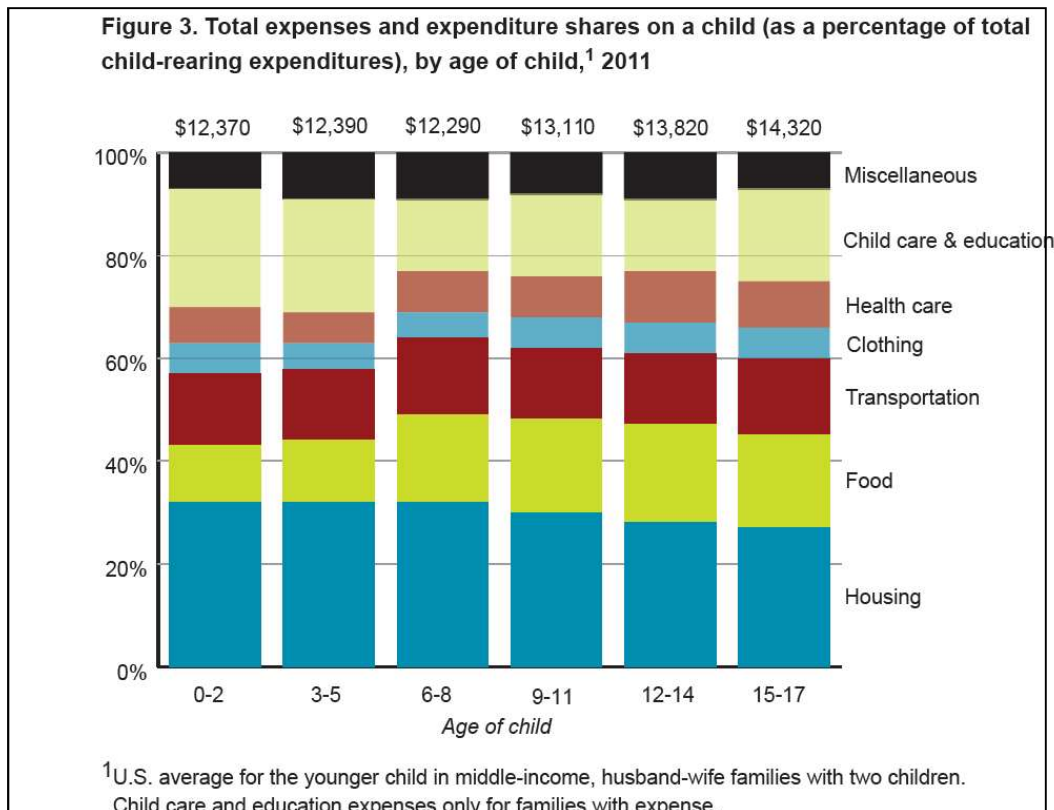


Financial Costs to Raise a Child

How much money did you think it would cost to raise one child? The first graph below shows the cost to raise a child for one year different ages. The second graph shows how much it costs, on average, to raise one child to age 18 for a middle income family.

Look carefully at the specific costs included in the numbers below. Do any of them surprise you?



Source: U.S. Department of Agriculture Expenditures on Children by Families 2011 Annual Report

Average cost for a middle-income family to raise one child (to 18)

\$234,900

How would these costs change if the child is mentally or physically handicapped? Housing costs are the single largest expense. An average is \$70,470 or 30 percent of the total. Child care and education was the second largest expense. An average is \$42,282 or 18 percent of the total. Other categories are transportation, clothing, health care, food, and miscellaneous costs, which include personal care items, entertainment, and reading material. The most expensive place to live is in cities in the western United States, followed by the cities in the Northeast and Midwest. Families who live in cities in the urban South and rural areas have the lowest expenses. (For more information: www.cnpp.usda.gov/Publications/CRC/crc2011.pdf – this is an Adobe Acrobat file.)