

# What A Child Needs

## OBJECTIVES:

1. Identify the costs of raising a child to adulthood.
2. Examine the personal financial responsibilities of parenting one's children.

## HANDOUTS:

1. *What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?*
2. *The Cost of Raising a Child*
3. *Take Home Message for This Session*

## ITEMS NEEDED FOR THIS EDUCATIONAL SESSION:

- Handout materials for participant workbooks
- Slide, handout or poster ***What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?***
- Calculators for the participants
- Scrapbooking materials
- A small notebook and pen for each participant to keep
- Flipchart and markers



**GETTING STARTED**

Have participants look at the scrapbook activity they did in the session on co-parenting (Module 2, session 4) titled **My Hopes and Dreams for my Children**. Give them a few minutes to review what they had done earlier and to add to or change the workbook page. Once they have done this, ask them to introduce themselves to the group if necessary and to describe one hope and dream they have for their children.

If participants have not completed this activity, have them do so before proceeding with the lesson.

*You just had an opportunity to think again about the hopes and dreams you have for your child or children. Some of you added to your hopes and dreams; some of you were reminded of what you hope for your child or children. Today we are going to talk about the kinds of things your children need to make your dreams come true for them. We are going to talk about what it costs to raise a child plus the other things they need.*

**ACTIVITY:  
What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?**

An important part of being a parent is making sure that your child has their needs met for food, shelter, clothing, education and other resources. We all know it takes money to meet these needs.

In teams of two, complete the handout on **What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?**

Let's see what the experts say about what it costs. Every year the U.S. Department of Agriculture issues a report of what it costs to raise a child. Here is what they say (Show a slide, handout or poster with this information).

Discuss:

- How close were your amounts to the USDA amounts? Were yours higher or lower? Why did you select the amounts you did?
- Were you surprised by any of the categories or kinds of expenses? Did you see any categories as unimportant and not needed? Are other categories more important?
- Were you surprised by the amounts each year? For the full 18 years? Did you think it was lower than this amount? Did you think it was higher?

**ACTIVITY:  
What Families Spend on Children Each Year**

Since 1960, the USDA has made estimates of what families spend on children from birth to age 17. We currently have estimates from 2005 for families headed by two parents and by one parent. They also use family income and the age of the child to determine what it costs.

We've tried to keep it fairly simple for you to see what families spend based on the family type, family income, and age of children.

Age of Child	Annual Cost Single-Parent Household	Annual Cost Husband/Wife Household
Birth to 2 yrs.	\$6,080	\$7,300
3 to 5 yrs.	\$6,880	\$7,480
6 to 8 yrs.	\$7,720	\$7,510
9 to 11 yrs.	\$7,140	\$7,480
12 to 14 yrs.	\$7,650	\$8,310
15 to 17 yrs.	\$8,440	\$8,290

This looks like a lot of money. Think about all of the things that children need: diapers, clothing, school supplies, food, and many other necessities. These things add up over time.

You want to be sure, no matter what your relationship is, that both parents are helping to pay for these expenses and are focused on meeting your child(ren)'s needs. Everyone can agree that children need their parents' love to thrive.

Discussion:

- Are you surprised by the amount of money it takes each year to support a child?
- Do you think you spend more or less for your child or children? Why do you spend more? Why do you spend less?

### **ACTIVITY:** **Tracking your Spending on your Child or Children**

Between now and the next session write down all the ways that you financially support your child or children. Also, make note of needs that your children have that you were unable to meet at this time. The purpose of this activity is to give you an idea of the real costs of raising a child to adulthood.

### **ACTIVITY:** **Workbook Page and Homework**

Have participants prepare a scrapbook page that depicts the needs of children that parents are responsible to meet. Encourage them to think of these needs in terms of their hopes and dreams for their children.

Give participant the take-home message for this session and have them write down their action steps on the take-home

message. Remind them to place the take-home message in the magnetic frame.

### **CLOSING:**

In this lesson we discussed the financial cost of raising your children to become healthy adults. You learned how important it is for parents to have adequate money to support their child to adulthood. This is a topic that is often very difficult for people to discuss, and we thank you for working on this important issue today.

### **SOURCES**

Bankrate.com. (2006). **What is the cost of raising a child? Calculator.** Available at URL: [www.bankrate.com/brm/calc/raiseChild.asp](http://www.bankrate.com/brm/calc/raiseChild.asp)

U.S. Department of Agriculture. (2006). **Expenditures on Children by Families, 2005.** Report No. 1528-2005. Available at URL: [www.usda.gov/cnpp/Crc/crc2005.pdf](http://www.usda.gov/cnpp/Crc/crc2005.pdf)



# What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?

For each category below, decide how much you spend to meet your child's needs. Then, using the calculator, add up the amount for the full 18 years.

Expense	Starting Age	Ending Age	Amount Spent Each Year
Child Care	Birth	12 Years	
Food	Birth	18 Years	
Clothing	Birth	18 Years	
Gift Giving	Birth	18 Years	
Bigger Home	Birth	18 Years	
Bigger Car	5 Years	18 Years	
Education	5 Years	18 Years	
Recreation	Birth	18 Years	
Additional Insurance	Birth	18 Years	
Health Care	Birth	18 Years	
Miscellaneous	Birth	18 Years	

# What Does it Cost to Raise a Child?

For each category below, decide how much you spend to meet your child's needs. Then, using the calculator, add up the amount for the full 18 years.

Expense	Starting Age	Ending Age	Amount Spent Each Year
Child Care	Birth	12 Years	\$4,300
Food	Birth	18 Years	\$1,525
Clothing	Birth	18 Years	\$606
Gift Giving	Birth	18 Years	\$330
Bigger Home	Birth	18 Years	\$2,900
Bigger Car	5 Years	18 Years	\$1,250
Education	5 Years	18 Years	\$600
Recreation	Birth	18 Years	\$330
Additional Insurance	Birth	18 Years	\$300
Health Care	Birth	18 Years	\$300
Miscellaneous	Birth	18 Years	\$330

**Grand total for 18 years = \$194,838.00**

# Take Home Message for This Session

**Directions:** Think of one step you will take before the next session and write it down in the space provided. In addition, write down the time, date, and location of the next session.

**I pay attention  
to my  
children's needs.**

My Action Steps:

.....  
.....

The Next Session:

.....  
DATE

.....  
TIME

.....  
LOCATION

