



Child Welfare Information Gateway

PROTECTING CHILDREN ■ STRENGTHENING FAMILIES

How Many Children Were Adopted in 2000 and 2001?

August 2004

U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Administration for Children and Families
Administration on Children, Youth and Families
Children's Bureau



Child Welfare Information Gateway
Children's Bureau/ACYF
1250 Maryland Avenue, SW
Eighth Floor
Washington, DC 20024
703.385.7565 or 800.394.3366
Email: info@childwelfare.gov
www.childwelfare.gov

Prepared under Contract GS-23F-8062H with the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

Suggested citation: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (2004). *How many children were adopted in 2000 and 2001?* Washington, DC: Child Welfare Information Gateway.

This report is available at www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/s_adopted/index.cfm.

Acknowledgments

The Children's Bureau and its Child Welfare Information Gateway (Information Gateway) are grateful to the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) for its important work in verifying adoption information from courts, bureaus of vital records, Native American Tribes, and private adoption agencies. Project staff from NCSC include Victor E. Flango, Vice President; Carol R. Flango, Director of Knowledge and Information Services; Ann L. Keith, Research Associate; and Mary C. McFarland, Information Analyst.

Information Gateway also wishes to acknowledge the Office of Immigration Statistics, Department of Homeland Security, for providing information on destination States of children with immigrant visas, as well as the hundreds of contacts in each of the States who assisted in the verification of adoption information.

Finally, Information Gateway recognizes Penelope Maza, Ph.D., of the Children's Bureau, for her thoughtful, comprehensive review and comments on multiple drafts of this report.

Table of Contents

HIGHLIGHTS	1
FINDINGS: CHILDREN ADOPTED	3
Total Adoptions.....	3
Adoptions by Source	9
FINDINGS: DATA SOURCES	15
History of Data Sources	15
Potential Data Sources.....	16
METHODOLOGY	19
CONCLUSION	20
EXHIBITS	
Exhibit 1: Percentages of Adoptions by Type, 1992 and 2001	2
Exhibit 2: Total Adoptions	3
Exhibit 3: Total Adoptions by Data Source, 2000.....	4
Exhibit 4: Total Adoptions by Data Source, 2001.....	5
Exhibit 5: Total Adoptions by State, 2000 and 2001	8
Exhibit 6: Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions, FY 2000.....	10
Exhibit 7: Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions, FY 2001.....	11
Exhibit 8: Percent of Total Adoptions That Were Public Agency Adoptions, Selected Years, 1987 – 2001	12
Exhibit 9: Intercountry Adoptions, 2000 and 2001.....	14
REFERENCES	21
APPENDIXES	
Appendix A: Total Adoptions for 1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 2000, and 2001.....	23
Appendix B: Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions, 2000 and 2001.....	25
Appendix C: Adoption and Dependency Filings, 2001	27

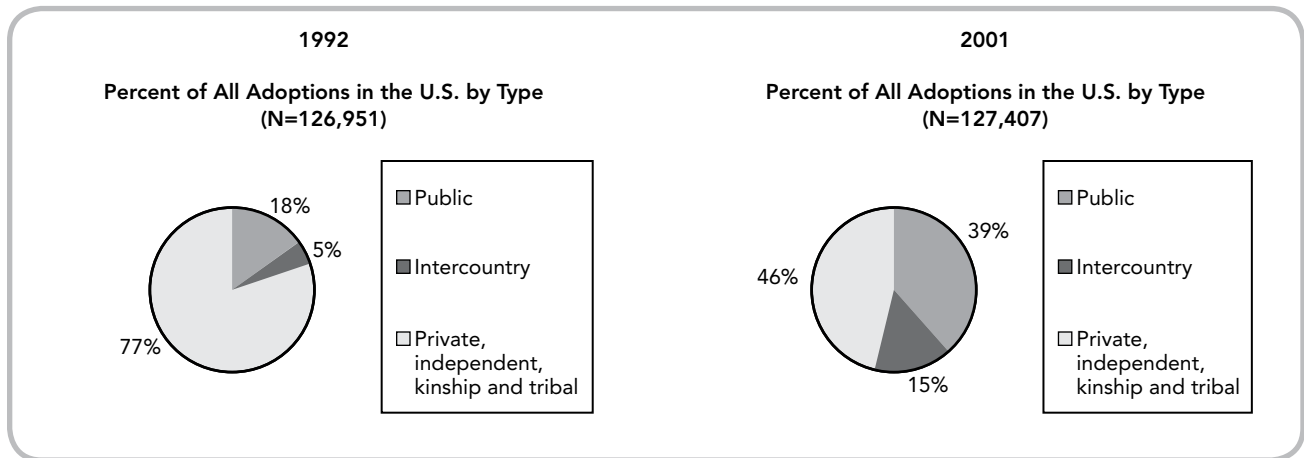
Highlights

The purpose of this report is to estimate the number of children adopted in each of the States for 2000 and 2001 and to use these numbers to estimate the composition and trends of all adoptions in the United States. Key findings are summarized below.

- **In 2000 and 2001, about 127,000 children were adopted annually in the United States.** Since 1987, the number of adoptions annually has remained relatively constant, ranging from 118,000 to 127,000.
- **The source of adoptions is no longer dominated by kinship adoptions and private agency adoptions.** Public agency and intercountry adoptions now account for more than half of all adoptions.
- **Adoptions through publicly funded child welfare agencies accounted for two-fifths of all adoptions.** More than 50,000 public agency adoptions in each year (2000 and 2001) accounted for about 40 percent of adoptions, up from 18 percent in 1992 for those 36 States that reported public agency adoptions in 1992 (Flango & Flango, 1995).
- **Intercountry adoptions accounted for more than 15 percent of all adoptions.** Intercountry adoptions increased from 5 percent to 15 percent of adoptions in the United States between 1992 and 2001 (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).
- **The other two-fifths of adoptions are primarily private agency, kinship, or tribal adoptions.** With the available data, it is not possible to separate figures within this group, although the percentages of all adoptions in that group as a whole have decreased. In 1992, for example, stepparent adoptions (a form of kinship adoption) alone accounted for two-fifths (42 percent) of all adoptions.

No one agency is charged with collecting data on adoptions. The National Center for State Courts' (NCSC's) Court Statistics Project collects data by calendar year (which most States use) and State fiscal years for the total number of adoptions processed through courts. NCSC's figures are incomplete, however, for several reasons. Some parents who adopt in foreign countries choose not to file in a U.S. court. While all domestic adoptions are finalized in U.S. courts, adoptions are such a small percentage of court caseloads that they are sometimes included

Exhibit 1
Percentages of Adoptions by Type, 1992 and 2001



in a larger category, such as “other civil petitions,” and cannot be separated from other civil petitions.

Three other sources of adoption information provide numbers of adoptions by type: the Federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS), the State Department, and the Office of Immigration Statistics within the Department of Homeland Security. AFCARS provides data on adoptions through public agencies, and the State Department and the Office of Immigration Statistics provide the number of visas issued for intercountry adoption. There is no overlap between the AFCARS data and the data provided by the Department of State and the Department of Homeland Security. Other data sources are inconsistent in terms of reporting period and population reported and are not mutually exclusive.

The number of adoptions in the third category—private agency, kinship, or tribal—can be approximated by subtracting the AFCARS and intercountry adoption numbers from the total adoptions reported by courts. The result is an approximation, but any difference due to gaps and overlap among counts from the three types is probably only slight.

To access a copy of these *Highlights*, go to www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/s_adoptedhighlights.cfm.

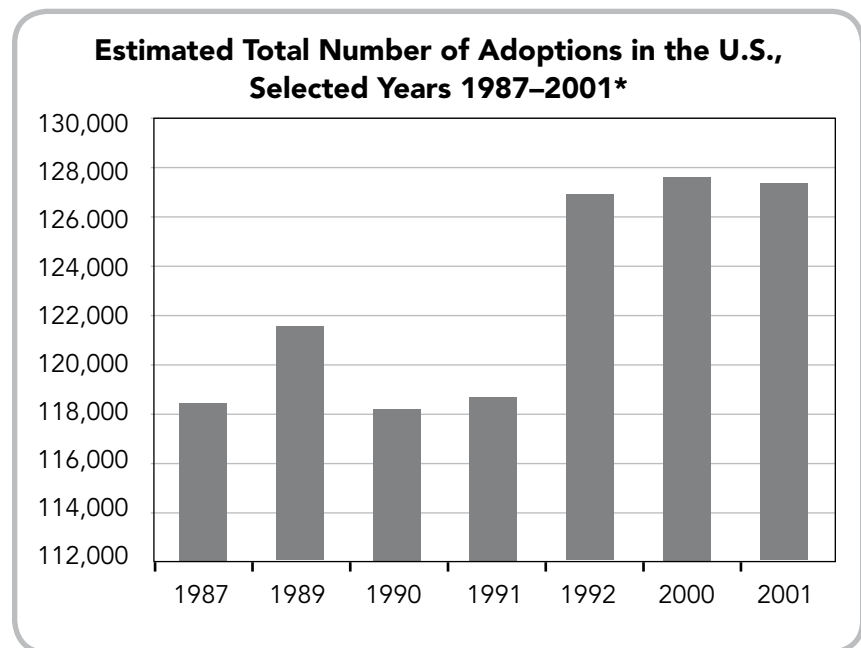
**Findings:
Children
Adopted**

Total Adoptions

The total number of adoptions remained relatively constant from 1987 to 2001. As is shown in Exhibit 2, the total number for selected years has ranged from a low of 118,138 in 1990 (Flango & Flango, 1995) to a high of 127,630 in 2000. The number of adoptions in each State for each year is shown in the table in Appendix A.

Exhibits 3 and 4 show the number of adoptions in each State for the years 2000 and 2001. Exhibit 3 shows a total of 127,630 adoptions in 2000, and Exhibit 4 shows a total of 127,407 adoptions in 2001. Such small changes could easily be attributed to variations in the method of reporting.

**Exhibit 2
Total Adoptions**



*Source for the 1987-1992 data is Flango and Flango, 1995.

Exhibit 3
Total Adoptions by Data Source, 2000

State	Courts	Vital Records	Special Studies	Total
Alabama		2,009		2,009
Alaska	634			634
Arizona	1,736			1,736
Arkansas	1,907			1,907
California			7,943	9,054
Colorado	2,895			2,895
Connecticut	1,210			1,210
Delaware	222			222
District of Columbia	492			492
Florida		8,088		8,088
Georgia				3,499*
Hawaii	626			626
Idaho	998	787		998
Illinois	6,921			6,921
Indiana	3,486			3,486
Iowa			1,116	1,116
Kansas	2,025	1,901		2,025
Kentucky	2,265	1,709		2,265
Louisiana	1,553			1,553
Maine				957*
Maryland	4,161	1,873		4,161
Massachusetts	2,697			2,697
Michigan	6,190			6,190
Minnesota	1,622			1,622
Mississippi	866	1,378		866
Missouri	2,554			2,554
Montana	608			608
Nebraska	920	314		920
Nevada	827	746		827
New Hampshire	690			690
New Jersey	2,294			2,294
New Mexico	723			723
New York	10,821			10,821
North Carolina				2,710
North Dakota	283		337	337
Ohio	5,693	1,159		5,693
Oklahoma	1,533			1,533
Oregon	2,064	1,787		2,064
Pennsylvania	4,458			4,458
Rhode Island	600			600

State	Courts	Vital Records	Special Studies	Total
South Carolina		1,237		1,237
South Dakota	432	132		432
Tennessee	2,528	2,875		2,528
Texas		8,329		8,329
Utah	1,599	450		1,599
Vermont	393			393
Virginia			2,218	2,218
Washington	3,025			3,025
West Virginia	921			921
Wisconsin	2,475			2,475
Wyoming	412	450		412
Total				127,630

*Estimates.

Exhibit 4 Total Adoptions by Data Source, 2001

State	Courts	Vital Records	Special Studies	Total
Alabama		1,857		1,857
Alaska	616			616
Arizona	1,642			1,642
Arkansas	1,698			1,698
California			9,202	9,202
Colorado	2,877			2,877
Connecticut	1,164			1,164
Delaware	225			225
District of Columbia	548			548
Florida		8,435		8,435
Georgia				3,499*
Hawaii	766			766
Idaho	1,048	748		1,048
Illinois	6,673			6,673
Indiana	3,588			3,588
Iowa			1,116	1,116
Kansas	1,880	1,671		1,880
Kentucky	2,086	1,850		2,086
Louisiana	1,391			1,391
Maine				957*
Maryland	4,384	2,349		4,384
Massachusetts	3,259			3,259

State	Courts	Vital Records	Special Studies	Total
Michigan	6,274			6,274
Minnesota	2,094			2,094
Mississippi	866	1,170		866
Missouri	2,554			2,554
Montana	600			600
Nebraska	939	232		939
Nevada	764	835		764
New Hampshire	630			630
New Jersey	2,384			2,384
New Mexico	680			680
New York	10,209			10,209
North Carolina				2,328*
North Dakota	295		368	368
Ohio	5,564	1,999		5,564
Oklahoma	1,533			1,533
Oregon	2,029	2,213		2,029
Pennsylvania	4,748			4,748
Rhode Island	617			617
South Carolina		1,648		1,648
South Dakota	399	89		399
Tennessee	2,633	3,010		2,633
Texas		7,957		7,957
Utah	1,387	396		1,387
Vermont	407			407
Virginia			2,301	2,301
Washington	2,748			2,748
West Virginia	908			908
Wisconsin	2,515			2,515
Wyoming	412	396		412
Total				127,407

*Estimates

The numbers of adoptions shown in Exhibits 3 and 4 were reported by three possible sources:

- Courts
- Bureaus of vital records
- Special studies.

The final column, Total, shows the data from the "best" source. Where data were reported by multiple sources for a State, the

project team selected the most reliable source according to the following hierarchy (from best to worst): special study, court, and bureau of vital records.

Adoption figures from special studies were the best sources of information in North Dakota (North Dakota Department of Human Services, 2003) and Virginia (L. Lewis, Virginia Department of Social Services, personal communication, June 27, 2003). A study in Iowa (C. Carey, Iowa Department of Human Services, personal communication, 2004) produced adoption figures for 2001 only, and these were used as the best estimate of adoptions in 2000. Total adoption figures for California were derived from a similar special study for 2001 (California Department of Social Services, 2003).

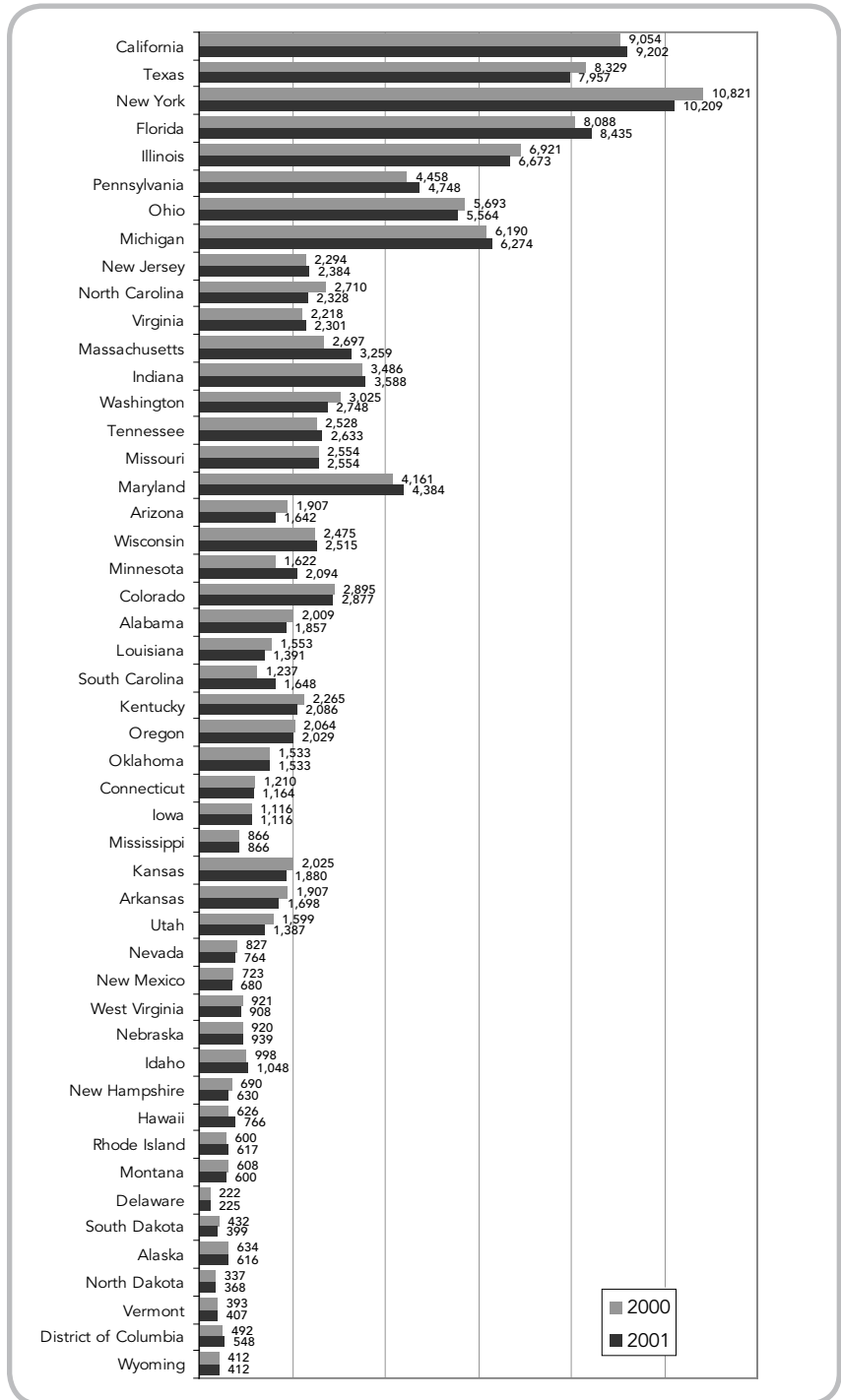
The State total was obtained from AFCARS in only two situations: (1) California in 2000 reported more adoptions in AFCARS than were reported in a special study, so the AFCARS figure is used in Exhibit 3, and (2) North Carolina included in its AFCARS reports not only public agency adoptions but also private agency and birth parent adoptions,¹ so its AFCARS report is probably the most reliable source of total adoptions for that State.²

The total number of adoptions in each State is related to the population size of the State, as is shown in Exhibit 5. States are arranged in order of population as reported in the 2000 census; California is at the top of the chart, and Wyoming is at the bottom. As shown in Exhibit 5, in some States, the number of adoptions is higher or lower than might be expected based upon the State's population size. For example, New York, Michigan, Maryland, Colorado, Oregon, and Kansas seem to have more adoptions, and States like Texas and Pennsylvania fewer adoptions, than would be expected if adoptions were correlated to population size alone. The factors that contribute to these exceptions need further exploration.

¹ "Birth parent adoptions" refer to those arranged independently directly between birth parents and adoptive parents without agency involvement.

² Only 11 birth parent adoptions were reported in 2001, however, so birth parent adoptions for the year 2000 were used to estimate the total adoptions in North Carolina in 2001.

Exhibit 5
Total Adoptions by State, 2000* and 2001*
(States in Population Order)



* Does not include States where totals are estimated: Georgia and Maine.

Adoptions by Source

Public Agency Adoptions

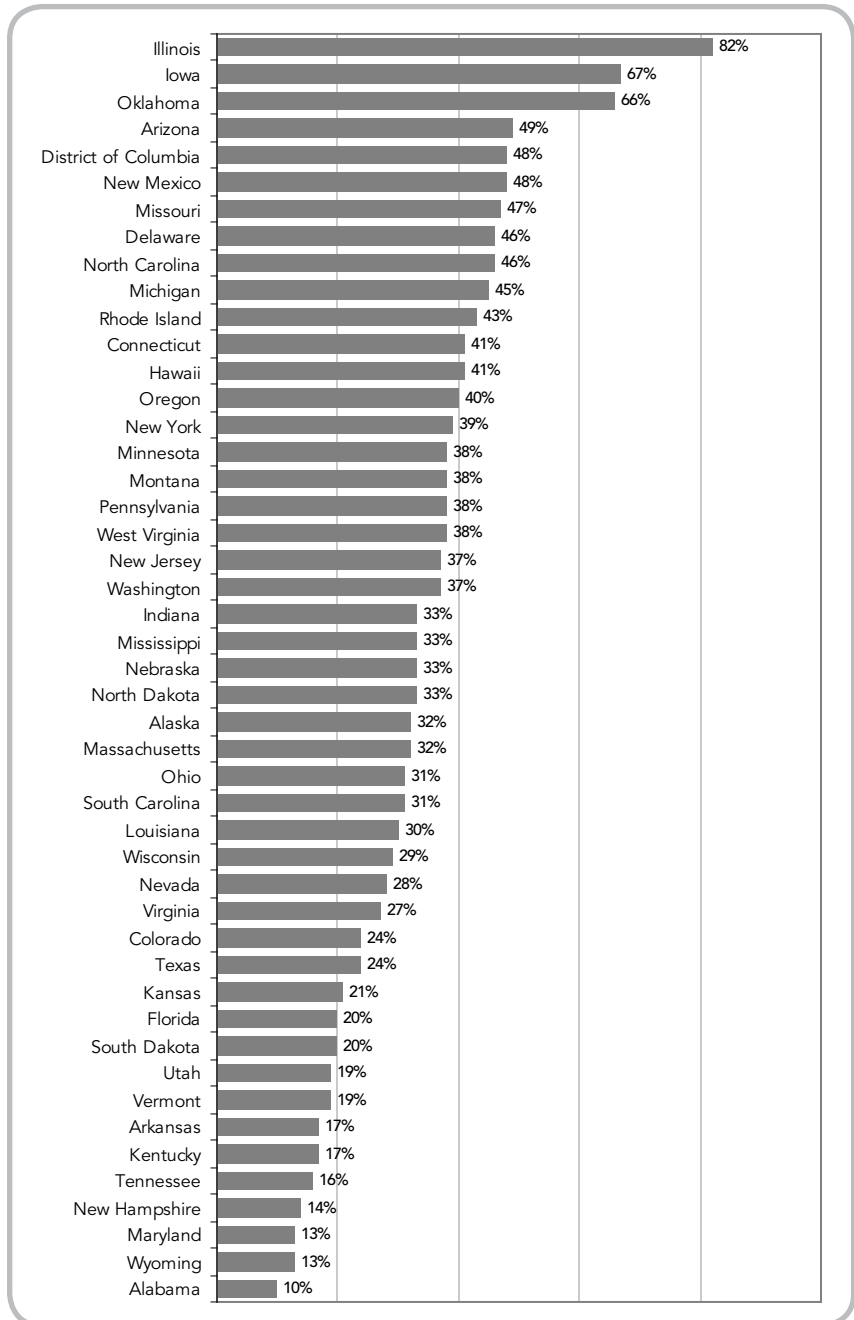
AFCARS reported 54,627 adoptions in the United States during fiscal year 2000³ and 50,136 adoptions in fiscal year 2001.⁴ Exhibits 6 and 7 show the percentage of total adoptions through publicly funded child welfare agencies in 2000 and 2001 by State. The States are arranged from highest percentage to lowest percentage. The actual numbers of adoptions reported by States are shown in a table in Appendix B.

The median, or middle case, was 33 percent in 2000 and 32 percent in 2001. This percentage is much higher than the median of 16 percent found in National Center for State Courts studies conducted in the late 1980s and early 1990s (Flango & Flango, 1995). In Illinois, Oklahoma, Iowa, and Arizona, in both 2000 and 2001, the public agency adoptions comprised the largest share of all adoptions. More than half of all adoptions in these States were public agency adoptions. Of all States, Alabama and Wyoming had the smallest percentage of public agency adoptions. Exhibit 8 presents the percentages of total adoptions that were public agency adoptions for selected years between 1987 and 2001.

³ This number includes private agency, independent, and tribal adoptions with public agency involvement that were reported to AFCARS.

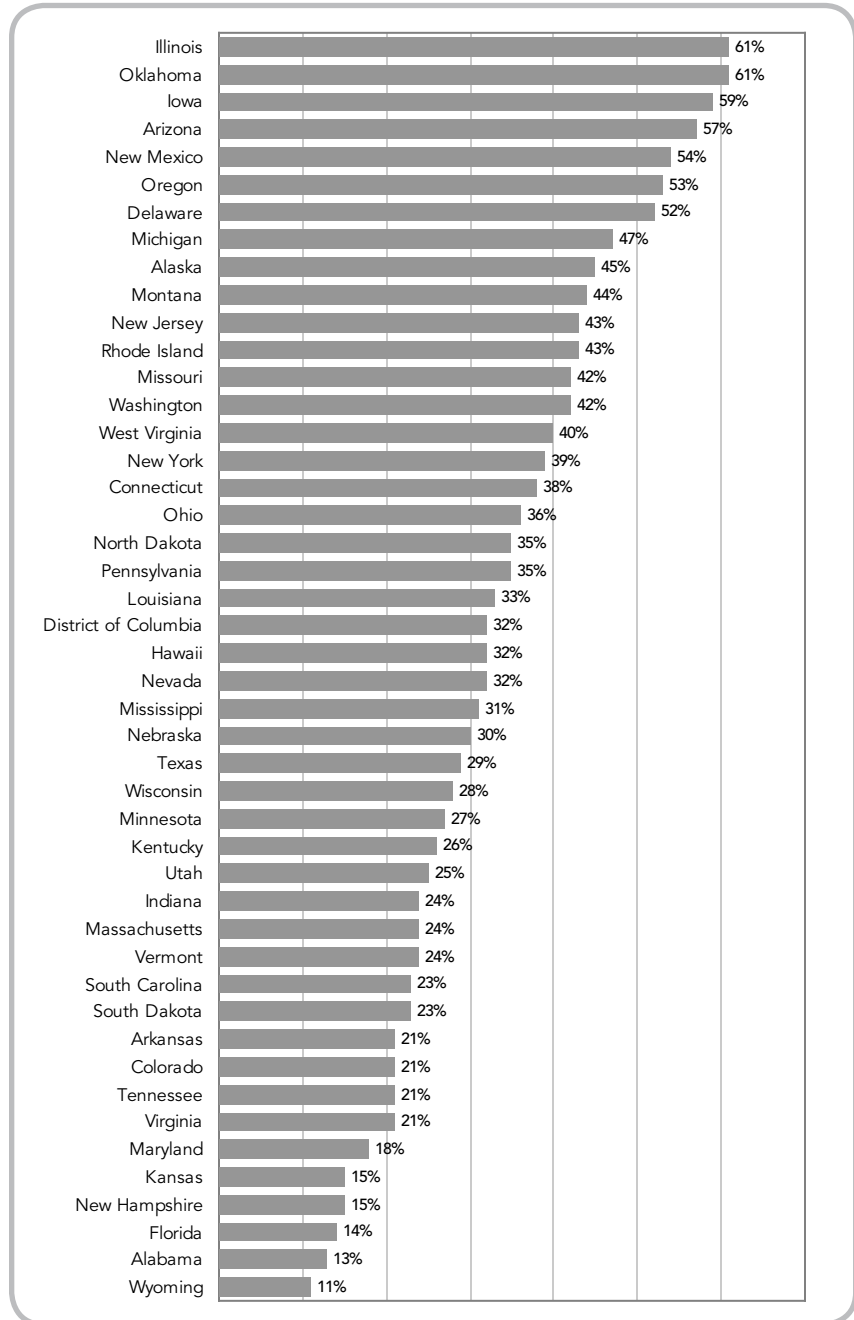
⁴ Adoption information in AFCARS is updated continually based on new reports submitted by the States. The data in this report were those available on May 15, 2003.

Exhibit 6
Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions,
FY 2000



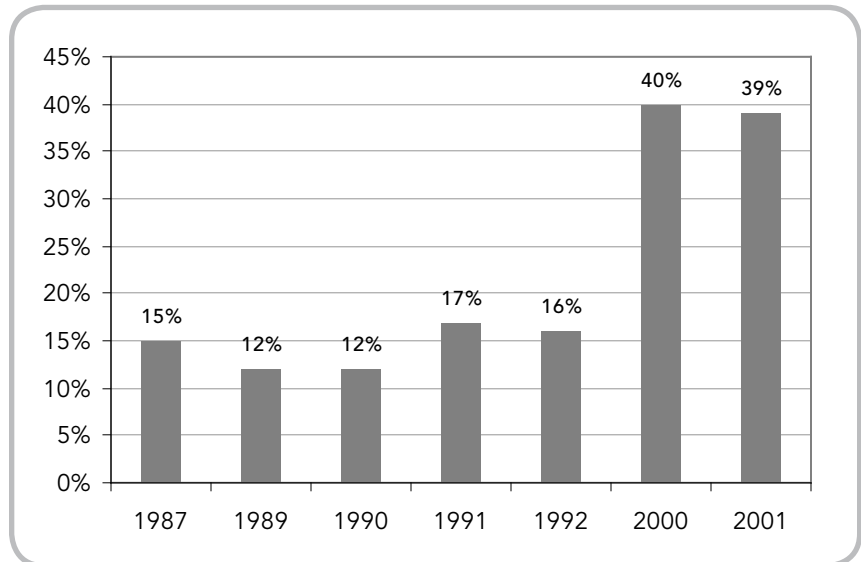
Note: Georgia and Maine are not included because totals are estimated. California is not included because complete data on nonpublic adoptions are not available.

Exhibit 7
Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions,
FY 2001



Note: Georgia, North Carolina, and Maine are not included because totals are estimated. California is not included because data on nonpublic adoptions are not available.

Exhibit 8
Percent of Total Adoptions That Were Public Agency
Selected Years, 1987 – 2001
(Caliber Associates, 1998; Tatara, 1993)



Data from 1987-1992 came from VCIS reports; data from 2000-2001 came from AFCARS reports.

Intercountry Adoptions

There are two sources for information on intercountry adoptions. The State Department's Office of Children's Issues reports the number of immigrant visas issued to orphans to enter the United States. In 2000, the State Department issued 17,718 visas; in 2001, 19,237 visas were issued (U.S. Department of State, n.d.).

The other source of information is the Office of Immigration Statistics within the Department of Homeland Security, which reports on how many orphans actually enter the United States. In 2000, 18,120 orphans entered the country, while the figure for 2001 was 19,087 (Office of Immigration Statistics, n.d.).⁵

The Office of Immigration Statistics also reports information on the State of residence of all immigrant orphan children. Exhibit 9 shows that intercountry adoptions roughly follow the domestic pattern, in that States with larger populations have more adoptions than States with smaller populations. Some States, such as

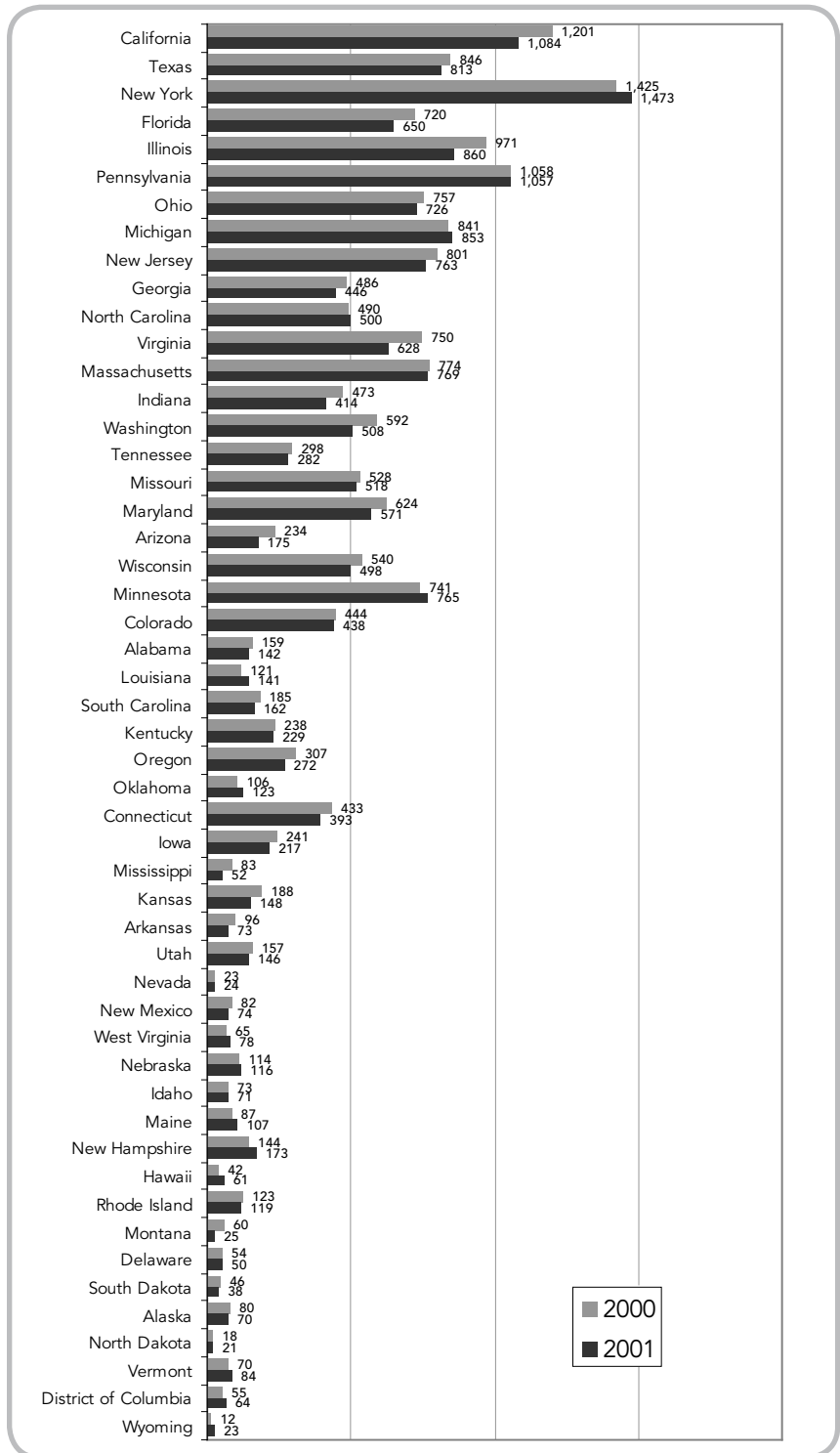
⁵ These figures differ slightly from the State Department numbers, because some children may receive visas but not enter the United States in the same year.

New York, Minnesota, and Connecticut, do have a larger percentage of intercountry adoptions than population size alone would predict.

Private Agency, Kinship, and Tribal Adoptions

No single data source reports any of these types of data. The total number can be approximated by subtracting the number of adoptions reported by AFCARS and the State Department and Office of Immigration Statistics from the total NCSC verifies from courts. The result is an approximation, but any difference due to gaps and overlap is probably only slight.

Exhibit 9
Intercountry Adoptions, 2000 and 2001
(Population Order)



Findings: Data Sources

There is no single source for the total number of children adopted in the United States, and there is currently no straightforward way of determining the total number of adoptions, even when multiple sources of data are used. The increased national interest in adoption in the past decade and the efforts of many dedicated individuals and agencies have failed to provide a consistent, reliable source of adoption data. One of the difficulties is that there is no one agency charged with compiling information on all adoptions in the United States. Agencies that do have access to some types of adoption information have no mandate or other incentives to compile that information so that it can be integrated with information from other sources.

This section contains a brief history of adoption data collection and a description of the strengths and limitations of potential adoption data sources.

History of Data Sources

Adoption data have been collected by a variety of sources during the last 60 years. The Children's Bureau and National Center for Social Statistics collected information on adoptions from 1944 through 1975 (Maza, 2001). The estimated number of adoptions in 1944 was 50,000, and the highest number of adoptions, 175,000, took place in 1970 (Stolley, 1993).

Beginning in 1983, the Children's Bureau funded the American Public Human Services Association (at the time called the American Public Welfare Association) to collect national data on adoption. Their Voluntary Cooperative Information System (VCIS) collected data only on children who were in, or passed through, the public child welfare system (Tatara, 1992).

The National Council for Adoption (formerly, the National Committee for Adoption) collected State-by-State data on adoption for the years 1982, 1986, and 1997 (published 1985, 1989; Pierce & Marshner, 1999).

In 1986, the National Center for State Courts (NCSC) conducted a study to determine the feasibility of collecting adoption data from courts and bureaus of vital records as well as from social service agencies. Their report, *The Flow of Adoption Information from the States* (Flango & Flango, 1994), includes an adoption profile for each State illustrating the sources of adoption infor-

mation, the data elements reported, and the steps necessary to fully implement an adoption reporting system. Actual adoption data were collected for specified years in the 1980s, with the last collection (until now) completed on adoptions for 1992 (Flango & Flango, 1990, 1993, 1995).

Starting in 1995, States were mandated by Federal statute and regulation to report adoptions conducted through public child welfare agencies to the Federal Children's Bureau. The State adoption data are entered in to the Federal Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS). The AFCARS data, together with other measures, are used to monitor State progress toward achieving goals established by the Adoption and Safe Families Act of 1997.

Potential Data Sources

State Courts

NCSC's Court Statistics Project is closest to providing a single data source, because all adoptions of U.S.-born children and many intercountry adoptions are finalized in courts in the United States. Courts track adoption filings and dispositions, and the dispositions are probably the best source for the number of total adoptions by State. However, NCSC cannot provide an accurate count of total adoptions for several reasons:

- **Incomplete data submissions.** The total legal adoptions were not submitted to NCSC for 10 States. Of the data available from 40 States and the District of Columbia, most of the State totals were numbers of adoption petitions *granted*. For a few States, only numbers of petitions *filed* were available, and were therefore used in this study. Although nearly all petitions filed are granted, some are denied, so even the numbers from the 40 reporting States may not be totally accurate.
- **Undercount of intercountry adoptions.** An adoption finalized in a foreign country and recognized by the United States does not require a filing or disposition in a State, unless the adoptive parents choose to file to obtain additional legal recognition for the adoption. Because not all parents choose to file in a U.S. court, the State court numbers do not reflect all intercountry adoptions.

- **Multiplicity of court sources.** In some States, obtaining a total number of adoptions is complicated by the multiplicity of courts that have jurisdiction over adoption cases. Appendix C contains a table with numbers of adoptions reported by each type of court in each State.⁶

Every other potential source of adoption information is less useful than court data for total number of adoptions. No one source can provide a total number of adoptions, and combining data from multiple sources is likely to result in overcounts. The other potential sources of adoption data, including their strengths and limitations, are described below.

State Child Welfare Agencies (AFCARS)

The total number of public agency adoptions in this report is based solely on AFCARS data. State child welfare agencies are mandated to report information semi-annually on public agency adoptions to the federally operated AFCARS. Federal legislation and regulations established AFCARS to collect uniform, reliable information on children “who are under the responsibility of the State Title IV-B/ IV-E agency for placement and care.”⁷ State child welfare agencies are required to report case-specific information on each child in foster care, each child adopted from the public child welfare system, and each adoption in which there has been public agency involvement, such as for a child who was never in foster care but for whom adoption assistance payments are made. AFCARS also collects information on the characteristics of those adoptions.⁸ State agencies may voluntarily report adoptions made under the auspices of private adoption agencies or individually arranged adoptions completed without any agency involvement, but most States have not done so.

It is important to note that of all of the potential data sources, only AFCARS contains information on the characteristics of

⁶ For more information, see the Information Gateway document *Court Jurisdiction and Venue for Adoption Petitions* www.childwelfare.gov/general/legal/statutes/jurisdiction.cfm.

⁷ The collection of information on adoption and foster care from the States was mandated by Congress under Title IV-E, Section 479 of the Social Security Act, as amended by Public Law 99-509, Section 9443 of the Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act of 1986.

⁸ For more information, see the website for the Children’s Bureau of the Administration for Children and Families: www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/stats_research/index.htm#afcars

children being adopted as well as on the birth and adoptive families.

Private Agencies

It is not possible to obtain totals from private adoption agencies, as most private adoption agencies do not report data on the number of children adopted through their agencies or the characteristics of the children, their adoptive parents, and their birth parents. Some private agencies assume that these data are captured by public agencies, who in turn are often under the impression that private agencies keep comprehensive information on their own adoptions.

Bureaus of Vital Records

Bureaus of vital records (or vital statistics) are potential sources of adoption information because a family who adopts often, but not always, requests a new birth certificate. For example, sometimes for an older child a family does not request a new birth certificate. Therefore, the bureaus of vital records' figures are expected to show fewer than the actual number of adoptions. This report uses the vital records figures only for States that were not able to provide numbers of court dispositions.

State Department and Department of Homeland Security

The State Department's Office of Children's Issues and the Office of Immigration Statistics within the Department of Homeland Security provide information on the number of children issued immigrant orphan visas in order to come to the United States for purposes of adoption. Some of these adoptive families may choose to re-adopt in the United States, even if the adoption from a foreign country is recognized by their State, as an added protection of the adopted child's legal status. Other families choose not to re-adopt. There is no way of knowing the percentage of intercountry adoptions processed by courts in the United States.

Tribal Courts

Some adoptions by Native American tribes go through tribal courts, some go through State courts, and some children simply reside with relatives without any formal legal arrangements.

Consequently, it is likely that the number of tribal adoptions is undercounted.

Special Studies

Some States conducted their own inventories of adoptive placements, in order to provide a number of total adoptions to NCSC. Special studies, however, tend to be costly and are not consistent from State to State.

Methodology

Through the Court Statistics Project, NCSC verified basic information from child welfare agencies, State courts, and bureaus of vital records in each State to estimate the total number of adoptions in the United States for the years 2000 and 2001. This total includes public agency adoptions (adoptions completed by public agencies or adoptions by private agencies under contract with public agencies), private agency adoptions, adoptions without any agency involvement, tribal adoptions, and inter-country adoptions. The Court Statistics Project also requested information about the number of children adopted by related persons, unrelated persons, stepparents, and foster parents.

Information about total adoptions was gathered in four phases:

- 1. Contact public adoption agencies.** To obtain information about private agency adoptions and adoptions not accomplished through any agency, project staff first contacted public adoption agencies with a request for contact information for private agencies and others who might be potential sources of adoption information. Although many of the agencies were able to give the project contact information for adoption specialists within the States, few were able to offer any comprehensive statistics on adoptions within their States. More than 65 agencies were contacted at this stage of the project.
- 2. Conduct follow-up.** A second round of requests for adoption numbers targeted 40 public agencies. Responses tended to reiterate the AFCARS and public agency data already acquired. Private agency contacts were more likely to be aware of the status of adoption statistics in the State. Most sources were certain that no comprehensive information on adoption numbers was being collected at all. These sources

further agreed that such information would be extremely beneficial.

- 3. Contact private agencies.** The third round of information requests was conducted using a comprehensive list of all the private adoption agencies in each State. More than 200 private agencies were contacted regarding statistics on the total number of adoptions. No agency was able or willing to produce total number of adoptions completed by that agency or comprehensive data about all private adoptions.
- 4. Contact bureaus of vital records.** Project staff contacted the vital records offices in each State to determine the number of amended birth certificates, from which the total number of adoptions could be inferred. Information was gathered from 28 vital records offices. Eighteen States provided numbers to the project, while 10 States reported that they do not record the number of amended birth certificates. Many States made the disclaimer that their numbers were slightly inaccurate because they probably included adoptions completed in previous years instead of those completed only in 2000 and 2001.

Conclusion

This report includes an estimated total number of children in the United States in 2000 and 2001 involved in three types of adoptions:

- Public agency adoptions
- Intercountry adoptions
- Private agency, kinship, and tribal adoptions.

In the process of developing those estimates, project staff identified several issues surrounding the potential sources of information about adoptions. The findings presented in this report suggest several areas for further research:

- Why is the total number of children adopted remaining fairly constant, while the percentage of the three types of adoption is changing?
- Why are adoptions in some States disproportionate to their overall populations?

- What are some potential ways of obtaining more consistent, reliable data about adoptions?

Adoption is a key component of the national goals of child safety, permanency, and well-being. Additional research into both the adoption trends and data sources can help inform policy and practice as child welfare agencies work to achieve those goals.

References

- Caliber Associates. (1998). *Analysis of State child welfare data: VCIS survey data from 1990 through 1994*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
- California Department of Social Services. (2003). *Adoptions in California: Agency, independent, and intercountry adoption programs: Annual statistical report, July 1, 2000 – June 30, 2001*.
- California Department of Social Services. (2002). *Adoptions in California: Agency, independent, and intercountry adoption programs: Annual statistical report, July 1, 1999 – June 30, 2000*.
- Flango, V., & Flango, C. (1990). Agency and private adoptions, by State. *Child Welfare* 69, 263-275.
- Flango, V., & Flango, C. (1993). Adoptions, 1990. *Child Welfare* 72, 311-319.
- Flango, V., & Flango, C. (1994). *The flow of adoption information from the States*. Williamsburg, VA: National Center for State Courts.
- Flango, V., & Flango, C. (1995). How many children were adopted in 1992? *Child Welfare* 74, 1018-1032.
- Maza, P. L. (2001). Adoption trends, 1944-1975. *Child Welfare Research Notes*. Washington, DC: Administration on Children, Youth and Families. (Originally published 1984)

- National Committee for Adoption. (1985). *Adoption factbook: United States data, issues, regulations, and resources*. Washington, DC: Author.
- Office of Immigration Statistics. (n.d.). Fiscal Year 2001 Statistical Yearbook, Immigrants, Table 15 (<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/yearbook/2001/IMM2001list.htm>) and Fiscal Year 2000 Statistical Yearbook, Immigrants, Table 15 (<http://uscis.gov/graphics/shared/statistics/yearbook/2000/IMM2000list.htm>). Department of Homeland Security.
- National Committee for Adoption (1989). *1989 Adoption factbook*. Washington, DC: Author.
- North Dakota Department of Human Services, Children and Family Services. (2003). *Foster care and adoption: 2003 annual report*.
- Pierce, W. L., & Marshner, C. (Eds.). (1999). *Adoption factbook III*. Washington, DC: National Council for Adoption.
- Stolley, K. S. (1993). Statistics on adoption in the United States. [Electronic version]. *The Future of Children* 3(1), 26-42. Retrieved June 2004 from http://www.futureofchildren.org/usr_doc/vol3no1ART2.PDF
- Tatara, T. (1992). *Characteristics of children in substitute and adoptive care: A statistical summary of the VCIS National Child Welfare Data Base. Based on FY 82 through FY 88 data*. Washington, DC: American Public Welfare Association.
- Tatara, T. (1993). *Characteristics of children in substitute and adoptive care: A statistical summary of the VCIS National Child Welfare Data Base. Based on FY 82 through FY 90 data*. Washington, DC: American Public Welfare Association.
- U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Immigrant visas issued to orphans coming to the U.S.* Retrieved May 2004 from http://www.travel.state.gov/family/adoption_resources_02.html

Appendix A

**Total Adoptions for
1987, 1989, 1990, 1991, 1992, 2000, and 2001
(Flango & Flango, 1995)**

State	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	2000	2001
Alabama	1,914	1,911**	1,907	1,939	2,189	2,009	1,857
Alaska	594	639	611	898	752	634	616
Arizona	1,688	1,449	1,541	1,747	1,862	1,736	1,642
Arkansas	1,512	1,647	1,671	1,678	1,501	1,907	1,698
California	11,780**	12,194**	12,608**	14,410**	14,722**	9,054*	9,202
Colorado	1,847	2,474	1,501	1,705	1,416	2,895	2,877
Connecticut	1,047	976	923	1,260	1,124	1,210	1,164
Delaware	116	209	226	190	184	222	225
District of Columbia	233	298	292	155	360	492	548
Florida	7,741	8,976	9,131	7,152	6,839	8,088	8,435
Georgia	4,946	3,933**	2,921	2,330	4,026	3,499**	3,499***
Hawaii	581	745	1,141	592	557	626	766
Idaho	945	874	952	879	944	998	1,048
Illinois	5,803	5,199	5,199	6,599	6,599	6,921	6,673
Indiana	2,802	2,676	2,778	3,299	3,065	3,486	3,588
Iowa	1,712	1,606	1,501	1,518	1,325	1,116	1,116
Kansas	2,309	1,765	1,810	1,730	1,838	2,025	1,880
Kentucky	1,473	1,582	1,585	1,925	1,874	2,265	2,086
Louisiana	1,795	1,902	1,945	2,280	1,919	1,553	1,391
Maine	839	875	863	715	715**	957**	957***
Maryland	1,402	1,520	1,634	2,492	2,696	4,161	4,384
Massachusetts	2,757	3,254	2,275	1,558	2,510	2,697	3,259
Michigan	5,015	5,181	5,294	4,758	5,408	6,190	6,274
Minnesota	2,325	2,475	2,072	1,963	2,124	1,622	2,094
Mississippi	1,399	1,317	1,348	1,406	1,206	866	866***
Missouri	2,363	2,043	2,139	2,176	2,099	2,554	2,554***
Montana	808	671	626	676	578	608	600
Nebraska	1,023	1,006	1,003	973	993	920	939
Nevada	673	685	691	779	732	827	764
New Hampshire	429	726	701	588	568	690	630
New Jersey	1,958	2,316	2,085	2,382	2,464	2,294	2,384
New Mexico	803	917	642	610	565	723	680
New York	6,613	7,736	7,670	8,968	9,570	10,821	10,209
North Carolina	2,455	2,455	3,637	2,669	2,938	2,710*	2,328**
North Dakota	406	361	415	355	313	337	368
Ohio	5,258	5,382	5,163	5,244	5,155	5,693	5,564
Oklahoma	2,500	2,272	2,238	1,779	2,265	1,533	1,533***
Oregon	1,161	1,728	1,715	2,150	2,221	2,064	2,029
Pennsylvania	4,823	4,051	4,681	3,884	4,663	4,458	4,748
Rhode Island	455	463	454	433	460	600	617
South Carolina	1,432	1,290	1,114	1,471	2,812	1,237	1,648
South Dakota	398	398	433	355	377	432	399
Tennessee	2,407	1,866	1,845	751	1,946	2,528	2,633
Texas	8,116	7,280	7,277	7,137	8,235	8,329	7,957

State	1987	1989	1990	1991	1992	2000	2001
Utah	1,261	1,142	1,151	1,304	1,371	1,599	1,387
Vermont	329	498	464	350	528	393	407
Virginia	2,573	2,481	2,335	2,590	2,634	2,218	2,301
Washington	2,462	2,561	2,448	2,603	2,617	3,025	2,748
West Virginia	869	1,279	1,140	884	852	921	908
Wisconsin	2,061	1,949	1,948	2,016	1,881	2,475	2,515
Wyoming	238	364	394	425	359	412	412***
Total	118,449	121,586	118,138	118,730	126,951	127,630	127,407

*AFCARS **Estimates ***Number from previous year

Appendix B

Public Agency Adoptions as Percentage of Total Adoptions,
2000 and 2001

	2000			2001		
	AFCARS	Total	Percentage	AFCARS	Total	Percentage
Alabama	200	2,009	10%	237	1,857	13%
Alaska	202	634	32%	278	616	45%
Arizona	851	1,736	49%	931	1,642	57%
Arkansas	323	1,907	17%	353	1,698	21%
Colorado	681	2,895	24%	607	2,877	21%
Connecticut	499	1,210	41%	444	1,164	38%
Delaware	103	222	46%	117	225	52%
District of Columbia	236	492	48%	177	548	32%
Florida	1,608	8,088	20%	1,466	8,435	17%
Hawaii	259	626	41%	244	766	32%
Idaho	102	998	10%	110	1,048	10%
Illinois	5,670	6,921	82%	4,079	6,673	61%
Indiana	1,143	3,486	33%	871	3,588	24%
Iowa	751	1,116	67%	661	1,116	59%
Kansas	435	2,025	21%	416	2,830	15%
Kentucky	388	2,265	17%	546	2,086	26%
Louisiana	469	1,553	30%	463	1,391	33%
Maryland	522	4,161	13%	806	4,384	18%
Massachusetts	861	2,697	32%	778	3,259	24%
Michigan	2,803	6,190	45%	2,979	6,274	47%
Minnesota	615	1,622	38%	567	2,094	27%
Mississippi	290	866	33%	265	866	31%
Missouri	1,205	2,554	47%	1,061	2,554	42%
Montana	228	608	38%	264	600	44%
Nebraska	306	920	33%	283	939	30%
Nevada	229	827	28%	243	764	32%
New Hampshire	96	690	14%	94	630	15%
New Jersey	842	2,294	37%	1,030	2,384	43%
New Mexico	346	723	48%	369	680	54%
New York	4,234	10,821	39%	3,934	10,209	39%
North Carolina	1,244	2,710	46%	1,222	2,328	52%
North Dakota	92	283	33%	127	368	35%
Ohio	1,777	5,693	31%	2,002	5,564	36%
Oklahoma	1,015	1,533	66%	938	1,533	61%
Oregon	831	2,064	40%	1,071	2,029	53%
Pennsylvania	1,700	4,458	38%	1,668	4,748	35%
Rhode Island	260	600	43%	267	617	43%
South Carolina	378	1,237	31%	384	1,648	23%
South Dakota	87	432	20%	92	399	23%
Tennessee	403	2,528	16%	555	2,633	21%
Texas	2,029	8,329	24%	2,319	7,957	29%
Utah	303	1,599	19%	349	1,387	25%
Vermont	105	393	27%	98	407	24%
Virginia	432	2,218	19%	490	2,301	21%
Washington	1,110	3,025	37%	1,153	2,748	42%

	2000			2001		
	AFCARS	Total	Percentage	AFCARS	Total	Percentage
West Virginia	350	921	38%	360	908	40%
Wisconsin	712	2,475	29%	693	2,515	28%
Wyoming	52	412	13%	46	412	11%

Note: Georgia and Maine are not included because totals are estimated. California is not included because complete data on nonpublic adoptions are not available.

Appendix C

Adoption and Dependency Filings, 2001

State	Court	Adoption	Child-Victim
States with jurisdiction in 1 court			
Arizona	Superior	1,749	1,968
Arkansas	Circuit	1,948	2,920
California	Superior	N/A	38,120
Colorado	District, Denver Juvenile	2,877	3,313
Delaware	Family	212	1,265
District of Columbia	Superior	657	1,490
Florida	Circuit	N/A	47,429
Hawaii	Circuit	786	1,988
Illinois	Circuit	7,097	5,922
Iowa	District	N/A	148
Kansas	District	1,880	6,161
Michigan	Circuit	6,274	16,807
Minnesota	District	2,115	5,538
Missouri	Circuit	N/A	N/A
Montana	District	640	956
Nevada	District	764	971
New Jersey	Superior	2,425	2,767
New Mexico	District	722	575
North Carolina	District	N/A	8,762
North Dakota	District	309	714
Ohio	Court of Common Pleas	5,674	35,912
Oklahoma	District	N/A	N/A
Oregon	Circuit	2,046	5,176
Pennsylvania	Court of Common Pleas	4,865	9,400
Puerto Rico	Superior	472	1,507
Rhode Island	Family	492	4,014
South Carolina	Family	N/A	N/A
South Dakota	Circuit	419	647
Washington	Superior	2,873	4,567
West Virginia	Circuit	912	1,420
Wisconsin	Circuit	2,555	5,100
Wyoming	District	435	285
States with jurisdiction in 2 courts			
Alaska	Superior	616	1,228
Alaska	District	N/J	N/A
Connecticut	Superior	N/J	3,666
Connecticut	Probate	1,164	N/J
Georgia	Superior	N/A	N/J
Georgia	Juvenile	N/J	20,454
Idaho	District	0	N/A
Idaho	Magistrates Division	1,085	1,411
Indiana	Superior and Circuit	3,631	N/A
Indiana	Probate	254	N/A
Kentucky	Circuit	2,342*	N/J
Kentucky	District	N/J	N/A
Maine	District	N/J	N/A
Maine	Probate	N/A	N/J

State	Court	Adoption	Child-Victim
Maryland	Circuit	4,385**	7,232
Maryland	District	41	2,263
Mississippi	Chancery	1,202	N/A
Mississippi	County	N/A	N/A
Nebraska	County	939	N/A
Nebraska	Separate Juvenile	N/J	N/A
New Hampshire	District	N/J	1,107
New Hampshire	Probate	645	N/J
New York	Family	4,916	67,038
New York	Surrogates'	2,798	N/J
Texas	District	N/A	N/A
Texas	County-level	N/A	N/A
Utah	District	1,589	N/J
Utah	Juvenile	N/J	3,645
Vermont	Family	N/J	496
Vermont	Probate	365	N/J
Virginia	Circuit	N/A	N/J
Virginia	District	N/J	36,186
States with jurisdiction in 3 courts			
Alabama	Circuit	N/A	5,031
Alabama	District	N/J	6,383
Alabama	Probate	N/A	N/J
Louisiana	District	955	N/A
Louisiana	Family and Juvenile	436	688
Louisiana	City and Parish	N/J	650
Massachusetts	District Court Department	N/J	506
Massachusetts	Juvenile Court Department	462	2,392
Massachusetts	Probate & Family Court Dept	2,797	N/J
Tennessee	Circuit Criminal and Chancery	2,666	N/J
Tennessee	General Sessions	N/J	N/A
Tennessee	Juvenile	N/J	8,669
Total 2001 filings		84,486	384,887

Notes:

* = Data are over inclusive in that additional case types are included in the count of filings.

** = Data are incomplete with Iowa and Puerto Rico being less than 75 percent complete.

N/A = Data not available.

N/J = No jurisdiction for that case type.