

NCHCW Housing-Child Welfare Cost Study 2015

In the absence of an adequate supply of safe, decent, and affordable housing, child welfare workers often must separate homeless and precariously housed families in order to protect children from the lingering effects of homelessness. In fact, nearly 30 percent of the children in foster care are there because their parents lack adequate housing. The federal funding available to help these families will cover the cost of foster care, but not the cost of housing and supportive services to keep the families together and safe.

In an effort to encourage policy makers to allow flexibility in these funds so that these children can return home, or avoid foster care altogether, NCHCW recently conducted a study of federal child welfare funds (Title IV-E) to compare the cost of foster care to the cost of using federal funds to subsidize housing and provide services for these families in order to reunite them.

This research shows considerable savings to states when Title IV-E funding is used to subsidize housing and supportive services. In fact, **the U.S. would save \$ \$773,773,269** if housing plus services intervention were applied to all Title IV-E eligible families who need it, or **\$32,885 per family**. The provision of housing and services is a good use of public dollars but also offers front line workers the resources they need to adequately address the problems they confront along with the families they serve every day. The state by state savings are included in the chart below.

State by State Comparison of Potential Savings

<i>State</i>	<i>Foster care plus services for children separated because of housing problems</i>	<i>Total cost for housing plus services to reunite families who are separated because of housing problems</i>	<i>Savings</i>
Alabama	\$9,181,113	\$4,159,497	\$5,021,617
Alaska	\$5,670,385	\$1,362,401	\$4,307,984
Arizona	\$25,839,105	\$12,634,635	\$13,204,470
Arkansas	\$11,467,174	\$3,417,780	\$8,049,394
California	\$157,044,176	\$89,030,347	\$68,013,830
Colorado	\$16,322,647	\$5,163,233	\$11,159,413
Connecticut	\$13,907,226	\$3,785,355	\$10,121,871
Delaware	\$1,110,122	\$432,513	\$677,609
District of Columbia	\$11,333,619	\$2,330,272	\$9,003,347
Florida*	\$763,709	\$27,111,751	-\$26,348,042
Georgia	\$21,617,633	\$5,601,828	\$16,015,805
Hawaii	\$5,877,371	\$1,312,633	\$4,564,738
Idaho	\$2,776,323	\$1,246,498	\$1,529,825
Illinois	\$56,123,650	\$13,740,501	\$42,383,149
Indiana	\$19,676,686	\$8,308,903	\$11,367,783
Iowa	\$6,775,286	\$3,792,940	\$2,982,346
Kansas	\$6,462,042	\$2,067,921	\$4,394,121



State	Total cost for foster care plus services for children separated because of housing problems	Total cost for housing plus services to reunite families who are separated because of housing problems	Savings
Kentucky	\$11,415,062	\$4,102,518	\$7,312,543
Louisiana	\$12,979,726	\$2,876,823	\$10,102,904
Maine	\$4,944,289	\$995,248	\$3,949,041
Maryland	\$17,696,904	\$3,585,924	\$14,110,980
Massachusetts	\$16,148,428	\$4,735,435	\$11,412,994
Michigan	\$37,088,795	\$12,606,657	\$24,482,139
Minnesota	\$11,839,315	\$3,536,652	\$8,302,663
Mississippi	\$4,613,414	\$2,019,680	\$2,593,734
Missouri	\$17,215,870	\$9,640,784	\$7,575,086
Montana	\$3,290,990	\$1,208,840	\$2,082,150
Nebraska	\$5,110,886	\$1,492,910	\$3,617,977
Nevada	\$9,578,708	\$5,171,183	\$4,407,525
New Hampshire	\$3,044,510	\$885,885	\$2,158,625
New Jersey	\$25,361,443	\$7,259,767	\$18,101,676
New Mexico	\$8,600,813	\$1,731,525	\$6,869,288
New York	\$110,165,355	\$33,478,341	\$76,687,014
North Carolina	\$22,042,822	\$5,726,202	\$16,316,620
North Dakota	\$3,182,119	\$747,604	\$2,434,515
Ohio	\$44,908,956	\$11,076,844	\$33,832,113
Oklahoma	\$9,971,069	\$7,172,223	\$2,798,846
Oregon	\$24,284,416	\$9,120,396	\$15,164,021
Pennsylvania	\$57,564,360	\$13,383,761	\$44,180,600
Rhode Island	\$3,692,374	\$1,126,454	\$2,565,920
South Carolina	\$7,885,386	\$2,408,159	\$5,477,227
South Dakota	\$1,553,128	\$889,583	\$663,545
Tennessee	\$11,088,623	\$5,379,167	\$5,709,457
Texas	\$65,128,105	\$21,607,171	\$43,520,935
Utah	\$5,902,510	\$1,468,767	\$4,433,742
Vermont	\$2,647,314	\$802,333	\$1,844,982
Virginia	\$16,233,961	\$4,375,459	\$11,858,502
Washington	\$23,128,944	\$12,933,185	\$10,195,759
West Virginia	\$5,483,362	\$1,034,880	\$4,448,482
Wisconsin	\$15,732,943	\$4,816,624	\$10,916,320
Wyoming	\$657,808	\$152,983	\$504,825
U.S. Total	\$1,158,822,239	\$385,048,971	\$773,773,269

