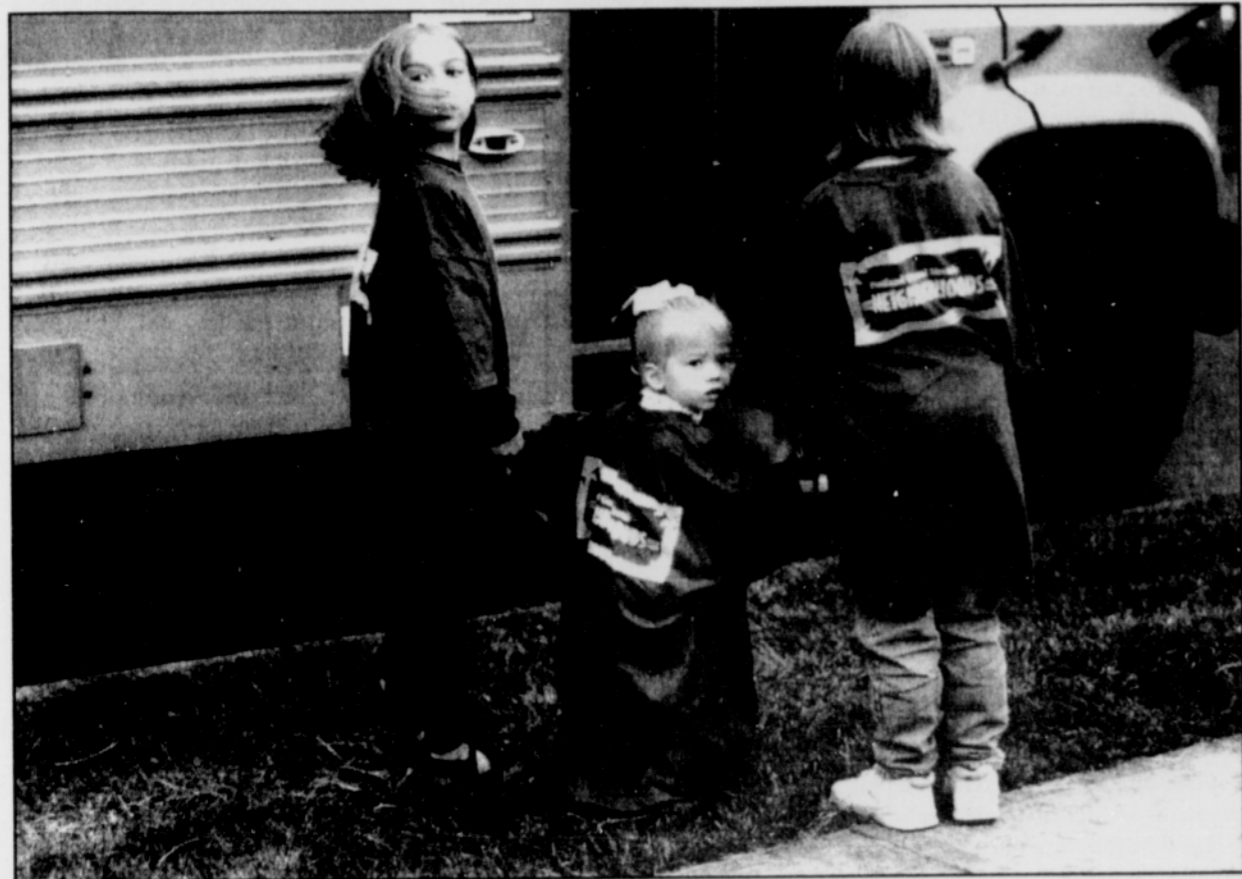


Family Living



Several kids from the inner city are lucky to get a taste of Rose Festival with transportation and tickets provided by Portland General Electric Co.'s Neighborhoods First Campaign. (Photo by Michael Wilhelm)

Raising children has big price tag

West leads country as costs of raising a child continue to rise

By TOM GENTLE

Is anyone really surprised that it costs a lot to raise a child? Or that it is getting more expensive?

According to estimates by the U.S. Dept. of Agriculture, a middle-income family (making \$34,400 to \$57,900) a year before taxes in the urban West will spend \$161,580 to raise a child born in 1996 to age 18.

The estimates are contained in "Expenditures on Children by Families," a report issued annually by the USDA.

The report provides estimates of expenditures on children from birth through age 17 for different geographic regions of the United States, according to Alice Mills Morrow, Oregon State University family resource specialties.

Child-raising costs in the urban West are higher than the rest of the country, primarily because housing is more expensive. Thus, the average cost in the United States for a

middle income family to raise a child born in 1996 to age 18 totaled an estimated \$149,820.

The estimates include direct spending for housing, food, transportation, clothing, health care, child care and education, and miscellaneous expenses.

They do not include costs related to pregnancy and childbirth or the indirect cost of lost earnings and career opportunities when one or both parents take time away from work to care for their children.

"Given the rising cost of a college education, it's important to note that these estimates only apply to costs from birth through age 18," Morrow said. "The cost of paying for college or for setting aside money for college through the years is not included in these estimates."

According to the USDA, expenditure estimates on children by husband-wife families do not apply to single-parent families, a group that

is increasing every year.

The USDA prepared estimates for these households show a single parent family with an income less than \$34,700 before taxes will spend \$104,400 to raise a child born in 1996 to age 18. The two-parent counterpart will spend \$110,040.

The cost of raising a child increases as a child gets older, a signal for parents to continually find ways to add to their income.

The USDA estimates are put to a variety of uses.

Divorce lawyers and mediators use them to provide a reality check for parents who think child support guidelines are unrealistic.

The estimates are also used in estate planning to evaluate financial needs in the event of a parent's sudden death. And teachers use the estimates to help student understand the financial changes that accompany parenthood.

The Way to Happiness A Proven Method to help Prevent Crime.

The Way to Happiness booklet is used all over the world in schools, businesses and community organizations to help create a saner world.

DOWNTREND IN CRIME STATISTICS

"The crime statistics from major crime in this area have been considerably down for each of the first four months of the year. I know that the distribution of over 16,000 *The Way to Happiness* books has had a lot to do with this."

Mike Hoy, Director, Pico Union Improvement Association, LA California

80% DECREASE IN VIOLENCE ON SCHOOL CAMPUS

"In addition to making a kinder, gentler school, *The Way to Happiness* program has made it safer. We have decreased the violence by 70% -80% over the school year. We have decreased disrespectful attitudes towards teachers, decreased vulgar language and gestures. You name it, it's better.

V.B. Principal, Lockland, Tennessee

RECIDIVISM (REPEAT CONVICTIONS) REDUCED FROM 70% TO 10%

"We noticed immediately that the children who were exposed to *The Way to Happiness* had a much lower recidivism than those who were not exposed to the booklet. About 90% of those who were given the booklet did not come back to the court again. The recidivism rate, in other words, dropped from 70% to 10%. The result were so spectacular that we incorporated the use of the booklet as a standard element in our program. *The Way to Happiness* has proved so effective in rehabilitating delinquent teenagers, we feel that the booklet really should be made available to them before they get into trouble."

Danny O. Black, Chief Probation Officer, Greenville, Alabama

To order *The Way to Happiness* booklets or for information on programs call ABLE Oregon at (503)203-1301

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Home Remedies

"Love, time and attention are the essential ingredients of the home that can be your child's richest learning environment," say Jennifer Marshall and Gina Dalfonzo, co-authors of Home Remedies, FRC's latest educational guide for parents and children. "Home Remedies' reading lists and curriculum guides will help you ensure that your children receive a well-balanced education in the basics and will provide enticing extras."

"Over 40 percent of 8-year-olds can't read. And our teenagers aren't doing much better. Sixty-four percent of 12th graders can't read proficiently. Home Remedies was designed to combat this lack of reading and help parents develop a healthy reading regimen for their children," Marshall said.

The guide offers parents and children an array of suggested books that meet the standards of excellence. It features a list of recommended reading for preschoolers through teenagers which includes more than 300 classics, inspirational works, biographies, mysteries, and much more.

Home Remedies also offers a "Curriculum Cupboard" filled with resources to help parents ensure that their children receive a well-balanced education and a "Reading Road Map" which helps kids and parents to trace progress by following the path to success.

Maria Donovan, a high school student in Virginia, recently completed a student review of Home Remedies. "I enjoyed the variety of selections in the recommended reading lists, but most of all I liked the articles that talked about poetry, art and music literature. Kids will like the page that shows you how to find fun summer reading on the Internet," Maria said.

"Summer is a great time for parents to help their kids dig into good books. Home Remedies will help families learn to love literature together," says Marshall.



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This Tuesday July 1, Midnight

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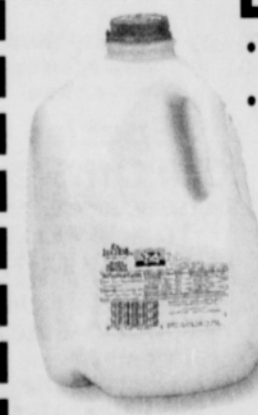
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3⁸⁸

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