



How Many Children Were Adopted in 2000 and 2001?— Highlights

This factsheet presents key findings from *How Many Children Were Adopted in 2000 and 2001?* a report from Child Welfare Information Gateway (Information Gateway). To find the complete report, go to www.childwelfare.gov/pubs/s_adopted/index.cfm

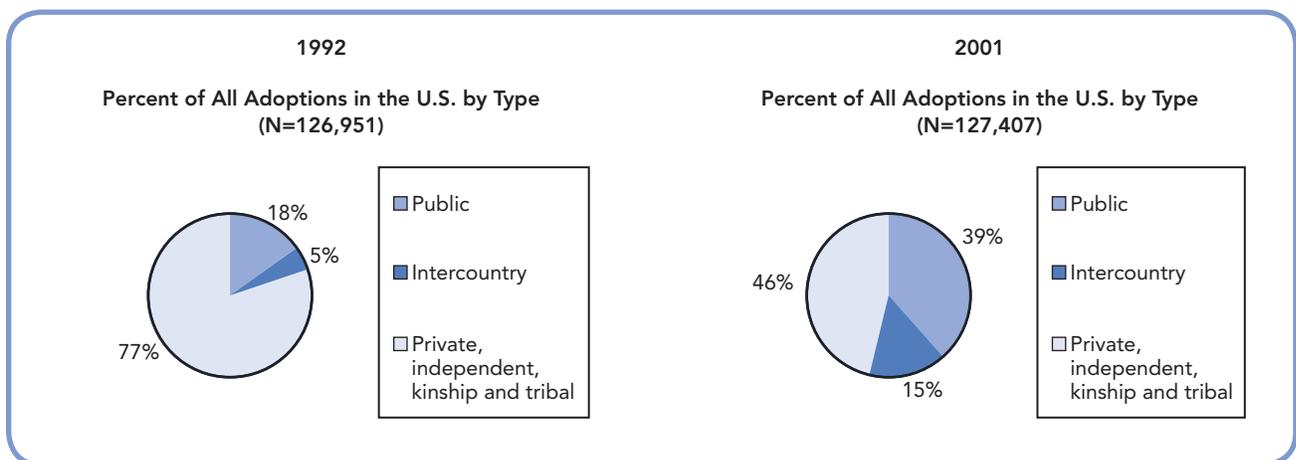
This factsheet presents highlights from Child Welfare Information Gateway's full report on *How Many Children Were Adopted in 2000 and 2001?* The purpose of this report is to estimate the number of children adopted in each of the States for 2000 and 2001 and to use these numbers to estimate the composition 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 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.

References

Flango, V., & Flango, C. (1995). How many children were adopted in 1992? *Child Welfare* 74, 1018-1032.

U.S. Department of State. (n.d.). *Immigrant visas issued to orphans coming to the U.S.* Retrieved May 2004 from www.travel.state.gov/family/adoption_resources_02.html.

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