

## AFCARS Adoption Data Research Brief Number 1

# ADOPTIVE FAMILY STRUCTURE

## *Background*

### Mary Eschelbach Hansen

*Department of Economics, American University,  
and Center for Adoption Research, University of  
Massachusetts Medical School*

The purpose of the AFCARS Adoption Data Research Briefs is to make national and state level AFCARS data available to citizens and researchers interested in adoption, especially adoption of children with special needs.

The data were made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and have been used with permission. Data from the AFCARS were collected by the Children's Bureau. Funding for AFCARS was provided by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The collector of the original data, the funder, the Archive, Cornell University and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analysis or interpretation presented here.

Financial support for this research was provided through the NIH/NICHD/Demographic and Behavioral Branch, through the Mellon Fund at the College of Arts and Sciences of American University, and through the Summer Research Institute at the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect at the New York State College of Human Ecology at Cornell University. The author thanks the staff at NDACAN for their assistance.

Research assistance was provided by Renata Kochut. Proofreading assistance was provided by Paul Jacobs. Formatting was accomplished by Aaron Tobler.

June 2006

From the early twentieth century until the 1980s, most child welfare agencies sought to place children in "normal" families. The aim was to place children where they would blend in, where they would (to the uninitiated) be indistinguishable from birth children. A normal family was composed of two married heterosexual same-race adults who were comfortable with a division of labor between non-working wives and bread-winning husbands.

Beginning in the 1960s and gaining steam in the 1970s, as *all children are adoptable* and *permanency planning* became key phrases in adoption practice, the importance of considering as many families as possible as viable resources for children became apparent. Agencies could no longer simply rely on the families who traditionally sought adoption; agencies had to begin to use the resources already known to them and had to seek out parents for children with special needs.

One of the first changes in adoptive family structure was the acceptance of foster families as prospective adoptive families. Adoptions by foster parents were historically discouraged for four main reasons. First, there was a concern that families hoping to adopt might sabotage reunification efforts. Second, child welfare agencies worried that if foster parents adopted, then they would stop fostering. Third, child welfare agencies worried that parents with both adopted and foster children would not treat the foster children equally. Finally, there was great uncertainty about the potential problems of the birth family knowing the location of the child.

While child welfare agencies remain, to a degree, troubled by these four potential problems, foster parent adoptions have increased as agencies also came to recognize the benefits of maintaining the relationship

between a waiting child and his foster family. First, if the child has had a positive experience in the foster family, further disruption of his life is unnecessary and potentially damaging. By joining a known family, the child may gain a new sense of safety and security. Second, the foster parents are equipped with direct knowledge about the child's medical, emotional, and behavioral needs. Their commitment is not based on expectations of a dream child, but grounded in reality. Third, knowledge of problems within the birth family can prove valuable. Finally, when a foster parent adopts a child in her care, the time to finalization of an adoption may be quite short because the time a child has already spent with the parent counts toward any waiting period for adoption.

It has been with the goal of expediting adoption that some states and localities have begun so-called *fost-adopt* programs, in which families are recruited especially to accept foster care placement of a child who is unlikely to be reunified with her birth parents, but for whom parental rights have not yet been terminated. Prospective adoptive parents who seek young children are often encouraged to join *fost-adopt* programs. Some jurisdictions are moving in the direction of requiring all prospective adoptive parents to foster before they can adopt, partly because the shortage of foster parents is greater than the shortage of adoptive parents. In a recent focus group study of prospective adoptive parents, almost all said that they were asked to consider fostering (Wilson, Katz & Geen 2005).

The next major change in adoptive family structure was the active recruitment of kin as both foster and prospective adoptive families. Kinship care follows an American-tradition of extended family care giving when parents are unavailable. Indeed, until the Industrial Revolution, care by kin was the only alternative outside charity-run orphanages for children whose parents died or were otherwise incapacitated.

When government assumed responsibility for child welfare programs, agencies did not want to discourage families from assuming their traditional responsibility for care-taking. And, in fact, when the National Association of

#### About AFCARS Data

A federal rule issued in December 1993 requires states to submit data on adoptions with state agency involvement (445CFR1355.40). Federal funding under the Social Security Act Title IV-E is contingent upon state's collection and submission of uniformly defined data. Beginning in 1998, states could be fiscally disciplined for lack of compliance. The data collection system is known as the Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System, or AFCARS. AFCARS reporting rules require states to submit to the Children's Bureau case-level information on all children covered by the Title IV-B/E of the Social Security Act; that is, states are required to submit semi-annually information about children in foster care and information about children whose adoptions were finalized after any state agency involvement. The foster care and adoption data are tabulated annually by the Children's Bureau. The Children's Bureau publishes tabulations on its website and in an annual Child Welfare Outcomes Report.

The data used to produce the outcomes report form the basis for the public use version of the data used here, although the public use data may also include updates made by the states.

The AFCARS public use data files contain answers to 37 queries regarding each adoption finalized during the fiscal year.

The public use AFCARS data used here begin with fiscal year 1996, but many records for 1996 and 1997 contain missing data. The completeness of the data improves after 1997. The Children's Bureau puts little faith in the AFCARS data for years before 1998. However, AFCARS represents the only source of case-level data on adoptions with state agency involvement that is reasonably consistent in format across states and over time.

Although states are only required to submit data for adoptions that involve a state agency, the 1996 and 1997 AFCARS files include some observations of adoptions that were made without state involvement and were submitted voluntarily. The statistics presented here include only adoptions with state agency involvement.

Black Social Workers voiced its opposition to transracial adoption in the 1970s, it simultaneously promoted the alternative of kinship care. Some social workers and policy makers believe that because kinship care preserves family ties, and family preservation is a fundamental guiding principle of social work, kinship care must be preferred. In keeping with this principle, in the 1980 Adoption Assistance and Child Welfare Act, Congress required agencies to encourage families to take responsibility by stating explicitly that kin placement should be preferred when out-of-home placement cannot be avoided. Since the 1980s, agencies have relied more and more on relatives and on other people who have a close tie to the child in care. Today, almost all child welfare agencies express (in law, in theory, and in practice) a preference for kinship care (Geen 2003).

Although agencies regularly use kinship care, written policies are not consistent across states. Perhaps most importantly, continuing concern over family incentives led to the creation of a two-tiered payment system in foster care that has complicated policy debate over kinship care.

Foster and adoptive parents are subsidized at a rate authorized by or negotiated with the state (or sometimes the local) agency. The 1961 amendments of the Social Security Act that created the foster care subsidy were thought by some states to imply that relatives were disallowed from the subsidies. Other states decided that the lower welfare payments (now TANF child-only grants and formerly child-only AFDC payments) that a parent might receive were the most appropriate rate for all kin caregivers. The 1979 U.S. Supreme Court decision *Miller v. Youakim* stated that kinship homes that meet licensing requirements must receive the foster care subsidy. Kinship homes not meeting licensing standards can apply to receive welfare for the child in their care.

The funding of kinship care is not the only kinship care policy that varies across states. In fact, several states have been involved in lawsuits that resulted in the court compelling the state to provide the same services to children in kinship care that they provided to children in traditional foster placements. It seems that agencies struggle with the problems of imposing legal constraints (for example: visiting schedules, family counseling, court and agency reviews) on a pre-existing relationship, whereas, with unrelated foster and adoptive parents, no similar problems exist.

A study of kinship and unrelated foster families in California (Berrick, Barth & Needell 1994), as well as a study of a nationally representative sample of families (Ehrle and Geen 2002), found that significant demographic differences exist between unrelated and kin caregivers. Kin caregivers were twice as likely to be single parents, fewer had high school diplomas, and many more reported being in poor health. Kin were more likely to head low-income households than were unrelated foster parents.

Before the 1997 Adoption and Safe Families Act, relatively few kinship caregivers had intentions of adopting their related foster child. Many believed this would cause hard feelings in the family system, be confusing to the child, and be too expensive. However, almost all kin expressed a commitment to raising the child into adulthood (Thornton 1991).

The Adoption and Safe Families Act (ASFA) requires that child welfare agencies develop a permanency plan even for children living with their relatives (although children in the care of kin may be exempt from some timetables concerning termination of parental rights). Many child welfare agencies now encourage kinship caregivers to adopt if reunification with birth parents is not possible. While concern still exists about how the legal process of termination of parental rights and adoption changes birth family relationships, ASFA's Adoption Incentive Program promotes adoption over alternatives.

Foster families and kin, although indispensable, prove insufficient: not every waiting child can find permanency with a family known to her or known to the child welfare

agency. Agencies respond by developing ways to recruit prospective families who were not already involved in the child welfare system or in the life of the waiting child. Adoptive recruitment began with written materials such as brochures, posters, and photo list books. The development of adoption exchanges, in which agencies listing both waiting children and approved families, led to the development of child-specific recruitment efforts. Further, agencies began to involve the media in recruitment. As access to the internet grew, states began to publish their photo listings on the web, and DHHS developed [www.AdoptUSKids.org](http://www.AdoptUSKids.org). Photo listing and media campaigns let the public know about individual waiting children. This created a demand for the adoption of the children waiting in foster care.

Beginning in the 1960s and 1970s a growing number of families chose adoption for reasons other than infertility (Feigelman and Silverman 1983). Of all adoptive families, these so-called preferential adopters were the most likely to adopt children with special physical, emotional, psychological, or educational needs, including children from foster care.

At the same time, many agencies and states widened the range of adults that they would approve as prospective adoptive parents. They dropped restrictions on marital status, income, home ownership, gender, religion, age, race, and handicap that kept interested people from becoming adoptive parents.

Although unmarried persons were not explicitly barred from adopting under the original nineteenth century adoption statutes, in the twentieth century the unmarried mother was viewed by child agencies as unusual, and therefore undesirable. Likewise, unmarried men who wished to parent were seen as unusual and were viewed as less desirable parents even than unmarried women.

As a consequence of growing rates of divorce and births out-of-wedlock, the number of families headed by unmarried parents grew throughout the twentieth century. Nonetheless, child welfare agencies believed growing up with only one parent hurt children emotionally and economically. The 1958 standards for adoption practice issued by the Child Welfare League of America stated only that adoptive families should include both a mother and a father. Any unmarried adults in the adoption triad were birth mothers. Child welfare agencies sought “normal” families for waiting children and made placement with the unmarried difficult or impossible.

Advocates of special needs adoption, however, saw that unmarried adults could fill a need for children with special needs, the children whose needs were not being met by the infertile married couples who most often expressed interest in adoption. By 1968 the Child Welfare League of America granted that placements with unmarried adults were allowable if the child would not otherwise be adopted.

From 1994 to 2001, the number of adoptions from foster care increased but adoption by adults unknown to the children did not. First, there was an increase in the number of foster parents who adopted children in their care, and then more and more of the adoptions from foster care were completed by kin of the waiting children. The latest AFCARS data also indicate that the increases in adoption from foster care are slowing. Quite possibly the pool of foster parents and adoptive kin is tapped out. Fortunately, the continued existence of a group of *prospective* preferential adopters is confirmed by nationally representative surveys.

While the exact number of adults interested in adoption is unknown, there is evidence that the number is substantial. One survey found that about one-third of all American adults have considered adopting a child at least somewhat seriously (Byron & Deoudes 2002). Data from the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) indicate that in 1995, 232,000 women respondents said they were seeking to adopt and had taken steps to do so. The survey was designed to be a representative survey of women in the

United States, so we can infer that in 1995 more than one million women had taken steps to adopt a child but had not completed the adoption process (Chandra et al 1999). One of the steps the women might have taken includes calling an adoption exchange. Adoption exchanges receive hundreds of thousands of calls each year. The National Adoption Center alone, a nationally active exchange, gets more than 40,000 calls each year. About 15,000 calls are from people who are interested in adopting a child from foster care (Wilson, Katz & Geen 2005).

The National Survey of Family Growth includes an additional 240,000 women who plan to adopt but had not yet taken specific steps toward adoption, from which we can infer about 10 million women might be recruited to adopt.

Of course, not everyone interested in adopting is willing to adopt a child from foster care. Most respondents to the NSFG who said they were currently seeking to adopt also said that they preferred to adopt a single child who is young and has no physical or mental disability (Chandra et al. 1999). However, a substantial share of respondents reported that they would “accept” a child who looks similar to children available from the foster care system: 56 percent said they would accept a child six to 12 years old; 83 percent said they would accept a child with a mild physical or mental disability; 33 percent said they would accept a child with a severe disability; 66 percent said they would accept a sibling group; 79 percent reported they would accept a black child. If just a small fraction of the adults interested in adoption were to adopt a child from foster care, all of the waiting children could have adoptive families.

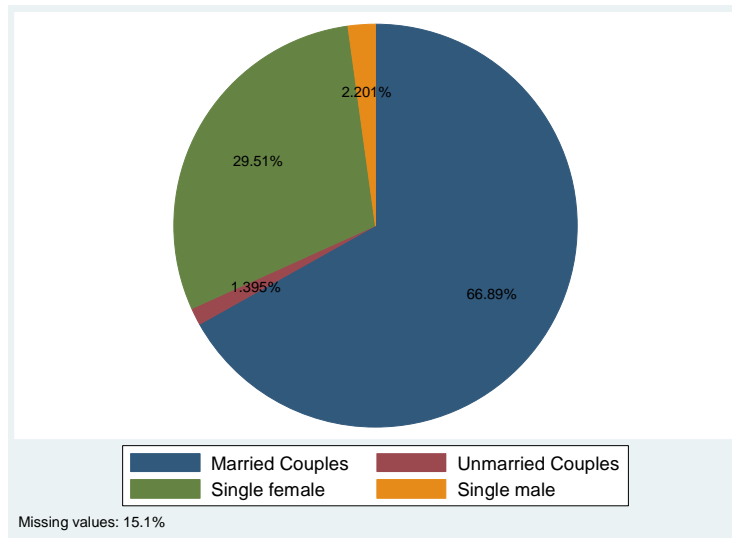
Surprisingly little is known about what adoptive families look like. The federal Census of 2000 was the first census to collect data on “adopted son/daughter” separate from “natural born son/daughter” and “stepson/stepdaughter” (Kreider 2003). The “adopted” category includes all kinds of adoptions, including adoption of kin and stepchildren, adoption through private and public agencies, domestic and international adoptions, and independent and informal adoptions. The census enumerated 2.1 million adopted children, who represented about 8 percent of all sons and daughters of householders in 2000. About 1.8 percent of all households (817 thousand households) contained only adopted children. Another 1.8 percent contained both adopted children and birth children.

About 78 percent of adopted children live with married parents. Seventeen percent of adopted children live with an unmarried female parent. About 10 percent of these female-headed households include an unmarried partner (of either sex). Five percent of adopted children live with an unmarried male parent. About one third of these male-headed households include an unmarried partner (of either sex). The average adoptive parent is about five years older than the average parent of birth children.

The median income of households including adopted children is \$56,138, while the median income of households including only birth children is \$48,200. Heads of households with adopted children are more likely to own their own home. Fewer adoptive parents have low education at attainment (less than a high school degree), and more adoptive parents hold graduate or professional degrees.

The next section summarizes the AFCARS administrative data on the structure of families who adopt children who have been involved with a public agency. These data include the marital status and age of the adoptive parents, and whether there is a prior (foster or kin) relationship between the adoptive parents and the child. No socio-economic data are reported in AFCARS.

Figure 1. Summary of Adoptive Family Structure, 1996-2003



### National Trends in the Structure of Adoptive Families

AFCARS includes a categorical variable that describes the “nature of the adoptive parent(s) family structure”. The data for fiscal years 1996 to 1999 have five mutually exclusive categories of family structure. The categories are *married couple*, *unmarried couple*, *single female*, *single male*, and *unable to determine*. For fiscal years 2000-2003

AFCARS allows a sixth category: *not applicable*. The categories *unable to determine* and *not applicable* are treated here as missing data. Unless otherwise noted, all proportions are calculated as fractions of valid observations.

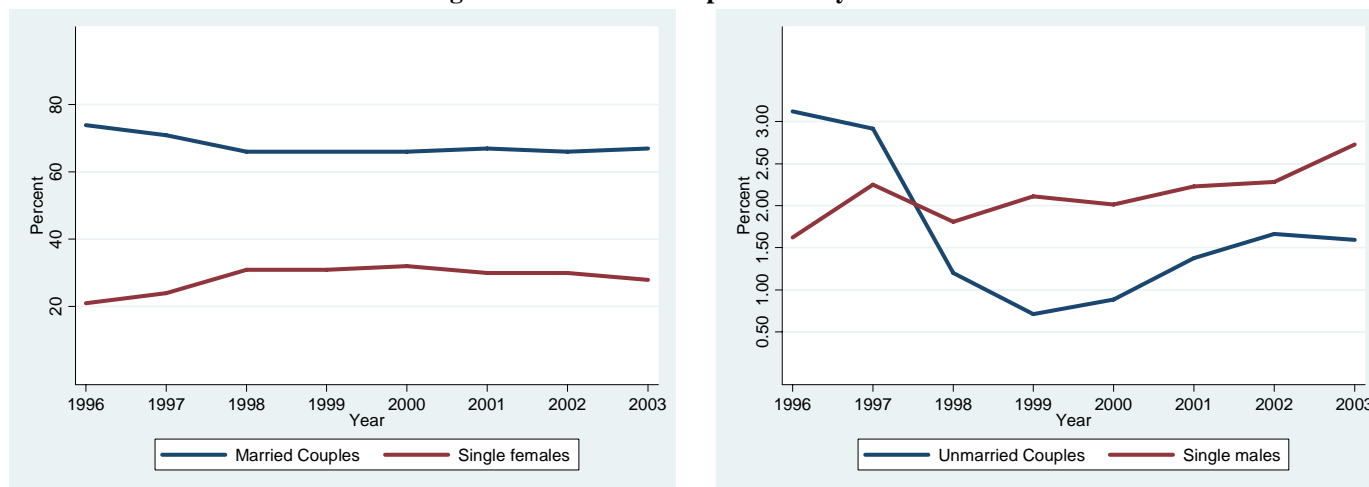
Figure 1 and table 1 present the proportions of the families of each type recorded in AFCARS across all states for fiscal years 1996 through 2003. About one-third of all cases have missing or unusable family structure data. Most of the missing data are for 1997 and 1996. For these two years combined percentage of three categories reaches 36.7 percent and 48.1 percent, respectively. The data for 1998 through 2003 are relatively complete. For fiscal years 1998 and 1999, 83 to 85 percent of cases have usable family structure information. For the most recent years just over 90 percent of adoption cases have usable family structure information. New York is the only state has not provided any usable information on family structure to AFCARS for any year.

Table 1. Number of Adoptions by Adoptive Family Structure

	Total Cases	Missing Observations	Percent of Valid Observations			
			Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single Female	Single Male
1996	7,540	316	2,109	164	5,881	16,010
1997	8,375	343	2,789	265	10,906	22,678
1998	20,219	365	9,295	551	6,220	36,650
1999	25,958	280	12,240	830	7,278	46,586
2000	30,037	405	14,446	922	4,790	50,600
2001	30,874	637	13,739	1,033	4,657	50,940
2002	31,616	794	14,231	1,090	4,815	52,546
2003	30,730	726	12,936	1,245	4,725	50,362
Average	185,349	3,866	81,785	6,100	49,272	326,372

The Kolmogorov-Smirnov equality-of-distribution indicates a significant difference in the distributions of data for each pair of subsequent years, except for distributions for

Figure 2. Trends in Adoptive Family Structure



years 1998-1999 and 1999-2000. There is also a significant difference between each year's distribution and the distributions in all other years.<sup>1</sup>

Most of the children adopted with state agency involvement are adopted by married couples. As the number of adoptions increased overall, the number of children adopted by married couples increased from about 6,000 in 1996 to a high of almost 32,000 in 2002.<sup>2</sup> The proportion of children adopted by married couples, however, fell from a high of 74.4 percent of valid observations in 1996 to a low of 65.6 percent in 2000. That is, while the number of children adopted by married couples grew, the number adopted by unmarried persons grew faster. The number of children adopted by unmarried women grew from 20.8 percent of valid observations in fiscal year 1996 to a peak of 31.5 percent in fiscal year 2000. The number of new adoptive families headed by unmarried women fell to 18.4 percent in 2003. Figure 2 shows the time trends in adoptive family structure.

As adoptions by unmarried women have fallen recently, adoptions by unmarried men and unmarried but co-habiting couples have risen as a percent of all adoptions with state agency involvement. In fiscal year 1996 only 164 adoptions were recorded as completed by unmarried men. By fiscal year 2003 the number of adoptions by single men had increased to 1,245 (representing 2.7 percent of all adoptions of children with state agency involvement).<sup>3</sup> Unmarried couples constitute the smallest group of families finalizing an adoption with state agency involvement. The number of adoptions by this group ranges from 280 in fiscal year 1999 to 794 in fiscal year 2002. There has been a roughly U-shaped trend in the proportion of adoptions completed by unmarried couples. In 1996, when the total number of adoptions was relatively small, unmarried couples represented just over three percent of newly formed adoptive families. The percentage fell to 0.7 percent in 2000, but rose from 2000 through 2002, when unmarried couples finalized 1.7 percent of adoptions with state agency involvement.

Across all years, unmarried men have, on average, adopted the oldest children (almost nine years old) while unmarried couples have adopted the youngest (average 6.3 years old); see table 2. Children of married couples and unmarried women who were adopted in fiscal 2003 were about six months older than the children adopted by these

<sup>1</sup> Difference in distributions is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01), except as noted in text.

<sup>2</sup> Year-to-year changes in proportions noted in the text are statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.05) in all cases.

<sup>3</sup> Overall increase in proportion of adoptions completed by single men is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.02).

**Table 2. Age of at Finalization of Adoptive Family Structure (Standard Deviation in Parenthesis)**

	Child Adopted by:				Average
	Married Couple	Unmarried Couple	Single female	Single male	
1996	6.1	7.0	6.7	8.9	6.3
	(4.5)	(4.6)	(3.8)	(5.8)	(4.4)
1997	5.9	6.4	6.8	8.1	6.2
	(4.0)	(3.6)	(4.1)	(5.8)	(4.1)
1998	6.3	6.0	7.2	8.8	6.6
	(3.8)	(3.8)	(3.8)	(4.1)	(3.8)
1999	6.3	6.4	7.4	8.5	6.7
	(3.9)	(3.8)	(3.9)	(4.1)	(3.9)
2000	6.4	6.5	7.3	9.0	6.8
	(4.0)	(4.2)	(3.9)	(4.5)	(4.0)
2001	6.4	6.0	7.4	8.9	6.8
	(4.1)	(3.9)	(4.1)	(4.3)	(4.1)
2002	6.5	6.3	7.5	9.2	6.8
	(4.2)	(4.1)	(4.2)	(4.3)	(4.2)
2003	6.4	6.1	7.5	9.2	6.8
	(4.2)	(4.1)	(4.3)	(4.4)	(4.3)
Average	6.4	6.3	7.4	8.9	6.7
	(4.1)	(4.0)	(4.0)	(4.4)	(4.1)

groups in 1996 and 1997.<sup>4</sup> There has been no clear trend in the age at adoption of the children of unmarried couples.

Table 3 shows the average time between termination of parental rights (TPR) and finalization of adoption for each type of adoptive family in each year. Averaging across all years, the adopted children of married couples had the shortest time between termination of parental rights and finalization.<sup>5</sup> However, the mean time between termination and finalizations has drifted downwards for married couples (from almost 19 months in 1996 to about 13 months in 2003).<sup>6</sup> For single parents, there was no clear trend in time between termination and finalization in the earlier years, but the average time has drifted upwards for single parents since 1999.<sup>7</sup>

Table 4 shows the percentages of children with a state-defined special need who were adopted by each type of adoptive family in each year. Despite the variation in experiences between people and between states, some patterns exist in these national data. The percentage of children with special needs adopted by every type of family increased from 1996 through 2001. Single women and unmarried couples were most likely to adopt a child with a special need in any given year. Since 1998, single men have been slightly more likely to adopt a child with special needs, as compared to married couples. Married couples have been the least likely to adopt a child with special needs.<sup>8</sup>

Table 5 summarizes the recorded disabilities of the children adopted by each type of adoptive family. The statistics in table 5 indicate that, while married couples complete fewer special needs adoptions, they are not less likely to adopt a child with a diagnosed cognitive, physical, or emotional disability. Because married couples are likely to adopt a very young child, the adopted children of married couples are less likely to fall into the “older child” category of special needs.

The AFCARS data confirm the conventional wisdom that unrelated adoptive parents adopt younger children, regardless of whether they have a medical condition or disability that requires extra care (table not shown). Foster parents are more than twice as likely to adopt a child for whom age is a special need, while non-relatives are almost three

<sup>4</sup> Difference in age is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01). Change in age over time is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01) within each family structure except for single men.

<sup>5</sup> Difference in time to TPR for single parents and unmarried compared to married couples is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01).

<sup>6</sup> Decrease is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.02).

<sup>7</sup> Increase is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01).

<sup>8</sup> Differences and changes noted in this paragraph are each statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.03).



**Table 3. Average Time from Termination of Parental Rights to Adoption by Adoptive Family Structure, in Months**

		Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
1996	Mean	18.8	31.6	19.3	14.9	19.2
	Std. Dev.	79.3	122.7	68.2	14.0	77.6
1997	Mean	14.8	16.9	16.9	16.5	15.3
	Std. Dev.	26.1	15.6	15.2	15.0	23.6
1998	Mean	14.6	15.6	16.3	20.8	15.2
	Std. Dev.	15.7	16.9	15.5	19.5	15.7
1999	Mean	14.0	14.9	14.8	17.6	14.3
	Std. Dev.	15.1	13.3	14.5	19.3	15.0
2000	Mean	14.3	15.5	15.0	18.2	14.6
	Std. Dev.	18.5	14.7	14.1	18.2	17.2
2001	Mean	14.6	15.5	16.4	18.5	15.2
	Std. Dev.	14.9	15.3	14.9	18.2	15.0
2002	Mean	14.4	14.3	16.8	20.7	15.3
	Std. Dev.	15.6	12.9	15.8	19.8	15.8
2003	Mean	14.4	14.3	17.4	20.4	15.4
	Std. Dev.	13.9	13.2	17.1	18.8	15.1
Average	Mean	14.5	15.8	16.2	19.2	15.1
	Std. Dev.	21.2	31.6	18.2	18.8	20.5

times more likely to adopt a child with no state-designated special need and somewhat more likely to adopt a child who has a diagnosed condition.<sup>9</sup>

Married and unmarried couples are more likely than single parents to adopt a child who has a specific disability. Table 5 shows the proportions of cases in which the child is recorded as having a disability. Single men, however, are the most likely to adopt a child with an emotional disturbance.<sup>10</sup>

The AFCARS information on specific disabilities confirms that unrelated adoptive parents, along with foster

parents, are more likely to adopt the children who are the most disabled. About 4.3 percent of adoptions finalized by non-relatives were of children who were mentally

**Table 4. Proportion of Children with a Special Need by Adoptive Family Structure**

	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
1996	46.8%	62.3%	55.0%	46.3%	49.0%
1997	59.5	76.7	62.5	52.1	60.5
1998	79.8	86.6	85.5	84.4	81.7
1999	81.1	81.8	87.8	83.7	83.3
2000	84.8	83.5	88.3	85.9	85.9
2001	85.9	92.6	89.4	86.6	87.0
2002	84.7	91.6	89.5	88.3	86.3
2003	83.6	87.7	88.8	85.2	85.1
Average	81.0%	85.3%	86.6%	83.4%	82.8%

challenged, compared to 2.6 percent of adoptions by foster parents and 2.2 percent of adoptions by foster parents. Almost 14 percent of adoptions by non-relatives were of children who were emotionally disturbed, compared to 8.3 percent by relatives and 11.4 percent by foster parents. Non-relatives and foster parents adopted children with physical, sensory and “other” disabilities at about the same rate.<sup>11</sup>

Children with a disability or other state-defined special need are eligible to receive adoption

assistance payments that are partially funded by the federal government. (See *Brief No. 5* in this series.) Table 6 summarizes the fraction of adoptions with state agency

<sup>9</sup> Differences noted in this paragraph are statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.02).

<sup>10</sup> The proportion of adopted children who are disabled is statistically significantly higher for couples ( $p$ -value<.01), except for the disability of *emotional disturbance*. For *emotional disturbance*, the proportion is statistically greater for single men compared with all other groups ( $p$ -value<.01).

<sup>11</sup> Differences noted in this paragraph are statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.05) in all cases.

**Table 5. Proportion of Children with Disabilities by Adoptive Family Structure**

	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
<b>Mental Retardation</b>						<b>Emotionally Disturbed</b>				
1996	3.6%	5.3%	3.6%	2.9%	3.7	5.8	15.4	7.4	5.8	6.4
1997	2.4	5.3	2.0	1.3	2.4	8.6	9.7	8.0	10.3	8.5
1998	2.5	3.6	2.2	1.6	2.4	10.5	4.9	6.9	12.4	9.4
1999	2.9	4.4	2.2	1.6	2.6	11.9	15.3	6.7	13.2	10.3
2000	3.4	4.8	1.9	2.4	2.9	12.0	13.7	7.9	13.7	10.7
2001	3.8	4.0	2.3	2.9	3.3	12.9	12.2	9.2	12.8	11.8
2002	3.4	5.9	2.5	2.9	3.2	13.9	12.8	10.4	15.7	12.9
2003	3.3	3.2	2.5	2.3	3.1	14.6	11.9	11.8	20.1	13.9
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.2</b>	<b>4.5</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>3.0</b>	<b>12.3</b>	<b>12.0</b>	<b>8.8</b>	<b>14.7</b>	<b>11.4</b>
<b>Visually or Hearing Impaired</b>						<b>Other Diagnosed Condition</b>				
1996	0.7	1.1	0.7	0.8	0.7	13.3	9.1	22.3	14.6	14.9
1997	0.8	0.0	0.7	0.9	0.8	13.4	10.9	17.3	15.4	14.2
1998	1.2	1.4	0.8	0.4	1.1	12.6	10.2	9.2	11.1	11.5
1999	1.4	2.9	0.9	0.8	1.2	14.3	13.5	9.2	10.4	12.6
2000	1.3	0.8	0.7	0.7	1.1	15.6	15.9	10.4	10.4	13.8
2001	1.7	1.3	0.8	1.0	1.4	17.0	12.4	12.2	11.7	15.3
2002	2.0	1.7	1.1	1.5	1.7	18.6	17.4	14.7	15.6	17.3
2003	2.4	1.2	1.8	0.9	2.2	17.7	13.4	13.2	14.1	16.2
<b>Average</b>	<b>1.6</b>	<b>1.3</b>	<b>1.0</b>	<b>0.9</b>	<b>1.4</b>	<b>16.0%</b>	<b>13.4%</b>	<b>12.0%</b>	<b>12.7%</b>	<b>14.7%</b>
<b>Physically Disabled</b>										
1996	2.3	3.5	2.5	1.5	2.4					
1997	2.4	2.5	2.5	1.7	2.4					
1998	3.5	3.0	2.2	2.2	3.0					
1999	3.5	2.9	2.0	1.8	3.0					
2000	3.4	2.5	2.0	1.7	2.9					
2001	3.5	2.4	2.0	1.7	3.0					
2002	3.6	4.0	2.7	2.0	3.3					
2003	3.9	3.1	3.0	2.8	3.6					
<b>Average</b>	<b>3.5</b>	<b>3.1</b>	<b>2.3</b>	<b>2.0</b>	<b>3.1</b>					

involvement that were made without a recorded monthly adoption assistance subsidy. Utilization of the subsidy increased greatly from 1996 to 2003. In 1996, over one third of adoptions with state agency involvement were made without benefit of the subsidy. By 2000, and thereafter, only about 12 to 13 percent of adoptions with state agency involvement were not supported by an adoption assistance subsidy.<sup>12</sup> The increase in utilization comes from two sources. First, more children are designated as having a state-defined special need. Second, the take-up rate for the subsidy by adoptive parents of special needs children is higher.

The greatest increase in utilization of the subsidy has been among married couples. In 1996, nearly half of married couples completing an adoption with state agency involvement did not have a subsidy recorded at finalization. Single men who adopted and unmarried couples who adopted failed to receive the adoption subsidy almost one-fifth of the time in 1996. Single women who adopted in 1996, received the subsidy about 85 percent of the time. The percentage of adoptions without subsidy was smaller for all types of adoptive families in 2003. The range was much closer as well: In 2003 just over 90 percent of unmarried couples received a subsidy, about 89 percent of single women

<sup>12</sup> Decrease in no subsidy cases is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01).

**Table 6. Percent of Adoptions without Recorded Subsidy**

	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
1996	46.3%	17.7%	15.1%	20.2%	38.5%
1997	32.1	5.0	11.8	16.3	26.2
1998	18.4	8.8	9.5	11.2	15.4
1999	15.5	13.9	8.0	15.6	13.2
2000	14.6	9.8	8.6	11.4	12.6
2001	14.2	8.5	9.5	14.4	12.7
2002	12.7	5.8	9.8	9.8	11.6
2003	14.0	9.7	11.3	13.7	13.2
Average	16.7%	9.2%	9.7%	13.1%	14.4%

received a subsidy, and about 86 percent of single men and married couples received a subsidy.<sup>13</sup>

Table 7 shows the average adoption assistance payments recorded for adoptions that have complete data on family structure, cost-of-living adjusted, constant 2000 dollars. After adjusting the reported adoption assistance payments for inflation and differences in the cost of living between states, the average subsidy

increased from \$320 to \$483. The average adoption assistance payment recorded at the time of finalization has risen rather smoothly, except for a large increase between 1997 and 1998 when it jumped \$100.<sup>14</sup>

The largest increase, both in absolute and percentage terms, was in the adoption assistance subsidies paid on behalf of the children adopted by single men, which have more than doubled. Subsidies paid on behalf of the adopted children of married couples have risen 50 percent. Adoption assistance for the adopted children of single mothers

increased 81 percent. Adoption assistance for the children of unmarried couples has risen most slowly, about 38 percent, although it started from the highest level.

**Table 7. Average Adoption Assistance Payments by Adoptive Family Structure in 2000 dollars (Standard Deviations in Parentheses)**

	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
1996	\$320 (259)	\$379 (275)	\$281 (233)	\$274 (238)	\$310 (253)
1997	331 (242)	338 (240)	334 (245)	290 (264)	331 (244)
1998	431 (251)	369 (188)	450 (239)	462 (293)	437 (248)
1999	451 (261)	427 (200)	461 (225)	486 (299)	455 (250)
2000	453 (241)	439 (254)	467 (235)	519 (322)	459 (241)
2001	462 (239)	450 (230)	485 (249)	476 (248)	469 (242)
2002	464 (235)	463 (229)	481 (233)	501 (247)	470 (235)
2003	483 (262)	524 (291)	510 (264)	557 (260)	494 (263)
Total	\$451 (250)	\$440 (250)	\$468 (245)	\$491 (281)	\$457 (249)

Lastly, there are some differences between family structures with respect to whether a claim for Title IV-E assistance was made on behalf of the adopted child. For 1997 and 1998, and especially for 1996, the fraction of adoptions by married couples that were supported with federal Title IV-E claims was lower than for the other family types.<sup>15</sup> Looking at the average rate of Title IV-E claims for each family type, in the last row of table 7, it is clear that adoptions by single women have been most frequently supported by a Title IV-E claim. Note also that there has been a decline in the rate of IV-E

<sup>13</sup> Although the differences between family structures have become smaller, they are still statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.05) in all cases.

<sup>14</sup> Average increase in each year is statistically significant ( $p$ -values<.02). Increases within each type of adoptive family structure are statistically significant as well ( $p$ -values<.05).

<sup>15</sup> Difference in percentages is statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01).

**Table 8. Percent of Adoptions for which Title IV-E Reimbursement was Claimed**

Year	Married Couples	Unmarried Couples	Single female	Single male	Average
1996	38.9	65.1	64.3	66.2	45.0
1997	50.4	80.5	69.1	68.2	55.9
1998	64.7	77.2	76.4	70.2	68.5
1999	68.9	64.3	80.8	70.1	72.6
2000	70.7	71.3	80.2	70.7	73.7
2001	70.5	81.3	77.6	70.3	72.8
2002	69.7	80.3	77.0	74.5	72.2
2003	65.1	69.1	71.3	66.2	66.9
Average	66.6	74.8	76.8	70.1	69.8

support since 1999 or 2000, depending on the adoptive family structure.<sup>16</sup>

The information in AFCARS on the relationship between the adoptive parent(s) and child prior to the adoption is more complete than the information on age of adoptive parent(s). About 84 percent of adoption records have usable information on prior relationship.

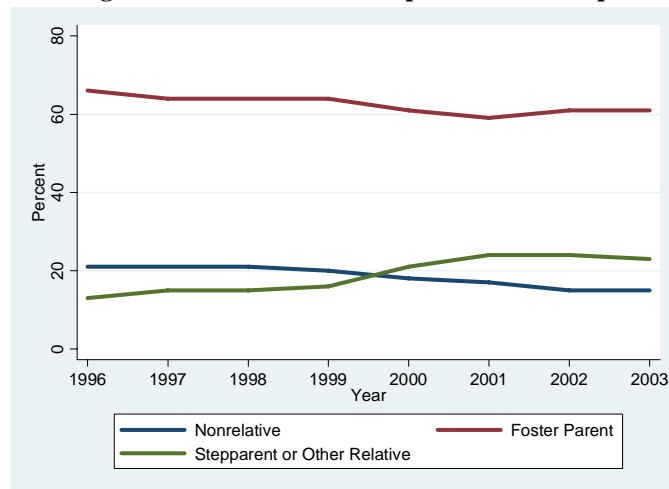
Figure 3 shows the trends over time in pre-adoptive relationships. As documented

elsewhere, the proportion of kinship adoptions rose from less than ten percent in fiscal year 1996 to more than 20 percent in 2001. The proportion of adoptions by foster parents rose sharply between fiscal years 1997 and 1999, and drifted downward thereafter. The proportion of adoptions finalized by parents with no prior relationship to the adopted child has declined from about 23 percent in fiscal year 1996 to just over 13 percent in 2003.<sup>17</sup> The absolute number of adoptions by non-relatives was about the same in 2003 as it was in fiscal year 2000. Since the foster care community and kin appear to be tapped out, recruitment and retention of prospective adoptive families must become a priority for child welfare agencies.

Averaging across all years, just over 60 percent of married couples were the foster parents of the adopted child; 16.5 percent of married couples were related by birth to the adopted child; 22 percent of adopting married couples were unrelated to the child prior to adoption. Just under 60 percent of unmarried women were the foster parents of the adopted child; almost 29 percent of unmarried women were related by birth to the adopted child, and just 12.5 percent of unmarried women were previously unrelated to the adopted child. About 53 percent of unmarried men who adopted were previously foster parents, 24.5 percent were related by birth, and 22 percent were unrelated.

Figure 4 shows the trend over time in non-relative adoptions for each type of adoptive family. Non-relative adoptions have fallen since 1998 for all types of adoptive families. In 1996, over 35 percent of married couples adopted a child with whom they had no prior relationship. In 2003, less than 20 percent of married couples adopted children with whom they had no prior relationship. Just over 17 percent of

**Figure 2. Trends in Pre-Adoptive Relationship**

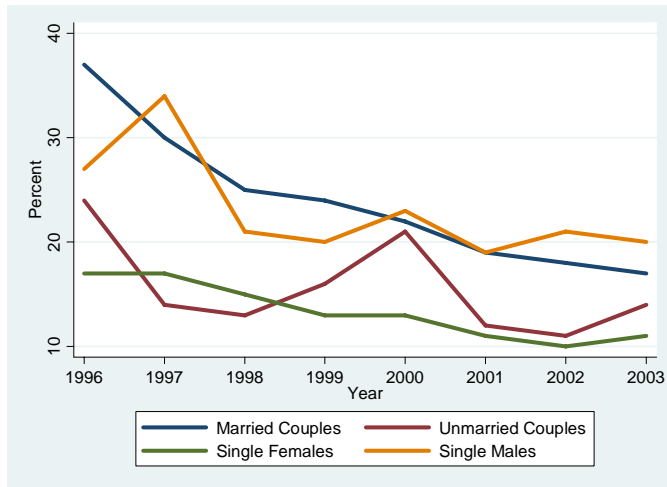


<sup>16</sup> Decline from peak to 2003 is statistically significant for each type of family structure and overall ( $p$ -value<.02).

<sup>17</sup> The changes noted are statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.05).

unmarried women who adopted in 1996 had no prior relationship to the adopted child; in 2002 and 2003, only about 10 percent of single mother adoptions were so-called stranger adoptions.<sup>18</sup>

**Figure 4. Trends in Stranger Adoptions by Adoptive Family Structure**



**Figure 5. Trends in Foster-Parent Adoptions by Adoptive Family Structure**



Part of the decline in stranger adoptions is likely due to an increase in the recruitment of foster parents as adoptive parents; see figure 5. Some public agencies also ask prospective adoptive parents to foster a child even before pre-adoptive placement can be made. If the child’s birth parents’ rights have not yet been severed by the court, these placements are termed “fost-adopt” placements. Figure 6 shows that, indeed, foster parenting was much more common in 2003 than it was in 1993 among all adoptive family types. The sharpest increase was in the prevalence of foster parents among married adoptive parents. Less than 40 percent of married parents finalizing an adoption in 1996 had fostered their child; in each year after 1996 about 60 percent of married parents who adopted had fostered first. The percent of unmarried couples and single people who fostered first also rose after 1996; however, there has been an across-the-board downward drift in this

proportion in recent years.<sup>19</sup>

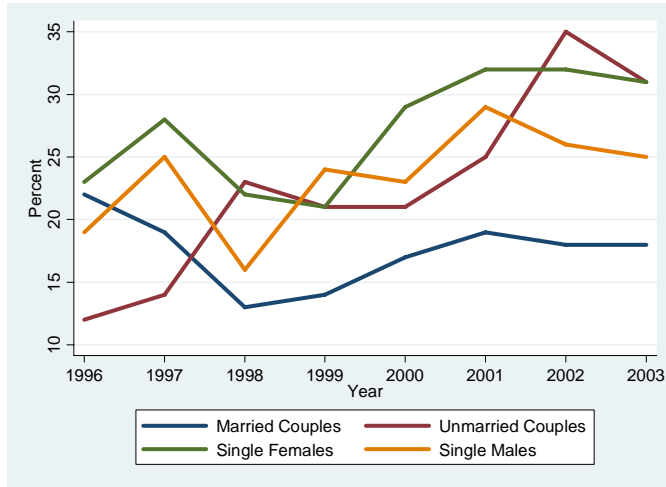
Figure 6 shows that stepparent and other relative adoptions were more common among adoptions finalized in 2003 by unmarried couples and single adoptive parents than by married adoptive parents.<sup>20</sup> This was not always the case. In 1996, the proportion of married and single female parents who were kin to their adopted children were about the same. The dip in the percent of adoptions by kin in the late 1990s is a reflection of the surge in adoptions by foster parents at the same time. Note that the largest increase in kinship adoptions has been among unmarried couples.

<sup>18</sup> Change from 1996 to 2003 are statistically significant ( $p$ -value<.01) for married couples, unmarried couples, and single females. Change for single males is statistically significant only from peak to 2003 ( $p$ -value<.01).

<sup>19</sup> Change from 1996 to 2003 is statistically significant for married couples and single females ( $p$ -values<.01). Change from peak to 2003 is statistically significant for all groups ( $p$ -values<.05).

<sup>20</sup> Differences relative to married couples are statistically significant ( $p$ -values<.05).

**Figure 6. Trends in Step-Parent and Other Relative Adoptions by Adoptive Family Structure**



## ***Adoptive Families State-by-State***

Table 9 summarizes missing and unusable data on family structure by state. New York has not submitted any usable data on adoptive family structure. Of the states that submitted any AFCARS data in 1996, four states did not report adoptive family structure. Six additional states submitted a majority of adoption records without family structure information. The completeness

of the data on adoptive family structure improves markedly after 1998, with only Indiana, Virginia, Mississippi, and Ohio, and New York missing many observations.

Tables 10 through 13 summarize the proportion of adoptions finalized in each year by families of each type recorded in AFCARS. States with the largest proportion of married couples among adoptive families are Kentucky (81.11), Maine (82.93), Montana (87.66), New Hampshire (82.51), Puerto Rico (85.75), Utah (92.67), West Virginia (86.72), and Wyoming (82.88). The lowest proportion of married couples occurred in District of Columbia (39.19), Florida (57.02), Maryland (58.20), New Jersey (57.77), Ohio (45.05), and Wisconsin (54.26).

The states with the highest proportion of single females among adoptive parents are the District of Columbia (51.32), Illinois (47.91), and New Jersey (39.64). Single females complete a small percentage of adoptions from public child welfare agencies in Montana (10.01), Puerto Rico (9.54), South Dakota (13.86), Utah (6.17), West Virginia (9.38), and Wyoming (12.67).

About half of the states did not experience significant change in the makeup of adoptive families over the period. However, some states did experience noticeable changes. There has been a decline in the representation of married couples among adopters in Alabama, Arkansas, California, Florida, Illinois, Indiana, Kansas, Kentucky, Maryland, and New Hampshire. There has been an increase in the representation of married couples in Colorado, Delaware, Iowa, and Virginia. A few states (Minnesota, Mississippi, Nebraska, and North Dakota) relied heavily on married couples early in the period, switched to relying more on unmarried adopters during the middle of the period, but have lately moved back to a reliance on married couples.

Adoptions by single men are relatively rare, but their proportions among all adoptive parents are largest in Delaware (3.11), Iowa (6.86), Nebraska (3.30), Nevada (3.85), and Wyoming (3.08). The lowest proportions of adoptions by single males were in Idaho (0.67), Louisiana (0.62), Minnesota (0.93), North Dakota (0.89), South Carolina (0.82), Utah (0.95), and West Virginia (0.99).

Adoptions by unmarried couples are also relatively rare, but the states with the greatest representation of unmarried couples among adopters are Massachusetts (3.61), Ohio (5.66), Rhode Island (4.17), and Vermont (3.89). Low representation was recorded in Florida (0.04), Kansas (0.03), and North Carolina (0.05). No adoptions by single men were recorded in Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, Montana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, South Dakota, and Virginia.

**Table 9. Summary of Completeness of Adoptive Family Structure Data Percent  
Non-Applicable, Unable to Determine, or Missing Values**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Alabama	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Alaska	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Arizona	0.4	0.9	0.8	0.0	1.1	N/A	8.0	8.8
Arkansas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.6	3.2
California	4.8	2.6	1.8	1.6	4.3	1.1	0.0	0.0
Colorado	0.0	0.3	2.5	2.9	2.0	2.3	47.9	83.0
Connecticut	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	N/A
Delaware	0.0	1.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	2.8
DC	5.8	4.4	1.7	2.2	4.2	7.9	18.9	23.5
Florida	0.6	4.2	2.1	1.4	3.3	0.7	100	100
Georgia	1.6	4.4	6.9	5.0	6.1	2.9	16.1	64.7
Hawaii	0.0	0.0	0.8	2.1	1.8	0.0	19.3	30.8
Idaho	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.0	0.9	0.0	64.9	83.6
Illinois	0.0	0.1	0.6	0.2	3.0	6.0	82.5	80.9
Indiana	4.5	7.5	5.0	2.4	3.3	3.8	100	98.8
Iowa	3.5	3.5	4.7	2.6	1.7	48.4	8.7	45.5
Kansas	6.4	8.1	7.5	7.2	7.4	49.2	95.2	N/A
Kentucky	0.3	0.7	0.7	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0
Louisiana	0.8	0.8	0.4	1.1	0.3	0.8	69.5	0.0
Maine	2.2	4.2	1.4	1.2	1.0	14.4	2.1	0.0
Maryland	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	13.4	27.8
Massachusetts	0.9	0.7	0.5	0.5	0.5	0.3	0.9	0.7
Michigan	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	1.1	1.3	1.8	3.4	1.7	0.0	0.0	0.1
Mississippi	39.0	36.6	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.0	0.0
Missouri	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.3	N/A	N/A
Montana	0.0	0.0	0.4	1.3	2.1	0.7	1.4	0.0
Nebraska	1.8	3.9	2.7	2.0	1.8	N/A	38.7	0.0
Nevada	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.8	N/A	100	N/A
New Hampshire	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.2	0.1
New Mexico	0.0	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.5	100	100
New York	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	N/A
North Carolina	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
North Dakota	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A
Ohio	5.6	8.0	6.1	5.5	83.6	43.2	47.0	39.7
Oklahoma	0.0	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Oregon	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	45.3
Pennsylvania	0.4	0.4	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.1	0.8	0.0
Puerto Rico	1.6	0.5	0.4	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Rhode Island	1.5	2.7	3.0	3.1	7.9	5.4	23.7	0.0
South Carolina	0.0	0.0	0.3	0.8	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	100	100
Tennessee	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	4.1	5.2
Texas	2.8	5.0	3.9	1.2	0.8	1.9	11.1	33.3
Utah	0.0	0.6	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vermont	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Virginia	0.4	0.7	0.8	1.1	15.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Washington	0.8	0.8	0.2	0.6	1.1	1.4	79.3	82.2
West Virginia	0.6	1.4	0.8	2.3	1.3	2.4	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	89.2	100
Wyoming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
<b>All States</b>	<b>9.4%</b>	<b>9.2%</b>	<b>9.1%</b>	<b>9.5%</b>	<b>15.6%</b>	<b>17.0%</b>	<b>48.1%</b>	<b>36.7%</b>

**Table 10. Percent of Adoptions by Married Couples**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Alabama	72.6%	79.9%	73.1%	82.7%	73.9%	82.6%	N/A	N/A
Alaska	66.8	73.5	67.3	74.3	75.9	66.3	N/A	N/A
Arizona	78.1	79.1	72.8	73.4	74.4	82.2	80.4	77.6
Arkansas	74.8	70.7	77.9	79.4	75.5	68.1	92.1	86.9
California	61.5	59.7	62.2	62.2	67.8	N/A	75.5	76.5
Colorado	77.3	76.6	76.0	76.8	74.8	74.6	60.9	0.0
Connecticut	64.3	64.0	65.5	58.3	69.5	69.4	N/A	N/A
Delaware	75.3	66.4	70.9	78.6	69.7	64.5	100.0	94.3
DC	36.7	44.8	41.6	43.6	35.2	39.1	46.8	57.7
Florida	63.6	64.3	72.7	74.7	70.4	71.7	N/A	N/A
Georgia	70.0	74.0	71.5	69.9	73.7	77.1	75.9	80.5
Hawaii	69.5	77.6	77.1	73.4	73.2	78.4	81.7	77.8
Idaho	92.8	89.0	89.3	90.7	87.7	100.0	100.0	100.0
Illinois	47.1	42.7	39.7	40.9	38.4	44.1	64.1	60.2
Indiana	66.2	68.4	70.3	70.3	75.9	79.4	N/A	100.0
Iowa	68.4	73.7	70.3	71.7	76.6	57.6	62.0	76.7
Kansas	79.3	74.4	83.1	78.4	76.2	83.1	100.0	N/A
Kentucky	78.2	76.2	74.0	78.4	79.4	79.8	90.9	91.1
Louisiana	69.4	76.0	75.4	69.4	67.9	68.1	77.8	60.0
Maine	80.5	87.3	88.6	80.5	92.5	86.9	88.2	84.9
Maryland	52.5	52.2	56.6	60.9	64.9	69.2	68.4	81.4
Massachusetts	67.8	70.3	66.0	68.7	65.0	64.6	58.1	57.5
Michigan	59.6	65.2	63.8	59.8	63.5	61.1	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	82.4	76.1	74.9	74.4	70.6	66.7	75.8	92.8
Mississippi	74.8	70.8	66.0	69.8	74.7	81.8	78.6	64.8
Missouri	69.4	68.9	65.3	69.6	67.7	73.0	N/A	N/A
Montana	88.4	89.5	83.2	86.3	90.2	93.2	90.4	93.9
Nebraska	81.0	74.0	80.3	62.2	78.8	N/A	93.4	100.0
Nevada	70.5	64.4	72.4	71.9	83.6	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	75.6	82.5	81.1	86.5	83.9	94.1	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	59.0	58.1	56.5	54.6	59.0	59.3	57.6	58.5
New Mexico	76.4	72.4	72.6	74.4	74.6	80.1	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	72.1	71.2	71.4	75.2	76.9	71.0	82.7	86.3
North Dakota	84.2	96.4	84.1	88.6	93.5	92.8	90.3	N/A
Ohio	61.8	64.0	65.4	64.6	67.7	29.5	32.5	55.5
Oklahoma	79.1	74.6	78.7	76.7	76.4	81.0	78.6	87.9
Oregon	80.5	77.0	76.5	78.5	80.8	81.5	78.2	72.3
Pennsylvania	62.9	65.9	71.7	63.8	63.0	59.8	59.6	52.4
Puerto Rico	88.1	83.7	76.2	83.6	88.0	90.4	89.9	92.9
Rhode Island	53.9	57.4	55.6	60.3	60.2	54.3	52.5	56.0
South Carolina	66.4	67.4	69.5	66.7	77.2	70.1	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	88.2	77.2	84.5	83.0	86.9	89.1	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	75.6	74.0	79.1	79.1	75.9	69.7	79.4	88.2
Texas	75.3	73.5	79.8	76.5	78.2	79.2	75.0	100.0
Utah	93.9	94.2	94.0	90.1	93.0	94.9	88.7	89.8
Vermont	71.9	80.4	71.6	82.0	72.7	83.9	86.2	80.7
Virginia	82.5	77.7	80.9	83.8	78.7	72.3	N/A	N/A
Washington	72.1	67.0	67.0	71.1	74.3	75.1	69.3	86.8
West Virginia	84.1	86.2	90.5	87.2	92.9	86.4	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	67.8	70.9	73.3	74.5	73.1	73.4	84.9	N/A
Wyoming	87.5	75.0	84.8	80.3	82.2	90.6	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>67.3%</b>	<b>66.2%</b>	<b>66.7%</b>	<b>65.6%</b>	<b>66.0%</b>	<b>66.4%</b>	<b>71.1%</b>	<b>74.4%</b>



**Table 11. Percent of Adoptions by Unmarried Couples**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Alabama	0.9%	0.4%	1.7%	2.0%	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	N/A
Alaska	2.4	5.4	2.9	3.5	1.5	0.0	N/A	N/A
Arizona	0.4	0.4	0.0	0.1	0.1	N/A	0.0	0.3
Arkansas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
California	3.8	4.2	2.9	1.3	1.0	1.2	0.9	0.7
Colorado	1.6	0.4	1.5	2.5	3.7	2.9	0.3	0.0
Connecticut	4.7	3.9	0.2	0.8	0.7	0.0	N/A	N/A
Delaware	1.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DC	0.0	0.8	2.2	0.0	4.4	3.1	5.2	0.0
Florida	0.1	0.1	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Georgia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hawaii	0.0	0.3	0.4	0.0	1.4	0.0	0.7	0.0
Idaho	0.7	2.5	2.3	0.7	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Illinois	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.6	1.3	2.2
Indiana	1.1	0.5	0.6	0.5	0.5	0.0	N/A	0.0
Iowa	0.0	0.2	0.3	0.1	0.3	0.0	36.1	20.2
Kansas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	N/A
Kentucky	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Louisiana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maine	4.8	1.0	0.3	0.7	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maryland	0.7	0.2	1.0	0.0	0.2	0.2	0.9	0.0
Massachusetts	7.2	6.9	3.9	2.8	4.6	2.3	1.8	1.9
Michigan	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	3.6	3.9	4.5	1.4	3.7	3.0	1.7	1.4
Mississippi	0.0	0.0	0.8	0.7	3.0	2.4	7.8	35.2
Missouri	2.7	1.6	1.3	1.6	1.5	0.9	N/A	N/A
Montana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Nebraska	2.6	3.4	0.7	1.7	0.4	N/A	6.6	0.0
Nevada	0.0	0.4	0.8	5.2	1.6	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Mexico	4.5	4.0	2.2	3.2	2.7	0.5	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	0.0	0.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.2	0.4	0.0
North Dakota	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	0.7	0.0	0.0	N/A
Ohio	3.8	4.6	4.4	3.0	0.7	26.9	33.8	17.4
Oklahoma	0.9	0.5	0.2	0.1	0.0	0.4	0.0	0.0
Oregon	3.4	3.3	2.8	2.5	0.9	0.8	3.6	10.9
Pennsylvania	0.3	0.3	0.4	0.4	0.3	0.1	0.0	0.0
Puerto Rico	3.0	0.5	2.7	2.6	2.5	3.6	0.0	0.0
Rhode Island	8.5	7.6	7.0	4.0	4.8	2.9	0.0	0.0
South Carolina	0.7	1.4	0.5	0.0	0.4	1.1	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	0.2	0.0	0.0	0.5	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Texas	0.6	0.5	0.3	0.7	0.3	0.3	0.0	0.0
Utah	0.0	0.3	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Vermont	7.2	6.5	7.8	4.9	3.6	0.0	0.5	2.9
Virginia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
Washington	2.6	3.8	3.6	3.5	1.8	1.9	1.5	0.0
West Virginia	2.5	2.0	1.4	0.3	0.7	2.9	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	0.5	0.0	0.3	0.1	0.2	0.5	0.0	N/A
Wyoming	1.8	1.9	0.0	0.0	4.4	0.0	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>1.6%</b>	<b>1.7%</b>	<b>1.4%</b>	<b>0.9%</b>	<b>0.7%</b>	<b>1.2%</b>	<b>2.9%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>

**Table 12. Percent of Adoptions by Single Females**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Alabama	24.9%	18.1%	25.2%	13.9%	25.5%	16.5%	N/A	N/A
Alaska	26.0	20.6	28.4	21.3	20.4	30.5	N/A	N/A
Arizona	19.4	18.2	24.5	24.4	22.3	N/A	18.7	19.4
Arkansas	21.6	28.6	21.6	17.5	21.1	12.8	7.9	13.1
California	31.4	33.5	32.4	34.1	27.9	28.7	21.4	21.9
Colorado	18.9	20.4	19.8	18.6	19.6	18.5	29.1	75.0
Connecticut	27.5	30.6	30.4	38.5	28.5	28.8	N/A	N/A
Delaware	19.8	29.0	28.2	20.4	27.3	27.4	0.0	2.9
DC	58.0	53.1	51.3	54.8	57.9	57.8	44.2	42.3
Florida	33.4	34.1	25.6	23.7	27.6	26.6	N/A	N/A
Georgia	26.9	24.6	26.6	29.0	25.2	21.8	22.7	19.5
Hawaii	28.0	18.6	20.2	22.6	22.1	19.6	13.4	22.2
Idaho	4.3	7.6	8.4	8.6	10.4	0.0	0.0	0.0
Illinois	50.1	54.3	57.6	57.0	59.9	53.6	34.5	33.7
Indiana	31.6	29.7	26.6	28.1	21.8	20.0	N/A	0.0
Iowa	18.9	18.2	22.9	19.8	16.2	37.3	0.6	2.0
Kansas	19.8	22.4	16.7	19.1	19.7	14.1	0.0	N/A
Kentucky	19.3	22.5	24.6	20.8	18.6	19.2	7.6	7.0
Louisiana	30.4	23.2	24.1	29.1	31.6	31.9	22.2	40.0
Maine	9.6	11.4	9.2	18.5	6.0	11.2	8.6	14.4
Maryland	44.7	45.5	40.9	36.7	34.1	29.1	29.1	18.6
Massachusetts	23.8	21.4	27.9	26.8	28.5	30.5	37.3	38.1
Michigan	37.3	32.7	34.3	38.1	34.5	37.2	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	12.7	19.1	20.1	22.1	23.8	30.1	22.6	5.4
Mississippi	25.2	28.5	32.1	28.8	19.0	14.1	11.7	0.0
Missouri	25.1	27.1	30.5	27.2	28.7	24.9	N/A	N/A
Montana	10.3	7.7	14.6	11.6	8.7	6.8	9.6	3.0
Nebraska	15.6	17.6	15.8	32.6	15.0	N/A	0.0	0.0
Nevada	24.1	30.8	22.2	19.5	13.1	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	20.6	16.7	17.9	13.5	16.1	5.9	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	38.2	39.0	40.5	43.9	38.4	37.7	39.7	40.3
New Mexico	15.4	19.5	22.2	21.3	19.1	17.4	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	25.1	27.1	27.5	23.9	21.3	27.1	15.4	13.0
North Dakota	13.3	2.9	15.2	9.5	5.8	7.2	6.5	N/A
Ohio	32.0	28.6	27.6	30.3	29.7	34.9	28.7	23.4
Oklahoma	19.1	22.5	19.8	20.9	22.1	17.8	20.9	11.6
Oregon	15.4	17.8	18.1	17.3	17.2	15.8	15.4	16.0
Pennsylvania	34.8	32.3	26.4	34.2	35.2	39.3	37.4	45.6
Puerto Rico	8.0	13.1	13.7	11.7	8.0	5.7	9.1	4.0
Rhode Island	33.9	34.5	35.5	33.3	33.8	40.0	47.5	41.9
South Carolina	31.4	29.1	29.5	33.1	21.9	28.2	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	11.1	22.1	14.4	17.0	11.9	9.1	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	22.3	24.2	20.3	19.0	24.1	28.8	18.0	11.6
Texas	22.2	24.0	18.0	21.1	20.2	19.2	25.0	0.0
Utah	5.5	5.2	4.0	9.6	5.4	4.2	10.1	10.2
Vermont	19.2	9.8	19.0	10.7	22.3	14.4	13.3	15.1
Virginia	16.3	21.1	17.9	14.9	20.6	26.0	N/A	N/A
Washington	22.4	26.3	26.4	23.0	21.7	21.5	27.7	10.5
West Virginia	12.2	11.2	6.7	10.5	6.2	10.7	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	29.8	27.9	25.1	24.5	24.9	25.4	15.1	N/A
Wyoming	10.7	19.2	10.9	11.5	13.3	9.4	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>28.4%</b>	<b>29.8%</b>	<b>29.7%</b>	<b>31.5%</b>	<b>31.1%</b>	<b>30.6%</b>	<b>23.7%</b>	<b>20.8%</b>

**Table 13. Percent of Adoptions by Single Males**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996
Alabama	1.5%	1.6%	0.0%	1.5%	0.7%	0.9%	N/A	N/A
Alaska	4.8	0.5	1.4	1.0	2.2	3.2	N/A	N/A
Arizona	2.1	2.3	2.7	2.1	3.2	N/A	0.9	2.8
Arkansas	3.6	0.7	0.6	3.1	3.5	5.0	0.0	0.0
California	3.4	2.7	2.5	2.4	3.3	2.0	2.2	0.9
Colorado	2.3	2.5	2.7	2.1	1.9	4.1	9.7	25.0
Connecticut	3.5	1.5	3.8	2.4	1.2	1.8	N/A	N/A
Delaware	4.0	4.6	0.8	1.0	3.0	8.1	0.0	2.9
DC	5.3	1.2	4.9	1.6	2.5	0.0	3.9	0.0
Florida	2.9	1.5	1.7	1.6	2.1	1.7	N/A	N/A
Georgia	3.1	1.4	1.9	1.1	1.1	1.1	1.5	0.0
Hawaii	2.5	3.5	2.3	4.0	3.3	2.0	4.2	0.0
Idaho	2.2	0.8	0.0	0.0	0.9	0.0	0.0	0.0
Illinois	2.9	3.0	2.7	2.0	1.7	1.7	0.2	3.9
Indiana	1.1	1.4	2.5	1.2	1.8	0.7	N/A	0.0
Iowa	12.7	7.9	6.5	8.4	6.9	5.2	1.3	1.1
Kansas	1.0	3.2	0.2	2.5	4.2	2.4	0.0	N/A
Kentucky	2.5	1.3	1.4	0.8	1.9	1.0	1.5	1.9
Louisiana	0.2	0.8	0.4	1.5	0.6	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maine	5.1	0.3	1.9	0.2	1.0	1.9	3.2	0.8
Maryland	2.2	2.0	1.6	2.4	0.8	1.5	1.6	0.0
Massachusetts	1.2	1.4	2.2	1.6	2.0	2.5	2.8	2.5
Michigan	3.1	2.2	1.9	2.1	2.0	1.7	N/A	N/A
Minnesota	1.3	1.0	0.5	2.2	1.9	0.2	0.0	0.5
Mississippi	0.0	0.7	1.1	0.7	3.4	1.8	1.9	0.0
Missouri	2.7	2.4	3.0	1.6	2.0	1.1	N/A	N/A
Montana	1.3	2.8	2.2	2.1	1.1	0.0	0.0	3.0
Nebraska	0.7	5.1	3.2	3.4	5.8	N/A	0.0	0.0
Nevada	5.4	4.3	4.5	3.5	1.6	N/A	N/A	N/A
New Hampshire	3.8	0.9	1.1	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
New Jersey	2.8	3.0	3.0	1.6	2.6	3.0	2.8	1.2
New Mexico	3.6	4.0	3.0	1.1	3.5	2.0	N/A	N/A
North Carolina	2.8	1.7	1.1	1.0	1.8	1.7	1.5	0.7
North Dakota	2.5	0.0	0.7	1.9	0.0	0.0	3.2	N/A
Ohio	2.3	2.8	2.6	2.1	2.0	8.7	5.0	3.8
Oklahoma	0.9	2.4	1.4	2.4	1.6	0.8	0.5	0.6
Oregon	0.7	1.9	2.6	1.7	1.1	1.9	2.7	0.8
Pennsylvania	2.0	1.5	1.5	1.6	1.4	0.7	3.0	2.0
Puerto Rico	0.9	2.7	7.4	2.2	1.5	0.4	1.0	3.0
Rhode Island	3.9	0.4	1.9	2.4	1.1	2.9	0.0	2.0
South Carolina	1.4	2.0	0.5	0.3	0.4	0.7	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	0.7	0.7	1.0	0.0	1.2	1.8	N/A	N/A
Tennessee	1.9	1.8	0.6	1.4	0.0	1.5	2.6	0.3
Texas	2.0	2.0	1.9	1.8	1.3	1.3	0.0	0.0
Utah	0.6	0.3	2.0	0.3	1.6	0.9	1.3	0.0
Vermont	1.8	3.3	1.7	2.5	1.4	1.7	0.0	1.3
Virginia	1.2	1.2	1.2	1.4	0.7	1.7	N/A	N/A
Washington	2.9	2.9	3.1	2.4	2.1	1.6	1.5	2.6
West Virginia	1.2	0.6	1.4	2.0	0.3	0.0	N/A	N/A
Wisconsin	1.9	1.2	1.3	0.9	1.9	0.8	0.0	N/A
Wyoming	0.0	3.9	4.3	8.2	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A
<b>Total</b>	<b>2.7%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>2.0%</b>	<b>2.1%</b>	<b>1.8%</b>	<b>2.2%</b>	<b>1.6%</b>

**Table 14. Summary of Data on Adoptive Parent Age and Pre-Adoptive Relationship**

State	Percent Incomplete	State	Percent Incomplete
Alabama	0.0	Montana	0.0
Alaska	0.4	Nebraska	89.5
Arizona	5.6	Nevada	8.3
Arkansas	17.9	New Hampshire	0.0
California	0.0	New Jersey	0.0
Colorado	17.6	New Mexico	0.0
Connecticut	0.5	New York	100.0
Delaware	4.8	North Carolina	2.0
DC	3.0	North Dakota	0.0
Florida	47.7	Ohio	59.2
Georgia	4.9	Oklahoma	0.0
Hawaii	1.9	Oregon	0.0
Idaho	10.0	Pennsylvania	2.8
Illinois	0.1	Puerto Rico	0.0
Indiana	4.5	Rhode Island	20.4
Iowa	0.9	South Carolina	0.1
Kansas	0.2	South Dakota	7.8
Kentucky	0.3	Tennessee	5.5
Louisiana	1.6	Texas	0.2
Maine	1.6	Utah	0.4
Maryland	1.5	Vermont	5.3
Massachusetts	1.1	Virginia	2.5
Michigan	0.0	Washington	13.0
Minnesota	0.3	West Virginia	0.0
Mississippi	26.9	Wisconsin	0.0
Missouri	3.5	Wyoming	1.7
Average	16.1		

Table 14 summarizes the (in)completeness of the AFCARS data on relationship of the adoptive parents to the child prior to adoption. New York, again, is the only state that has not submitted usable data on pre-adoptive relationship between parents and their adopted children. Florida, Mississippi, Nebraska, and Ohio are missing information on pre-adoptive relationship for 25 percent or more of records.

For many states, the data distribution of pre-adoptive relationships, shown in tables 15-18, show no discernable trend. However, there was a decline in the proportion of adoptions by parents with no previous ties to their adopted children in the following states: California, Delaware, Idaho, Indiana, Kansas, Montana, Ohio, and Wisconsin. There were increases in non-relative adoptions in Iowa and Nebraska, and there was a U-shaped pattern of decline and rise in this proportion in Arizona, Minnesota, Nevada, Pennsylvania, and Washington.

A large, one-time decline in non-relative adoptions coincident with an increase in adoptions by foster parents occurred in Alabama, Arkansas, Georgia, Maryland, Mississippi, New

Mexico, North Carolina, and Vermont. More than 90 percent of adoptions with public agency involvement are completed by foster parents in Washington, Montana, and Illinois.

**Sources**

Berrick, J.D., Barth, R.P., & Needell, B. (1994). A comparison of kinship foster homes and foster family homes: Implications for kinship foster care as family preservation. *Children and Youth Services Review* 16, 33-63.

Boots, S.W., & Geen, R. (1999). Family care or foster care? Urban Institute. Available at <http://www.urban.org/publications/309166.html> (last accessed 10 May 2006).

Byron, J., & Deoudes, G. (2002). 2002 national adoption attitudes survey. Presented at the Child Welfare League

of America, National Adoption Conference, November 2002, representing the Dave Thomas Foundation for Adoption and the Evan B. Donaldson Adoption Institute. Report available at [http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/survey/Adoption\\_Attitudes\\_Survey.pdf](http://www.adoptioninstitute.org/survey/Adoption_Attitudes_Survey.pdf) (last accessed 25 May 2006).

Chandra, A., Abma, J., Maza, P., & Bachrach, D. (1999). Adoption, adoption seeking, and relinquishment for adoption in the United States. National Center for Health Statistics. Advance Data Number 306. Available

- at  
<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/data/ad/ad306.pdf> (last accessed 25 May 2006).
- Ehrle, J., & Geen, R. (2002). Children cared for by relatives: What services do they need? Assessing the New Federalism, B-47. Available at  
<http://www.urban.org/publications/310511.html> (last accessed 25 May 2006).
- Feigleman, W., & Silverman, A.R. (1983). *Chosen children: New patterns of adoptive relationships*. New York: Praeger.
- Geen, R. (2003). Foster children placed with relatives often receive less government help. Assessing the New Federalism, A-59. Available at  
<http://www.urban.org/publications/309166.html> (last accessed 15 January 2006).
- Hansen, M.E., & Hansen, B.A. (in press). The economics of adoption of children from foster care. *Child Welfare*.
- Kreider, R. (2003). Adopted children and stepchildren: 2000. Census 2000 Special Reports. Available at  
<http://www.census.gov/prod/2003pubs/censr-6.pdf> (last accessed 18 May 2006).
- Lakin, D. S., and Whitfield, L. (1997). Adoption recruitment: Meeting the needs of waiting children. In Avery, R. (Ed.), *Adoption Policy and Special Needs Children*. Westport, CT: Auburn House.
- Maza, P. (2000). Using administrative data to reward agency performance: The case of the federal adoption incentive program. *Child Welfare* 79(5), 444-456.
- Maza, P. (2002). Is the Adoption and Safe Families Act doing what it is supposed to do? Manuscript presented at Child Welfare League of America, National Adoption Conference, November 7, 2002.
- Melosh, B. (2002). *Strangers and kin: The American way of adoption*. Cambridge: Harvard University Press.
- Macomber, J.E., Zielewski, E.H., Chambers, K., & Geen, R. (2005). *Foster care adoption in the United States: An analysis of interest in adoption and a review of state recruitment strategies*. Washington, DC: Urban Institute. Available at  
[http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411254\\_foster\\_care\\_adoption.pdf](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/411254_foster_care_adoption.pdf) (last accessed 25 May 2006).
- National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (n.d.). *AFCARS user's guide and codebook*. Ithaca, NY: NDACAN. Available at  
[http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/Datasets/Abstracts/DatasetAbstract\\_AFCARS\\_General.html](http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/NDACAN/Datasets/Abstracts/DatasetAbstract_AFCARS_General.html) (last accessed 25 May 2006).
- Pollack, D., Bleich, M., Reid, C., & Fadel, M. (2004). Classical religious perspectives of adoption law. *Notre Dame Law Review* 79(2).
- Thornton, J.L. (1991). Permanency planning for children in kinship foster homes. *Child Welfare* 70(4), 593-601.
- US DHHS, Administration for Children and Families, Children's Bureau (various years). Adoption and foster care statistics. Available at  
[http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/stats\\_research/index.htm](http://www.acf.dhhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm) (last accessed 1 May 2006).
- Wilson, J., Katz, J., & Geen, R. (2005). Listening to parents: Overcoming barriers to the adoption of children from foster care. KSG Working Paper No. RWPO5-005. Available at  
<http://ssrn.com/abstract=663944> (last accessed 15 September 2005).

The information in this Brief may be reproduced with proper citation. Suggested citation:

Hansen, Mary Eschelbach (2006). Adoptive Family Structure. AFCARS Adoption Data Research Brief Number 1. ONLINE. North American Council on Adoptable Children. Available: [http://www.nacac.org/pub\\_articles.htm](http://www.nacac.org/pub_articles.htm). Accessed on: <insert the data you accessed the information>.

**Table 15. Percent of Adoptions by Parents with No Prior Relationship to Child by State and Year**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	Average
Alabama	47.72%	55.82%	96.64%	98.02%	96.08%	100%	N/A	N/A	<b>76.67%</b>
Alaska	1.92	0.0	0.0	0.99	0.0	1.05	N/A	N/A	<b>0.61</b>
Arizona	29.92	35.18	14.71	18.76	28.52	N/A	47.48	53.79	<b>28.46</b>
Arkansas	0.0	0.0	14.09	28.62	22.33	29.84	100	9.52	<b>17.47</b>
California	5.06	5.57	7.63	9.20	13.78	7.63	19.11	17.73	<b>8.97</b>
Colorado	11.43	11.64	10.0	13.75	11.36	17.91	32.00	N/A	<b>12.76</b>
Connecticut	84.50	83.95	25.23	81.36	81.14	76.86	76.00	N/A	<b>72.32</b>
Delaware	15.84	27.82	24.79	26.21	27.27	16.13	45.45	41.67	<b>26.13</b>
DC	0.88	0.40	0.0	7.86	26.51	31.65	4.21	31.25	<b>8.93</b>
Florida	0.69	3.67	18.90	23.18	30.85	31.25	45.61	N/A	<b>16.45</b>
Georgia	14.07	14.40	17.91	16.84	14.61	1.11	9.92	61.21	<b>14.46</b>
Hawaii	0.63	1.37	0.0	0.0	1.43	2.77	0.75	0.0	<b>1.04</b>
Idaho	41.30	40.68	36.36	60.0	42.27	50.0	66.67	100	<b>45.95</b>
Illinois	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	<b>0.0</b>
Indiana	48.49	47.72	52.16	45.95	57.44	81.76	100	100	<b>55.08</b>
Iowa	30.71	32.20	28.59	24.22	17.15	13.52	0.0	N/A	<b>24.08</b>
Kansas	9.34	13.16	12.62	15.57	15.19	21.24	28.57	N/A	<b>14.62</b>
Kentucky	15.52	31.12	22.98	41.52	100	87.98	34.97	36.31	<b>37.62</b>
Louisiana	14.69	15.61	17.02	15.34	18.26	23.63	0.0	6.67	<b>16.33</b>
Maine	90.59	83.28	93.68	88.81	95.54	72.00	100	100	<b>90.07</b>
Maryland	3.95	3.73	4.17	6.15	8.95	18.24	15.26	81.62	<b>10.24</b>
Massachusetts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	20.43	24.83	<b>6.64</b>
Michigan	7.28	8.92	9.90	9.06	10.02	12.45	N/A	N/A	<b>9.53</b>
Minnesota	56.99	48.08	41.27	44.95	44.55	35.90	41.86	46.99	<b>46.04</b>
Mississippi	0.0	0.0	29.70	25.69	35.02	31.76	32.04	27.78	<b>22.13</b>
Missouri	6.06	8.37	5.08	7.75	9.42	14.53	N/A	N/A	<b>7.95</b>
Montana	1.34	2.02	1.09	2.54	1.60	0.0	10.14	45.45	<b>3.34</b>
Nebraska	5.84	2.60	2.05	4.00	1.43	N/A	0.0	0.0	<b>2.92</b>
Nevada	12.54	12.65	6.17	19.48	29.51	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>14.42</b>
New Hampshire	8.40	14.04	15.79	8.33	8.06	19.61	N/A	N/A	<b>11.84</b>
New Jersey	22.46	17.42	20.14	19.83	19.40	21.25	22.55	21.60	<b>20.27</b>
New Mexico	1.36	45.09	62.33	65.99	52.71	64.97	40.32	48.11	<b>50.49</b>
North Carolina	19.37	24.47	25.24	26.46	28.30	32.88	45.77	69.23	<b>27.14</b>
North Dakota	31.67	52.55	41.38	65.71	61.87	55.86	41.94	N/A	<b>50.76</b>
Ohio	14.81	16.10	10.27	15.53	21.83	N/A	N/A	N/A	<b>14.32</b>
Oregon	31.21	25.56	29.79	35.74	44.71	29.77	48.98	47.01	<b>34.52</b>
Pennsylvania	32.68	18.42	36.76	50.47	52.27	53.10	42.60	1.36	<b>39.00</b>
Puerto Rico	25.96	24.75	14.01	20.78	23.01	23.84	16.83	19.19	<b>22.02</b>
Rhode Island	8.40	9.84	6.37	7.00	13.10	9.63	2.86	2.35	<b>7.46</b>
South Carolina	28.93	32.27	31.25	42.97	44.30	36.56	N/A	N/A	<b>36.69</b>
South Dakota	21.53	17.24	10.31	22.34	20.24	74.55	N/A	N/A	<b>23.42</b>
Tennessee	25.79	25.05	18.89	25.99	49.21	63.50	47.21	59.94	<b>33.54</b>
Texas	25.57	24.81	26.66	24.05	26.78	27.47	22.22	33.33	<b>25.82</b>
Utah	24.44	26.88	32.09	47.19	42.82	42.81	47.80	22.45	<b>35.98</b>
Vermont	0.60	6.54	2.59	9.02	1.44	41.53	41.33	31.22	<b>19.80</b>
Virginia	13.35	15.80	16.77	15.85	15.64	11.49	N/A	N/A	<b>15.07</b>
Washington	100	N/A	39.20	37.25	36.20	38.50	44.71	61.03	<b>39.73</b>
West Virginia	2.48	2.77	3.04	3.69	4.81	7.58	N/A	N/A	<b>3.80</b>
Wisconsin	8.93	14.30	18.83	13.99	17.29	13.06	25.82	100	<b>19.24</b>
Wyoming	1.79	11.54	0.0	8.20	20.0	37.50	N/A	N/A	<b>11.30</b>
<b>All States</b>	<b>19.75%</b>	<b>20.31%</b>	<b>20.68%</b>	<b>25.53%</b>	<b>28.32%</b>	<b>31.59%</b>	<b>33.88%</b>	<b>40.68%</b>	<b>24.18%</b>

**Table 16. Percent of Adoptions by Foster Parents by State and Year**

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	Average
Alabama	49.85%	44.18%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	0.0%	N/A	N/A	21.31%
Alaska	56.25	64.73	53.24	60.89	62.77	58.95	N/A	N/A	59.00
Arizona	36.00	24.46	42.32	42.91	30.62	N/A	23.95	24.24	34.14
Arkansas	51.17	44.11	56.35	52.00	61.64	60.08	7.81	0.0	51.01
California	50.81	47.55	46.15	47.77	52.00	58.13	52.82	56.23	49.91
Colorado	57.52	56.47	61.31	65.85	66.90	60.87	34.67	N/A	60.56
Connecticut	63.16	67.91	61.71	69.14	61.79	62.01	29.60	N/A	63.26
Delaware	72.28	57.89	69.23	66.99	60.61	80.65	45.45	2.78	59.41
DC	70.61	72.58	78.70	69.81	89.76	89.21	75.79	64.71	76.20
Florida	1.64	5.15	38.90	44.00	43.39	47.77	47.72	51.89	29.45
Georgia	73.40	74.57	74.19	72.94	75.73	71.67	58.68	24.14	72.39
Hawaii	47.80	47.67	47.31	44.16	51.43	39.86	61.97	45.45	47.55
Idaho	26.81	38.14	41.67	30.0	71.03	35.71	0.0	0.0	38.46
Illinois	99.63	99.81	99.93	99.89	99.90	98.99	98.70	97.11	99.46
Indiana	36.53	32.93	29.95	38.62	32.02	10.60	0.0	0.0	30.50
Iowa	69.03	67.80	71.41	75.78	82.72	86.48	92.49	30.56	69.79
Kansas	63.00	60.72	66.36	57.36	67.49	62.29	55.56	N/A	62.83
Kentucky	83.99	68.71	72.98	57.47	98.15	28.67	3.51	1.27	47.60
Louisiana	85.11	83.98	75.96	84.24	81.74	75.95	30.51	86.67	80.55
Maine	0.0	0.33	0.0	0.49	0.50	12.15	0.0	0.0	0.84
Maryland	56.95	53.30	56.44	62.57	68.24	69.39	76.78	35.14	60.03
Massachusetts	100	100	99.23	100	100	100	53.20	50.05	85.71
Michigan	54.20	53.99	56.50	54.08	59.28	54.90	N/A	N/A	55.45
Minnesota	20.03	27.64	32.28	31.92	27.80	30.30	31.56	4.55	21.05
Mississippi	0.0	0.0	65.04	73.96	58.65	57.65	58.65	66.67	47.12
Missouri	61.08	64.85	69.42	64.03	64.19	64.69	N/A	N/A	64.56
Montana	90.63	85.83	76.00	77.97	80.75	79.19	78.38	45.45	80.59
Nebraska	13.50	6.49	0.68	1.33	3.94	N/A	0.0	0.0	4.69
Nevada	65.42	66.40	80.25	62.34	66.94	N/A	N/A	N/A	68.33
New Hampshire	81.68	78.07	81.05	76.04	80.65	64.71	N/A	N/A	78.14
New Jersey	77.54	82.58	79.86	80.17	80.46	78.75	77.28	78.25	79.69
New Mexico	77.27	28.00	4.61	1.73	15.89	6.09	11.29	15.09	18.87
New York	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0
North Carolina	67.82	55.98	48.53	55.10	57.13	50.28	18.46	25.17	54.14
North Dakota	66.67	47.45	58.62	31.43	35.25	36.94	58.06	N/A	47.08
Ohio	62.67	67.52	36.64	66.93	68.83	N/A	N/A	N/A	56.29
Oregon	63.13	69.15	33.52	60.05	48.37	38.65	35.37	49.57	51.25
Pennsylvania	63.72	77.77	58.31	44.80	44.15	44.66	32.44	6.80	54.65
Puerto Rico	49.66	56.13	45.91	57.58	39.88	39.86	31.25	48.48	46.83
Rhode Island	66.03	53.54	62.92	59.92	47.24	53.21	14.86	15.84	46.71
South Carolina	43.57	67.44	67.45	57.03	50.0	58.06	N/A	N/A	57.50
South Dakota	68.75	73.10	69.07	62.77	70.24	45.45	N/A	N/A	67.04
Tennessee	77.36	74.62	73.68	76.57	56.54	65.28	47.21	59.94	70.42
Texas	48.06	50.24	48.92	70.48	58.52	65.67	66.67	0.0	56.04
Utah	74.60	65.61	59.89	47.19	50.68	50.90	49.06	71.43	58.28
Vermont	79.04	81.70	73.28	73.77	84.89	55.08	53.57	45.50	64.22
Virginia	80.90	77.59	77.37	77.68	64.72	82.55	N/A	N/A	76.98
Washington	100	100	58.55	60.74	62.18	60.25	53.47	38.97	67.48
West Virginia	73.60	78.67	81.77	80.11	83.01	74.41	N/A	N/A	78.91
Wisconsin	76.66	73.54	68.83	73.51	71.81	75.89	28.19	100	71.75
Wyoming	78.57	73.08	76.09	77.05	68.89	53.13	N/A	N/A	72.60
<b>All States</b>	<b>59.48%</b>	<b>57.84%</b>	<b>56.63%</b>	<b>56.85%</b>	<b>58.03%</b>	<b>55.23%</b>	<b>40.90%</b>	<b>36.53%</b>	<b>55.23%</b>

**Table 17. Percent of Adoptions by Kin by State and Year**

	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	Average
Alabama	2.13 %	0.0 %	3.36 %	1.98 %	3.92%	0.0 %	N/A	N/A	1.94 %
Alaska	40.38	37.05	46.76	40.59	40.15	40.0	N/A	N/A	41.26
Arizona	30.87	33.67	40.72	37.51	26.41	N/A	16.81	15.15	31.74
Arkansas	7.53	6.73	11.33	19.38	16.04	10.08	35.94	84.13	14.77
California	44.40	46.94	46.21	43.13	34.35	34.30	28.08	26.05	41.20
Colorado	30.86	31.77	28.03	23.59	23.14	23.65	5.33	N/A	27.07
Connecticut	11.70	13.29	13.06	18.64	18.86	23.14	7.20	N/A	15.46
Delaware	11.88	14.29	5.98	6.80	12.12	3.23	4.55	13.89	9.64
DC	28.51	27.02	20.0	21.38	2.41	2.16	0.0	0.0	17.38
Florida	1.02	5.48	25.57	19.83	14.32	8.65	0.66	N/A	10.67
Georgia	12.05	10.48	7.79	9.65	8.33	6.67	2.07	2.59	8.93
Hawaii	53.14	50.96	51.92	55.84	46.79	58.13	47.71	54.55	52.36
Idaho	31.88	21.19	21.97	10.0	1.87	28.57	16.67	0.0	17.90
Illinois	0.37	0.19	0.07	0.09	0.10	0.99	1.04	1.96	0.45
Indiana	14.98	19.35	17.88	15.43	10.54	6.39	0.0	0.0	14.30
Iowa	0.27	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.13	0.0	0.0	2.91	0.42
Kansas	27.47	26.11	20.56	27.08	16.78	15.75	15.87	N/A	22.25
Kentucky	0.49	0.18	1.58	0.76	95.24	1.59	16.26	17.52	6.73
Louisiana	10.26	9.24	7.02	4.20	2.81	1.27	0.0	6.67	6.28
Maine	9.18	15.03	5.49	10.05	3.00	3.74	0.0	0.0	7.64
Maryland	39.92	45.74	40.74	33.15	25.84	21.59	16.20	4.86	33.68
Massachusetts	0.68	0.87	0.77	0.58	0.22	0.0	26.37	25.12	7.91
Michigan	38.52	37.13	33.60	36.85	30.70	32.70	N/A	N/A	35.04
Minnesota	24.69	24.44	25.75	24.76	29.70	32.87	25.91	6.50	20.47
Mississippi	3.85	0.0	1.13	0.35	2.53	7.65	5.83	1.85	2.42
Missouri	28.80	23.54	21.32	23.16	22.85	17.81	N/A	N/A	23.57
Montana	8.04	12.15	22.91	19.49	17.11	20.81	11.49	9.09	16.01
Nebraska	2.55	5.84	2.40	4.33	1.79	N/A	0.0	0.0	3.17
Nevada	22.71	21.34	13.58	18.18	4.96	N/A	N/A	N/A	17.67
New Hampshire	9.92	7.89	3.16	15.63	11.29	15.69	N/A	N/A	10.02
New Jersey	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Mexico	21.36	26.91	33.06	32.28	31.40	28.93	48.39	36.79	30.64
New York	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0
North Carolina	13.58	21.44	24.11	18.97	15.31	16.95	13.08	3.50	18.19
North Dakota	1.67	0.0	0.0	2.86	2.88	7.21	0.0	N/A	2.16
Ohio	22.52	16.38	9.15	17.54	9.33	N/A	N/A	N/A	14.89
Oregon	35.57	37.40	36.69	32.97	32.16	31.43	15.65	14.32	31.86
Pennsylvania	4.52	5.15	4.92	5.72	4.06	2.44	6.49	1.36	4.62
Puerto Rico	17.61	11.27	23.74	16.45	31.60	31.32	40.87	18.18	22.95
Rhode Island	28.24	35.83	29.21	31.91	38.62	37.16	0.0	0.0	25.10
South Carolina	27.50	0.29	1.04	0.0	5.70	5.38	N/A	N/A	5.77
South Dakota	9.72	10.34	20.62	14.89	9.52	12.73	N/A	N/A	12.60
Tennessee	7.55	8.57	7.43	2.78	3.93	2.67	1.52	1.73	5.79
Texas	26.41	25.42	24.25	18.58	19.62	13.48	0.0	0.0	21.87
Utah	9.65	8.38	7.45	5.61	5.69	5.09	3.14	5.44	6.60
Vermont	20.36	11.76	24.14	9.84	13.67	3.39	2.55	5.03	10.01
Virginia	5.34	6.37	5.45	5.58	3.99	5.96	N/A	N/A	5.47
Washington	100	N/A	0.08	0.26	0.19	0.11	0.15	0.0	0.35
West Virginia	23.91	18.56	15.19	15.63	12.18	18.01	N/A	N/A	17.19
Wisconsin	14.41	12.06	12.33	12.50	10.90	11.04	5.64	100	12.53
Wyoming	16.07	15.38	23.91	13.11	11.11	12.50	N/A	N/A	15.41
<b>All States</b>	<b>18.73 %</b>	<b>16.39 %</b>	<b>16.54 %</b>	<b>15.68 %</b>	<b>15.41%</b>	<b>14.11 %</b>	<b>10.81%</b>	<b>13.91%</b>	<b>15.34 %</b>



**Table 18. Percent of Adoptions by Step-Parents by State and Year**

State	2003	2002	2001	2000	1999	1998	1997	1996	Average
Alabama	0.30 %	0.0 %	0.0%	0.0 %	0.0 %	0.0 %	N/A	N/A	0.08 %
Alaska	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Arizona	0.0	0.0	0.11	0.12	0.26	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.08
Arkansas	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	1.56	6.35	0.24
California	0.12	0.06	0.04	0.02	0.05	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.05
Colorado	0.20	0.11	0.33	0.0	0.42	0.52	0.0	N/A	0.24
Connecticut	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.80	N/A	0.79
Delaware	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
DC	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.63	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.14
Florida	0.0	0.05	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.01
Georgia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Hawaii	0.31	0.27	0.0	0.36	0.36	0.35	0.0	0.0	0.26
Idaho	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	16.67	0.0	0.44
Illinois	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Indiana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Iowa	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	41.65	4.92
Kansas	0.18	0.0	0.47	0.0	0.18	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.14
Kentucky	0.0	0.0	2.28	0.25	88.89	0.79	44.68	44.90	15.88
Louisiana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maine	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Maryland	0.0	0.11	0.37	0.0	0.34	0.0	0.0	4.32	0.30
Massachusetts	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0
Michigan	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Minnesota	0.31	0.32	0.35	0.16	0.16	0.0	0.0	41.67	12.95
Mississippi	0.0	0.0	3.76	0.0	2.11	2.35	0.97	3.70	1.44
Missouri	0.36	0.45	0.45	0.55	0.35	0.47	N/A	N/A	0.44
Montana	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.53	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.07
Nebraska	0.36	0.97	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0	0.0	0.25
Nevada	0.0	0.40	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.09
New Hampshire	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
New Jersey	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
New Mexico	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
New York	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0
North Carolina	0.11	0.11	0.15	0.20	0.28	1.14	0.61	0.0	0.28
North Dakota	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	0.0
Ohio	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	N/A	0.0
Oregon	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
Pennsylvania	0.05	0.0	0.0	0.06	0.07	0.26	0.0	0.0	0.06
Puerto Rico	6.77	7.84	16.34	5.19	5.83	4.98	11.06	14.14	8.26
Rhode Island	0.0	0.0	0.37	0.0	0.0	0.0	10.29	9.09	2.42
South Carolina	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
South Dakota	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Tennessee	0.10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.29	0.05
Texas	0.28	0.09	0.17	0.15	0.15	0.31	0.0	0.0	0.19
Utah	0.64	0.58	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.30	0.0	0.0	0.22
Vermont	0.0	0.0	0.0	7.38	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.65
Virginia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
Washington	N/A	N/A	2.16	3.33	3.25	2.85	2.87	0.0	2.76
West Virginia	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.57	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.10
Wisconsin	0.0	0.10	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	40.36	N/A	4.82
Wyoming	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	N/A	N/A	0.0
<b>All States</b>	<b>0.20 %</b>	<b>0.23 %</b>	<b>0.54 %</b>	<b>0.37 %</b>	<b>2.02 %</b>	<b>0.30 %</b>	<b>3.84 %</b>	<b>5.54 %</b>	<b>1.15 %</b>

**Modifications to the Public Use AFCARS Adoption Data**

The following corrections were made:

*Monthly Amount of Adoption Assistance Subsidy*

New York's subsidy data included only observations of "0" or "1"; we treated these as missing. South Dakota and New Mexico (802 records) were inconsistent with other years' data and treated as missing. Values for Nevada (1040 records) and Mississippi (958 records) were divided by 100. For Rhode Island, 1998 and 1999 values were multiplied by 10. For Alaska and Georgia values were divided by 10 if greater than \$2,000. All subsidy values greater than \$10,000 were divided by 100 (331 records). Subsidy amounts for California (706 records), Illinois (239 records), Ohio (1,995 records), and other states (2,031 records) were divided by 12 if the recorded amount was greater than \$2,000 and evenly divisible by 12.

*Race*

Due to the differences in race coding in 1995-1999 and 2000-present data we recoded to create a uniform child and adoptive parent race variable. The variable "of color" equals 1 for non-white and Hispanic children and 0 otherwise. Arizona reversed coding for White, non-Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islander in 1999-2000. In 1999 Indiana reversed coding for Hispanic and non-Hispanic.

*Special Needs Basis*

Arkansas (63 records), Connecticut (1700 records), Delaware (22 records), Idaho (32 records), Maine (44 records), Nevada (101 records), and New Mexico (455 records) reported only one value for special needs basis in some years; we