforts culminated in the passage of the Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) of 1997. ASFA authorized financial incentives for states that increased the number of children adopted out of their foster care systems, provided a timeframe for when states are to commence proceedings to terminate parental rights, and provided a tighter definition of what

Figure 3. Pre-ASFA foster care population trends in rates per 1,000 children and absolute numbers (1982 -1997)



“reasonable efforts” are to be made to “complete whatever steps are necessary to finalize the permanent placement of the child.”⁵ ASFA also re-authorized child welfare demonstration projects, expanded family preservation and support services, and provided states with guidelines for yearly, mandatory reporting on a number of child welfare indicators. Nevertheless, the main purpose of the act was to promote adoption. In making this their focus, the authors of the act showed that they recognize the importance of adoption as the preferred permanency outcome for children whose parents’ parental rights have been terminated.

4. Committee of Ways and Means of the U.S. House of Representatives, “House Ways and Means Committee 2000 Green Book.” Sec. 11, 719-720. Available online at <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/wmprints/green/2000.html>

5. *Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997 (ASFA)*, §101(a)(15)(A). Public Law 89, 105th Cong., 1st session. (November 19, 1997).

Estimating ASFA's Effects on Adoption Rates

It has been nearly ten years since the implementation of ASFA in 1998, and preliminary evidence regarding the act's effect on children's permanency outcomes is beginning to become available. Current statistics suggest that ASFA has expedited the adoptions of thousands of children from foster care, but that further efforts are necessary to build on its success. Between 1998 and 2002, the absolute number of children adopted out of the foster care system rose from 38,000 to 51,000. During the same period, the percentage of all exiting children being adopted out of the system rose from 15 percent to 18 percent.⁶ Since 2002, these figures have remained relatively stable.

These trends are more or less what one would expect as a result of successful, pro-adoption reform. First, any comprehensive shift in emphasis toward adoption would likely lead to an initial surge in the number of children being adopted from the child welfare system. In time, this surge would taper off, and the number of children exiting the system through adoption would stabilize, albeit at a higher level than before. In other words, Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data suggests that ASFA worked and continues to work. Still, we must consider the possible connection between ASFA and recent adoption trends in more depth before addressing the dilemma of the rising numbers of children being emancipated from care.

ASFA's Effects on a Child's Conditional Probability of Adoption

To more adequately assess ASFA's impact, we turn to an analysis by Chapin Hall Center for Children, which examines data on seven states from the Multistate Foster Care Data Archive on

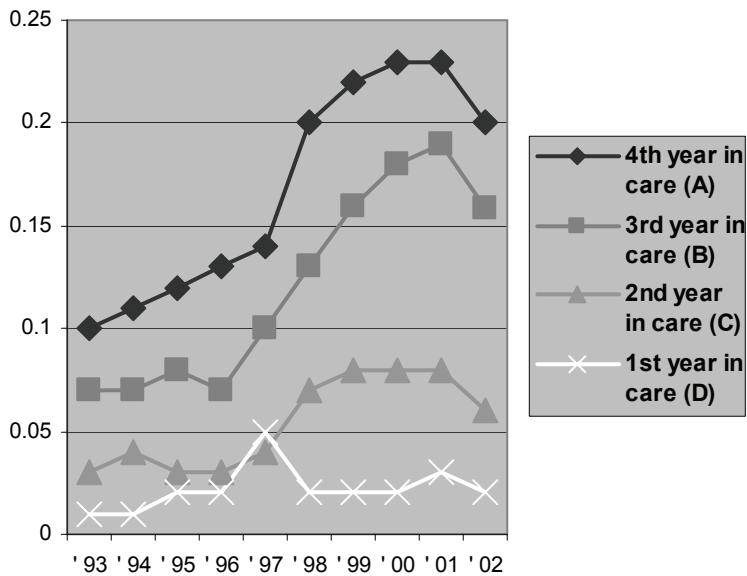
children entering foster care between 1990 and 2002. In order to estimate ASFA's impact, the authors calculated the conditional probability that a child in each of the thirteen yearly entry cohorts would be adopted during any upcoming year given that he or she was in the system on the first day of that year, and that he or she did not exit the system during the course of that year via another permanency option. This allowed the authors to compare the conditional probability of adoption across time periods and cohorts. Generally speaking, the authors found that children entering the foster care system later in the 1990s had higher conditional probabilities of adoption overall, and that a child's conditional probability of adoption peaked at around years seven through nine across all cohorts.⁷

Using data from the Chapin Hall publication, Figure 4 on the following page compares the conditional probability of adoption across all thirteen entry cohorts during the ten years for which there is data on a minimum of four entry cohorts. For example, the data for 1993 shows that, in that year, the conditional probability of adoption for children who entered the system in 1993, 1992, 1991 and 1990 was 0.01, 0.03, 0.07, and 0.10, respectively. Similarly, the data for 2002 shows that, in that year, the conditional probability of adoption for children who entered the system in 2002, 2001, 2000, and 1999 was 0.02, 0.06, 0.16, and 0.2, respectively. These data were chosen so that, represented visually, they would be fairly evenly divided between the pre-ASFA and post-ASFA periods.

6. Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 - 13)."

7. Wulczyn, F., Hislop, K., Chen, L., "Adoption Dynamics: An Update on the Impact of the Adoption and Safe Families Act," Chicago, Chapin Hall Center for Children, 2005. Available online at http://www.chapinhall.org/article_abstract.aspx?ar=1384

Figure 4. Conditional probability of adoption for children in foster care by year and time in care



So, did ASFA accomplish its intended goal of expediting the adoption of children from foster care? Consider line A in Figure 4, representing the conditional probability of adoption during each year from 1993 through 2002 among those children for whom the year in question was their fourth year in care. Between 1997 and 1998, there is a significant jump in the conditional probability of adoption, from 0.14 to 0.20. This means that in 1997, children who were in their fourth year of foster care (i.e., children who had entered the system in 1994) had a conditional probability of adoption of 0.14, whereas in 1998, children who were in their fourth year of foster care (i.e., children who had entered the system in 1995) had a conditional probability of adoption of 0.20. Obviously, something occurred between the years 1997 and 1998 which affected the chances of a child being adopted provided he had been in the foster care system for four years. The implementation of ASFA in 1998 seems an obvious candidate.

On the other hand, consider line B, representing the conditional probability of adoption

during each year from 1993 through 2002 among those children for whom the year in question was their third year in care. The conditional probability of adoption again increased between 1997 and 1998, but the increase is about as significant as the increase during the preceding period. Similarly, the conditional probability of adoption actually decreased between 1997 and 1998 for those children for whom the year in question was their first year in care.

The authors drew two conclusions from their findings. One, ASFA did have a significant overall effect on a child's conditional probability of being adopted, though this effect was not evenly distributed across whatever number of years a child might spend in foster care. Two,

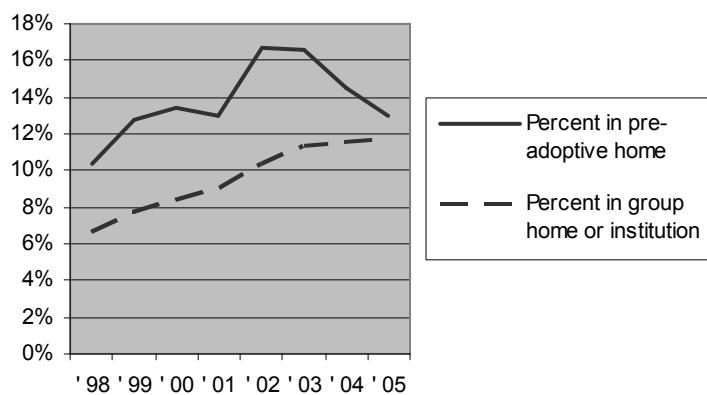
the effects of ASFA accentuated, but did not initiate, the trend toward increasing numbers of adoption from the foster care system. This is most evident in line A of the graph in Figure 4, which rises steadily from 1993 – 1997, jumps substantially from 1997 – 1998, then resumes a more gradual upward trend. Line B also shows a steadily increasing trend beginning in 1996, two years *before* the implementation of ASFA.

The post-ASFA plateau and decline in the conditional probability of adoption from foster care evident in all four cohorts around 2000 – 2002 supports our earlier idea that the system may have reached a new equilibrium at around this point. Recent AFCARS data provides evidence that the current trend of stagnant numbers of adoptions and increasing numbers of emancipations from the system will continue. Figure 5 shows the percentage of children in foster care whose parents' parental rights have been terminated living in group homes or institutions relative to those living in pre-adoptive homes by year.⁸ Children in group homes or institutions are far more likely to be emancipated than adopted

8. Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 - 13)."

from the system.⁹ Neither the steady increase in the percentage of children whose parents' parental rights have been terminated living in such settings, nor the recent decrease in the percentage living in pre-adoptive homes, suggest we will see renewed improvements in permanency outcomes for such children in the near future.

Figure 5. Percentage of children whose parental rights have been terminated by placement setting and year



Older Children, Longer Waits

We return now to the important question of why emancipations out of the foster care system have risen since 1998 at a disproportionately high rate, and seem likely to continue to rise, despite a greater emphasis on adoption. Our interpretation of the post-ASFA situation is that while ASFA, in conjunction with state initiatives, moved a large number of children out of the foster care system via adoption, those children were disproportionately easy to place. This left a growing number of difficult-to-place children in the system waiting to be adopted, on whom ASFA has had much less of an effect. We feel that this assumption is reasonable. For those who require additional evidence, we note that between 1998 – 2005, the average amount of time since termina-

tion of parental rights among children waiting to be adopted rose by 4.9 months, from 22.1 months to 27.0 months. In addition, the average age of children waiting to be adopted rose by 9.6 months during the same period, from 7.8 years to 8.6 years, while the average age of children entering the system *dropped* by three months from 8.6 years to 8.2 years.¹⁰ As younger children have significantly higher rates of adoption from the foster care system, both these statistics suggest that the child population waiting to be adopted has become more difficult to place since 1998.¹¹

Funding for Parent Recruitment and Training Services

Efforts to further increase the number of adoptions out of foster care by moving difficult-to-place children into adoptive homes must do what ASFA, while otherwise successful, did not. Thus, it is appropriate to ask what aspects of the child welfare system ASFA left untouched, but which, if reformed, might reasonably lead to an increase in the adoption of difficult-to-place children. In this vein, we would like to point out that, despite aiming to promote the adoption of children from foster care, ASFA was silent on the crucial issue of prospective adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training. Most likely, this was because the federal government already gave states significant leeway in how much they can spend on such services. Following is a brief description of the four major available federal funding sources states may utilize for parent recruitment and training services.

- Under Title IV-B, Subpart I of the Social Security Act, the Child Welfare Services program provides grants to states to fund services aimed at promoting general child welfare; preventing child abuse and neglect; supporting at-risk families so that children may safely remain with their fami-

9. Freundlich, M., & Avery, R.J. (2005) "Planning for Permanency for Youth in Congregate Care," *Children and Youth Services Review*, 27(2), 115 – 134.

10. Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 - 13)."

11. Ibid.

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lies or be reunited with their families in a timely manner; promoting the best interests of children in foster care and adoptive families; and providing training to the state's child welfare workforce. There are no income eligibility requirements for families to access services provided under this program. States must match 25 percent of these federal funds. Adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services are permitted under the category of promoting the best interests of children in foster care and adoptive families.

- Under Title IV-B, Subpart II of the Social Security Act, the Promoting Safe and Stable Families program provides grants to states for the purpose of funding family support, family preservation, family reunification, and adoption promotion and support services. There are no income eligibility requirements for families to access these services. States must match 25 percent of these funds. Adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services are permitted under this program's adoption promotion and support category.
- Title IV-E of the Social Security Act includes two entitlement programs under which states are reimbursed a portion of the funds they spend on adoption assistance and foster care maintenance services. Adoptive parent recruitment services and foster parent recruitment services are reimbursable under the administration section of the Adoption Assistance and Foster Care Maintenance programs, respectively. Similarly, adoptive parent training services and foster parent training services are reimbursable under the training sec-

tions of the Adoption Assistance and Foster Care Maintenance programs. States are reimbursed 50 percent of the amount they spend on recruitment of prospective adoptive and foster parents for income eligible children, and 75 percent of the amount they spend on training prospective adoptive and foster parents for income eligible children.

- Under Title XX of the Social Security Act, the Social Services Block Grant provides states with funds proportionate to their total populations to promote the well-being of a number of dependent groups including, but not limited to, children in the state's child welfare system.

This paper will focus specifically on the issue of the states' allocation of federal funding available for parent recruitment and training services. It will show that despite their importance, states underfund and, by extension, underutilize these services relative to other child welfare services. The purpose of this research is not to establish an empirical link between the amount of federal dollars states are allocating toward parent recruitment and training services and the current backlog of children in the foster care system waiting to be adopted. Such an argument is beyond the scope of this research. Rather, this paper will show the amounts of federal dollars that states are spending on parent recruitment and training services are much lower than what a reasonable individual might expect, and lay the groundwork for further research on what effects present funding decisions are having on child welfare.¹²

12. We chose to limit our analysis to federal expenditures because the federally approved CFS-101 forms provided limited and unreliable data on state and county expenditures. While part II of the CFS-101 form does include a column entitled "State, Local, Donated Funds," data for this column was often either incomplete or inconsistent with the federal expenditures recorded on the same form. For example, Hawaii, Idaho and Puerto Rico recorded total amounts in their State, Local, Donated Funds column, but did not break down their totals by service. Louisiana, Mississippi, North Dakota, South Carolina, Vermont, and Wisconsin recorded Title IV-E total expenditures in excess of 75 percent of their total state and local expenditures. This is impossible, given that Title IV-E expenditures are federal reimbursements for between 50 and 75 percent of state and local expenditures, depending upon the service. Finally, of the remaining 43 states, 36 reported spending more in Title IV-E funds under at least one service category than in state, local and donated funds. Staff at several state child welfare agencies responsible for filling out and submitting these forms informed us that, because the purpose of the CFS-101 form is to estimate a state's allotment of *federal* child welfare funds, we should deal with any inconsistencies between federal and state data by discarding the latter.

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Methodology

In order to assess how much federal funding states are allocating toward parent recruitment and training services, we reviewed each state's most recently approved Child and Family Services (CFS) 101 form. Under ASFA, states are required to submit a three-part CFS-101 form to the federal government detailing how much in local and federal expenditures states intend to allocate toward their various child welfare services.¹³ The forms are then reviewed by the federal government and revised in tandem with the states if the federal government deems it necessary prior to approval. The breakdown in federal funding as documented in the CFS-101 form guides the states in how to allocate expenditures through the fiscal year.

Approved forms for all 50 states, plus the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico, were provided by the Administration for Children and Families. The majority of forms (43) were for federal fiscal year 2007. Eight forms were for federal fiscal year 2008, and one form was for federal fiscal year 2006. Part II of the basic CFS-101 form asks states to record the amount of child welfare services funding they receive from eight designated federal sources, four of which, listed and described above, may be used for adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services. In addition, part II of the CFS-101 form also permits states to estimate the dollars allocated from "Other Federal Programs" to various child welfare services, including adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services.

The "Other Federal Programs" category presented a unique difficulty during our assess-

ment of the percentage of eligible federal child welfare funds allocated to parent recruitment and training services. Namely, there was often no way to ascertain whether the expenditures recorded under this category for any child welfare service other than parent recruitment and training *could* have been allocated toward parent recruitment and training. Occasionally, states voluntarily identified the specific programs providing "other federal funds." In these instances, it was a simple matter to determine whether funding from the programs so identified could have been allocated toward parent recruitment and training services. Expenditures from funding sources which did not provide for parent recruitment or training services were disregarded.¹⁴ However, this still left a considerable amount of funding for which there was no named source.

We responded to this uncertainty through the use of two analyses. The first analysis assumed that all funding in the "Other Federal Programs" category which could not be reliably connected to a specific source could have been allocated toward parent recruitment and training services. The second analysis assumed that only those funds in the "Other Federal Programs" category which *were* allocated toward parent recruitment and training services could have been so allocated. Of course, these analyses represent the two most extreme possible scenarios, with the reality most likely falling somewhere in between. However, together they establish the range in which the percentage of available funds being allocated toward parent recruitment and training services falls. On a national level, the range was one tenth of one percent.

13. Part II of the CFS-101 form has rows reserved for "Foster Parent Recruitment and Training" expenditures and "Adoptive Parent Recruitment and Training" expenditures. These categories are defined in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services instructions as "the cost of short-term training to increase foster parent's ability to provide assistance and support to foster and adoptive children, and those costs associated with/resulting from the recruitment of potential foster parents," and "the cost of short-term training to increase adoptive parent's ability to provide assistance and support to foster and adoptive children, and those costs associated with/from the recruitment of potential adoptive parents," respectively.

14. Such funding sources included the Refugee Assistance program, Child Care and Development Fund/Child Care Block Grant, Community-Based Family Resource and Support grant program, and the Children's Justice Act.

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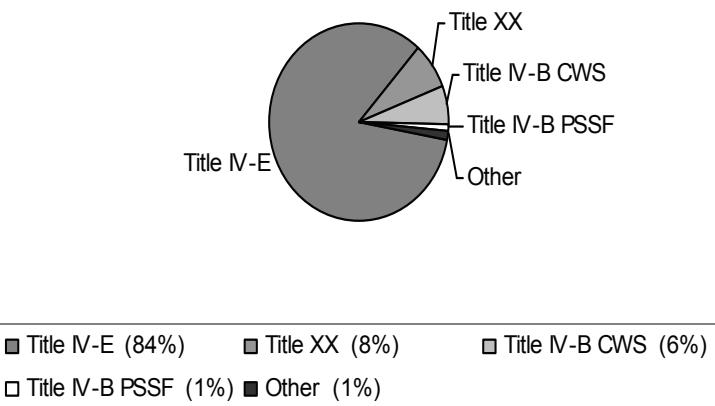
Parent Recruitment and Training Expenditures

We may now say with confidence, that based on their most recently approved CFS-101 forms, states are allocating between 1.2 percent and 1.3 percent of available federal funds to parent recruitment and training services. In terms of actual dollars, states are allocating \$102 million out of \$7.9 - \$8.5 billion in available federal dollars to parent recruitment and training services.

Among the states themselves, North Carolina spent the greatest percentage of available federal dollars on parent recruitment and training services: between 21.24 percent and 21.34 percent. North Carolina was also the only state to spend more than ten percent of available funds on these services. Four states spent between five and ten percent of available funds on parent recruitment and training; thirty-seven states spent less than five percent; and ten states reported spending no federal dollars on parent recruitment and training. (For information on all 50 states, as well as Washington D.C. and Puerto Rico, please see Figures 7, 8 and 9 at the end of this publication.)

Among the federal funding streams, Title IV-E was the most commonly availed source of parent recruitment and training funds. Thirty-nine states, plus Puerto Rico, reported using some Title IV-E dollars to pay for parent recruitment and training. Eleven states reported using Title IV-B, Subpart I dollars for parent recruitment and training; six states reported using Title XX funds; four states reported using funds from other federal programs; and one state reported using funds from Title IV-B, Subpart II. The majority of federal dollars states spent on parent recruitment and training services came from Title IV-E. A complete breakdown of total federal expenditures on parent recruitment and training services by major funding source is provided in Figure 6.

Figure 6. Federal funding for adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services by program



Parent Recruitment and Training Services Expenditures Relative to Independent Living Services Expenditures

To put the amounts allocated toward parent recruitment and training services in context, it may be useful to consider these expenditures relative to the amount allocated toward independent living services—i.e., services to help children who age out of the foster care system adjust to life as responsible adults. The comparison is useful for two reasons. First, as mentioned earlier, adoption typically represents the best possible outcome for a child whose parents' parental rights have been terminated, whereas emancipation typically represents the worst. Second, many more children in foster care whose parents' parental rights have been terminated have adoption as their case goal rather than emancipation. For each year from 1998 – 2005, between 100,000 and 118,000 children in foster care had a case goal of adoption, while the number of children with a case goal of emancipation held steady at around 30,000.¹⁵ These statistics reflect the preference caseworkers rightfully give to adoption. But is this preference

15. Children's Bureau, "The AFCARS Report (10 - 13)."

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reflected in state allocation of federal funds? Do states spend more federal dollars on parent recruitment and training services than they do on services to prepare children for emancipation from the system, as one would expect given that adoption is not only the preferable outcome for children, but also the explicit case goal for three times as many children in foster care? To answer these questions, we looked again at the CFS-101 forms, which list each state's federal expenditures for independent living services.¹⁶ In total, states spent nearly twice as much in federal dollars on independent living expenditures than they did on parent recruitment and training services. The actual total allocation for independent living services was approximately \$200 million in federal funds, compared to \$102 million in federal funds for recruitment and training. Only 11 states spent more federal dollars on parent recruitment and training than on independent living services (see Figure 8). All states spent federal dollars on independent living services under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. Four states also spent federal money on these services under Title IV-B, Subpart I. Four additional states spent federal money on these services under Title IV-E.

Conclusion

In order to build on the success of ASFA and improve outcomes for American children in foster care, new efforts are necessary to promote adoption. The good news is that there is no shortage of prospective adoptive and foster parents in

the United States to provide loving, permanent families to such children. There are 57.5 million married-couple households in this country, 500 for each child waiting to be adopted, and many singles who could provide loving families, too. There are three places of worship for each child waiting to be adopted and all of America's major faiths exhort their believers to care for needy children. Finally, studies suggest that up to one third of American families have considered adopting a child at least somewhat seriously.¹⁷

These figures testify to a vast, largely untapped pool of prospective adoptive and foster parents. Yet states, in conjunction with the federal government, are making the decision to allocate minuscule amounts of their available federal funds to recruiting and training adoptive and foster parents from this pool. This is especially true considering the number of children for whom adoption is the preferred permanency option. **In 2005, 22 percent of children in foster care had adoption as their case goal, yet states spent, on average, between 1.2 percent and 1.3 percent of available federal funds on parent recruitment and training services for these children.**

Low levels of funding for parent training may be causing states to lose what foster parents they do recruit. Nearly 25 percent of foster families quit each year, and up to 50 percent of foster families quit within one year of their first placement.¹⁸ An analysis of data from the National Survey of Current and Former Foster Parents (NSC&FFP) found that, among foster parents who had quit the system, the two most frequently cited reasons for doing so were lack of agency

16. Independent living services expenditures include those funds spent on education and training vouchers for youth aging out of the system under the Chafee Foster Care Independence Program. States sometimes list education and training vouchers separately on their CFS-101s.

17. Princeton Survey Research Associates (1998) "Benchmark Survey on Adoption: Report on the Findings." Washington, D.C.

18. Gibbs, D. A. (2004). "Understanding foster parenting: Using administrative data to explore retention." Report prepared by RTI International for U.S. Department of Health and Human Services; Office of Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation. Washington, D.C.

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support (cited by 40 percent of respondents) and poor communication with a caseworker (cited by 38 percent of respondents).¹⁹ As much of the interaction between a prospective parent and agency staff takes place during the parent's training, the states' decision to allocate minuscule funds toward adoptive and foster parent training services may be negatively affecting parent retention.

The availability of funds has no bearing on states' funding decisions. Titles IV-E and IV-B of the Social Security Act are the two largest streams of federal funding earmarked specifically for child welfare purposes, and both may be used to fund parent recruitment and training services. During the course of our research, we came across some evidence that states may not be entirely aware of what funds are available for parent recruitment and training services. Six states (including Delaware, Massachusetts, Maryland, Michigan, Nevada, and New Mexico), as well as the District of Columbia, reported spending state and local dollars on parent recruitment and training services, but not Title IV-E funds. Given the uncertainty surrounding CFS-101 allocations of state and local funds, these may have been simple reporting errors. However, these reported allocations do raise the possibility that some states are unaware that they are entitled to receive Title IV-E reimbursements for a portion of the local dollars they spend on parent recruitment and training services.

In any case, the decision to allocate, on average, between 1.2 percent and 1.3 percent of their available federal child welfare funds to parent recruitment and training is very much out of sync with the will of the American people. In an online Harris Interactive survey, conducted between February 23-27, 2007 among 2,021 adults and commissioned by the National Council For

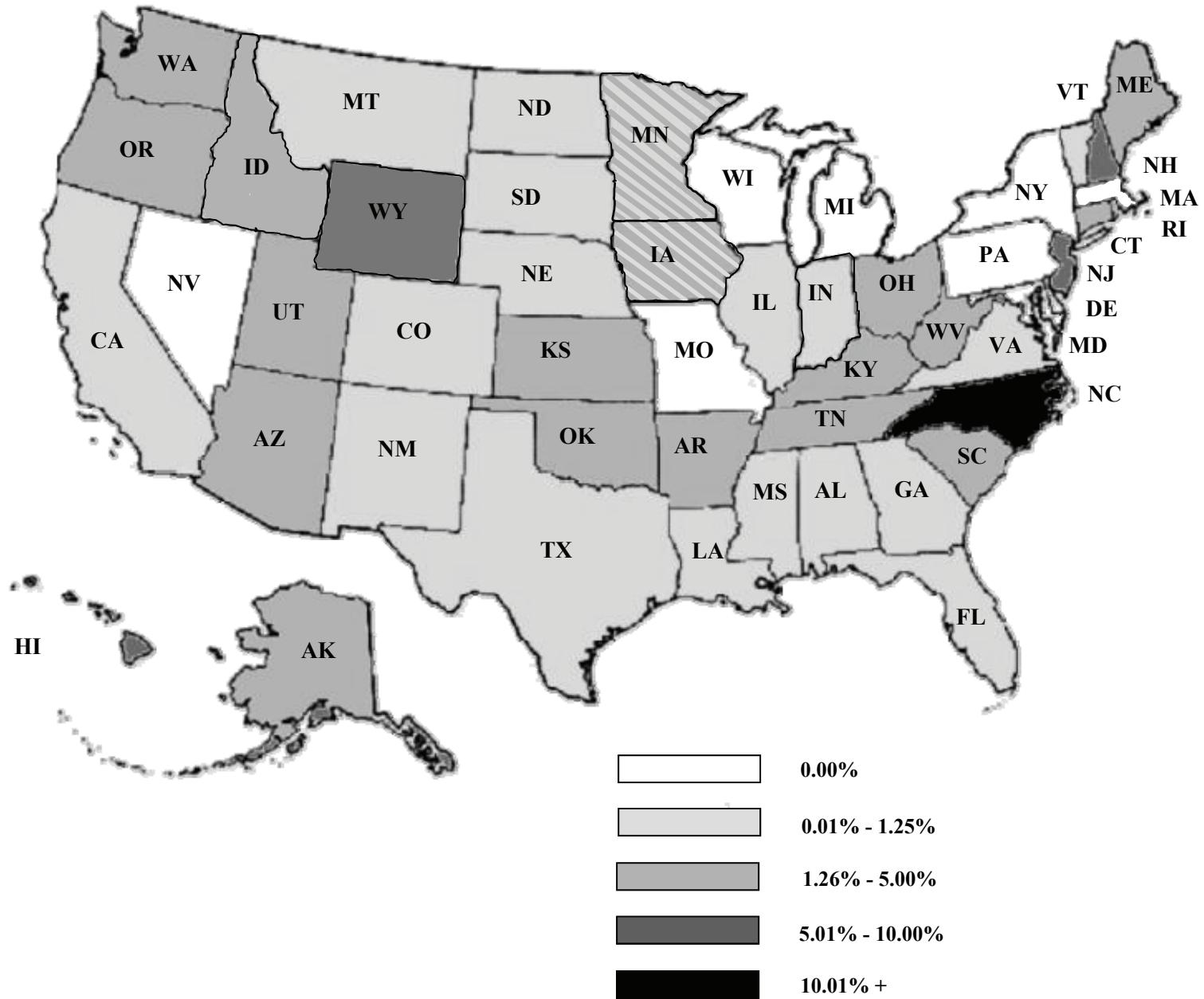
Adoption, respondents wanted an ideal of 19.2 percent of federal child welfare funds allocated to parent recruitment and training services.²⁰ Just as importantly, states' allocation of federal funds is out of sync with the needs and desires of the children in foster care themselves. That our child welfare system currently spends twice as much in federal dollars preparing children for emancipation as it does on recruiting and training prospective parents for these children suggests that states do not see parent recruitment and training as a child welfare priority. Yet for those children whose parents' parental rights have been terminated, adoption is often their *highest* priority. It is in their best interests for states to share this priority, so that these children may have the best possible chance of entering into the type of loving, permanent family they were denied through no fault of their own.

19. Rhodes, K. W., Orne, J.G., Buchler, C. (March, 2001). "A Comparison of Family Foster Parents Who Quit, Consider Quitting, and Plan to Continue Foster." *Social Services Review*, University of Chicago. 84 - 114

20. National Council For Adoption, (April 28, 2007). "Public Attitudes Regarding the Federal Child Welfare System's Financing and Performance," *Adoption Advocate*, Vol. 3. Available online at <http://www.adoptioncouncil.org/resources/documents/AdoptionAdvocateVol3FINAL.pdf>

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Fig. 7 Percent of Available Federal Child Welfare Funds Allocated toward Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment and Training Services for 50 States*



* The percentages for Iowa and Minnesota fall into two of the above ranges depending on whether the state's federal parent recruitment and training expenditures are divided into the high or low estimate for the state's total available federal child welfare services funds.

Figure 8. A Comparison of Federal Independent Living Services Expenditures and Federal Parent Recruitment and Training Services Expenditures by State

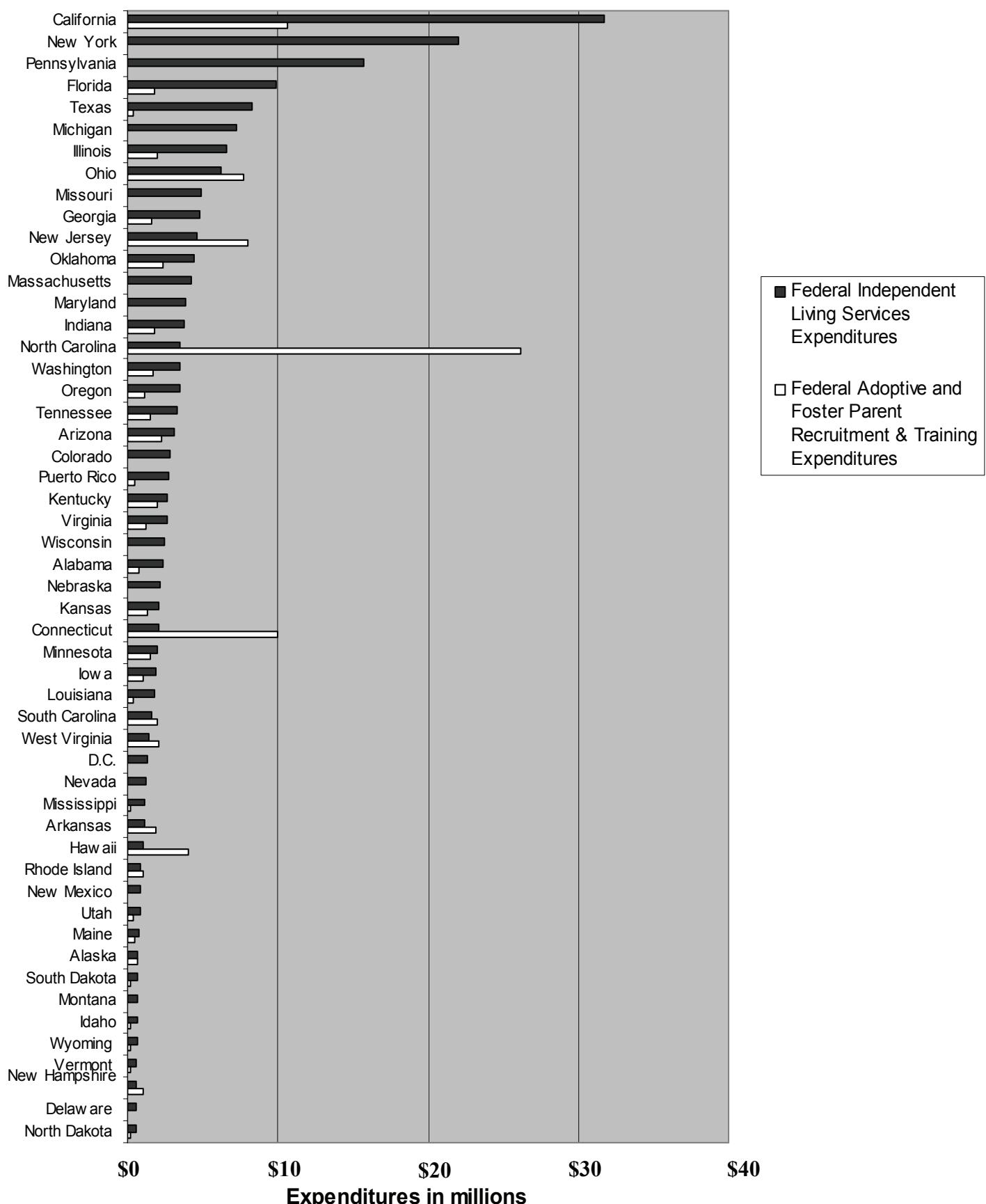


Figure 9. Federal Parent Recruitment and Training Services Expenditures by State in Numbers and as a Percentage of Available Funds

State	Federal Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment & Training Expenditures*	Total Available Federal Child and Family Services Expenditures‡	Federal Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment & Training Expenditures as Percent of Total
Alabama	\$791,000	\$80,825,000	0.98%
Alaska	\$680,800	\$27,478,400	2.48%
Arizona	\$2,296,500	\$137,229,800	1.67%
Arkansas	\$1,867,000	\$63,807,000	2.93%
California	\$10,598,000	\$1,827,088,000	0.58%
Colorado	\$73,000	\$103,171,000	0.07%
Connecticut	\$10,000,000	\$227,855,000	4.39%
D.C.	\$0	\$31,741,160 -- \$36,261,136	0.00%
Delaware	\$0	\$11,486,536 -- \$13,091,691	0.00%
Florida	\$1,774,685	\$316,501,982 -- \$318,584,275	0.56%
Georgia	\$1,642,000	\$148,890,000 -- \$305,051,000	0.54% -- 1.10%
Hawaii	\$4,000,000	\$54,612,545	7.32%
Idaho	\$190,000	\$15,099,000	1.26%
Illinois	\$2,000,000	\$394,255,500 -- \$402,255,500	0.50% -- 0.51%
Indiana	\$1,766,000	\$145,928,000 -- \$184,292,000	0.96% -- 1.21%
Iowa (1)	\$996,000	\$78,578,000 -- \$219,096,000	0.45% -- 1.27%
Kansas	\$1,349,000	\$36,376,000	3.71%
Kentucky	\$1,959,100	\$100,133,957	1.96%
Louisiana	\$380,074	\$94,497,765 -- \$98,804,601	0.38% -- 0.40%
Maine	\$463,000	\$26,120,348	1.77%
Maryland	\$0	\$139,049,660	0.00%
Massachusetts	\$0	\$179,671,763	0.00%
Michigan	\$0	\$261,151,170	0.00%
Minnesota	\$1,511,000	\$105,113,000 -- \$202,304,000	0.75% -- 1.44%
Mississippi	\$198,481	\$42, 598,430 -- \$43,287,158	0.46% -- 0.47%
Missouri	\$0	\$145,068,138 -- \$264,016,055	0.00%
Montana	\$121,279	\$14,777,358 -- \$25,676,837	0.47% -- 0.82%
Nebraska	\$91,000	\$33,538,000	0.27%
Nevada	\$0	\$29,770,471 -- \$35,524,722	0.00%
New Hampshire	\$999,185	\$13,909,716 -- \$16,167,216	6.18% -- 7.18%
New Jersey	\$8,043,000	\$134,141,455 -- \$138,048,455	5.83% -- 6.00%
New Mexico	\$31,015	\$38,245,997 -- \$39,598,397	0.08%
New York	\$0	\$631,420,000	0.00%
North Carolina	\$26,125,000	\$122,396,000 -- \$122,987,000	21.24% -- 21.34%
North Dakota	\$149,240	\$14,352,436	1.04%
Ohio	\$7,731,000	\$420,147,000	1.84%
Oklahoma (2)	\$2,350,000	\$62,570,000	3.76%
Oregon	\$1,119,000	\$81,141,000 -- \$83,745,000	1.34% -- 1.38%
Pennsylvania	\$0	\$400,081,058	0.00%

Figure 9. Federal Adoptive and Foster Parent Recruitment and Training Services Expenditures by State in Numbers and as a Percentage of Available Funds (continued)

Puerto Rico	\$424,000	\$22,897,343	1.85%
Rhode Island	\$1,063,000	\$23,138,000 -- \$32,154,000	3.31% -- 4.59%
South Carolina	\$2,002,000	\$44,216,000	4.53%
South Dakota	\$150,000	\$15,460,000	0.97%
Tennessee	\$1,478,000	\$103,671,000 -- \$104,610,000	1.41% -- 1.43%
Texas	\$353,218	\$392,221,977 -- \$430,075,388	0.08% -- 0.09%
Utah	\$330,845	\$23,238,957	1.42%
Vermont	\$170,645	28,303,805 -- \$29,882,556	0.57% -- 0.60%
Virginia	\$1,180,634	\$107,926,160	1.09%
Washington	\$1,650,302	\$112,480,983 -- \$119,026,983	1.39% -- 1.47%
West Virginia	\$2,093,206	\$54,203,139 -- \$70,845,805	2.95% -- 3.86%
Wisconsin	\$0	\$130,779,000 -- \$135,939,000	0.00%
Wyoming	\$150,000	\$2,536,834	5.91%
National	\$102,341,209	\$7,851,889,843 -- \$8,534,325,706	1.20% -- 1.30%

* As reported on the standardized CFS-101, Part II forms. Funding streams include Title IV-B Subpart I, Title IV-B Subpart II, Title IV-E, Title XX (also known as the Social Security Block Grant), and other federal programs that provide money for recruitment services.

† Includes all expenditures listed under the "Independent Living Services" and "Education and Training Vouchers" categories.

‡ Does not include those child and family services funding sources (e.g. CAPTA, TANF, CCDF, CSBG, Refugee Assistance Funds, and Medicaid) which states are not permitted to allocate toward adoptive and foster parent recruitment and training services. Where applicable, the low estimate assumes that unidentified funds listed in the "Other Federal Programs" funding category are not available for parent recruitment and training services if they are not so allocated, whereas the high estimate assumes that unidentified funds listed in "Other Federal Programs" category are available regardless of allocation.

(1) Data was erroneously entered on part II of the CFS 101 form. \$143,446,000 was recorded as the amount spent on Title IV-B, Subpart 1. Part I of the CFS-101 form records only \$2,928,000, which is in keeping with other state totals and funding estimates. Most likely, the difference of \$140,518,000 was meant to go in the "other federal programs category." Data already in the "other federal programs" category was not included in the high estimate because it was identified on the CFS-101 form as coming from grants not available for parent recruitment and training services. The low estimate comes from similarly discarding the unsourced data wrongly entered in the first column.

(2) Oklahoma included its foster parent recruitment and training and adoptive parent recruitment and training services under category #11, staff training. The figure listed here is the amount listed under that category. In other words, this figure represents the maximum amount that Oklahoma may have spent on parent recruitment and training services, and is thus almost certainly artificially high.

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♦♦ Nothing written here is to be construed as necessarily reflecting the views of the National Council For Adoption or as an attempt to aid or hinder the passage of any bill before Congress or a state legislature.

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