

# CENTER ON FATHERING

## Fathering is For Life

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## Center on Fathering Monthly Newsletter---October 2022

### It Now Costs \$300,000 to Raise a Child-Rina Torchnsky, The Wall Street Journal



That's \$80,000 more than the estimate released five years ago. The Brookings Institution analysis is based on a middle-income, two-parent, married family with two kids, and it doesn't include the cost of college.

A middle-income family might spend more than \$18,000 a year on average, as inflation hits food,

housing, haircuts, and sports.

The cost of raising a child through high school has risen to more than \$300,000 because of inflation that is running close to a four-decade high, according to a Brookings Institution estimate.

It determined that a married, middle-income couple with two children would spend \$310,605—or an average of \$18,271 a year—to raise their younger child born in 2015 through age 17. The calculation uses an earlier government estimate as a baseline, with adjustments for inflation trends.

The multiyear total is up \$26,011, or more than 9%, from a calculation based on the inflation rate two years ago, before rapid price increases hit the economy, the Brookings Institution said.

Brookings calculated the cost of raising a family based on a 2017 estimate from the Agriculture Department. The estimate covers a range of expenses, including housing, food, clothing, healthcare and childcare, and accounts for childhood milestones and activities—diapers, haircuts, sports equipment, and dance lessons, among other costs.

Inflation's trajectory in the future isn't clear, Dr. Sawhill, who holds a Ph.D. in economics, said, in part because Federal Reserve efforts to bring the rate down have an uncertain outcome.

We know it's very high right now, but we also know that the Fed is stepping on the brakes very hard and that it's going to come down," she said. "We don't know how fast and to what level and how long it will stay somewhat elevated."

The annual inflation rate eased to 8.5% in July, down from 9.1% the prior month. Gasoline and other energy prices fell from the prior month, but food prices continued to climb. Prices for food at home were up 13.1% in July compared with the year before, the Labor Department said, adding pressure to household budgets.

Rising expenses for raising a family could disproportionately affect lower-income families, said Dr. Sawhill. For a single parent earning \$20,000 or \$30,000 a year, shelling out the extra funds for a child might be difficult, she said.

"If you are going to have children, you have to recognize you have to work harder or consume less in some other area," noted Sawhill, "It's not a free choice."

And the study only includes child-rearing costs up to age 17, which means that additional expenses faced by parents who plan to send their children to college are not included in the estimate. "If you expect your children to go to college, the \$310,000 is just a beginning," Sawhill noted.

She added that the rising cost of raising children may be impacting some Americans' decisions about whether to start a family, although declining birth rates are common across developed nations — even in nations with financial support for families.

At the same time, more Americans without children are saying they will never have kids, with the Pew Research Center finding in a 2021 survey that 44% of nonparents between 18 to 49 aren't planning to start families — a jump of 7 percentage points from three years earlier.

What's clear is that families are increasingly making choices between what to fund, including whether one parent should stay home with children given the high expense of childcare. The biggest cost for parents is housing, which consumes about 29% of raising a child, followed by food at 18% and childcare and education at 16%, according to the Department of Agriculture's analysis.

Americans "could adjust by having fewer children or working more or by cutting back on expenses, but something has to give here," Sawhill noted.

Sawhill's analysis didn't break down the cost of raising a kid by category, but instead applied an estimated inflation rate to the USDA's calculation from 2015, when it expected parents would need about \$234,000 to raise a child. From 2015 to 2020, Sawhill used an inflation rate of 2.23%, but assumed an inflation rate of 4% for 2021 and subsequent years, reflecting the current period of high inflation and mirroring the average CPI increase from 1980 to 1997, when the nation also faced a period of high prices.

# MONTHLY ACTIVITIES (free)



Online  
**Art Class**  
With Palak StudioInk

Register Online Art Class  
25 Seats Only

PalakStudioInk.com

JOIN NOW

The graphic features a purple background with white and pink decorative elements. It includes a photo of two children holding their art projects and a 'JOIN NOW' button. The Palak StudioInk logo is also present.

**Free Online Art Class For Kids & Teens - Colorado Springs-Palak StudioInk Online Art Classes.** This free painting class is open for all ages. You are welcome to this class as a beginner as well. We will be doing a painting on nature and learn how to blend colors. I will be walking you through a few techniques to make blending easier. I have different versions of the same painting, so it suits all ages. For more info go to: <https://palakstudioink.com/>



**THANK YOU**

**LITTLE HIKERS  
THANK YOU TREE**

Fountain Creek Nature Center  
Friday, Nov 11  
10:30 AM - 12:00 PM  
Register on Eventbrite

UpaDownna  
Ditch your Monday

The graphic is a collage of images: a wooden sign that says 'THANK YOU', a group of people holding a banner for 'UpaDownna', children hiking on a trail, and a forest with autumn foliage. Text provides event details and a registration link.

**Little Hikers: Thank You Tree-Friday, November 11, 2022, 10:30 AM – 12:00 PM.** Fountain Creek Nature Center 320 Peppergrass Lane Fountain. Join us for a hike to the Thank You Tree, Grandfather Cottonwood, and share what they are thankful for at Fountain Creek Regional Park. This is a hike specifically for families with toddlers to preschoolers. The program capacity is limited, and each participant little hiker requires their own ticket. Contact the organizer with any questions at [info@upadowna.org](mailto:info@upadowna.org)



**Gobble Up the Fun with a Dancing Turkey Toy-** Bring your mini-DIYer into Lowe's at one of the select time slots. Workshops hosted by one our Red Vest experts are held from 9:00am – 12:00pm, in-store only. We look forward to building with you and your little ones! Don't forget – if you are unable to attend during your selected timeslot, your kit may be given away to Walk-Ins starting at 12:00pm, the day of the workshop. Go to: <https://www.lowes.com/events/register/gobble-up-the-fun-with-a-dancing-turkey-toy>



# WHAT'S NEW?

## **Susan Burt, Center on Fathering Supervisor, is Retiring**

Susan Burt, Supervisor of the Center on Fathering, has spent 12 years with the Center on Fathering and 8 years with Child Protection Casework, totaling 20 years with DHS.

As a staff member with Center, Susan's accomplishments included creating a diligent search process of locating non-resident fathers during the "Bringing Back Dads" grant. She also incorporated the protective factors into the fathering class.

As the Supervisor of the Center, Susan as implemented many changes to ensure the growth of the Center in the community including adding "Fathering for Life" classes on Ft. Carson, Mount Carmel Veteran's Center, and Pikes Peak Community College. She has overseen the move of the Center from 325 N. El Paso to the Citizen's Service Center and integrated the "Caring Dads" class and Legacy Project for dads.

During Susan's tenure, the Center received an Army Community Partnership award from the Pentagon and participated in a Denver University Grant using Solution Focused Brief Therapy in its "Fathering for Life Class". She also managed the move to web classes during the Covid social distancing and reimplemented the "Father to Father" mentorship program.

Susan's commitment and passion to help fathers, her dedication to her peers and staff will be missed. We wish you good luck Susan!

## **The Legacy Garden is Closed for the Year**



On October 15<sup>th</sup> the Bear Creek Garden Association had closed the garden for the year. The Center's plot was cleared of all plants and raked smooth. This year the heat and lack of consistent rain took its toll on some of the plants, but we still had tomatoes, peppers, and zucchini. We hope we will see you at the garden next year.

# DAD'S TIPS

**Average cost of raising a child by category-** Zehra Valencia, Debra Bozzi, Aditi Sen, Katie Martin, Health Care Institute, May 22, 2022



When breaking down the cost of essential needs for a child or children in the U.S., each cent and dollar noticeably adds up, whether you have a tight or loose budget.

According to data examined by the Health Care Cost Institute, the average cost of childbirth in the U.S. in 2020 for couples who had insurance cost \$13,393.

And once that baby comes home, on average, that baby will go through about 6,000 diapers during their first two years of life, according to data collected by Realdiapers.org. Disposable diapers for a single baby will cost around \$70 a month and \$840 a year.

Food to feed your family is an essential and sometimes non-negotiable purchase when it comes to budgeting. Data collected and adjusted for current inflation by Investopedia found that families who adhere to a lower budget were spending about \$10,261 a year on food. Families with a more flexible budget spent just a little over \$17,000 per year.

The average cost of clothing per year was about \$779 for a middle-class family from birth through the age of 17, according to data collected by the USDA.

In addition, families who require childcare will shell out thousands and will invest more to ensure their children have quality care. Using an interactive budget calculator from Costofchildcare.org, families with babies would need to spend nearly \$16,000 a year to cover the cost of childcare, according to the Center for American Progress.