

---

**Adoption in Massachusetts:  
Private and Public Agency  
Placements and Practices in 2004**

---

June 2006



## Table of Contents

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY.....	4
INTRODUCTION .....	7
RESULTS .....	8
AGENCY INFORMATION .....	8
TYPES OF PLACEMENT PROGRAMS.....	8
BIRTH PARENT INFORMATION.....	10
HOME STUDY SERVICES IN COORDINATION WITH NON-MASSACHUSETTS AGENCIES .....	10
FINALIZED ADOPTIONS IN 2004 .....	10
SINGLE PARENT AND CO-PARENT ADOPTIONS IN 2004 .....	13
LENGTH OF WAIT: PRIVATE DOMESTIC AND INTERNATIONAL ADOPTION .....	14
ADOPTION FEES .....	15
ADOPTION PLACEMENT PRACTICES .....	16
ADOPTION RELATED SERVICES.....	18
ADOPTIONS FROM FOSTER CARE .....	18
FUTURE DIRECTIONS.....	21
APPENDIX A: LISTING OF LICENSED ADOPTION PROVIDERS IN MASSACHUSETTS.....	22
APPENDIX B: PERCENTAGE OF AGENCIES OFFERING ADOPTION SERVICES TO FAMILIES.....	29

## **Acknowledgements**

In 2004, through the efforts of all Massachusetts adoption agencies and the Massachusetts Department of Social Services, 2,392 children from around the world and from our own backyard found “forever homes.” We are grateful to the adoption agencies in Massachusetts for their work in making those 2,392 miracles possible and for taking the time to complete the annual survey that lets us showcase their successes. As we do every year, we provide annual statistics on their excellent work. This year we have also included some quotes from state and national adoption experts, along with some facts about adoption and some national statistics. We hope you find the information useful, and we are eager to receive your feedback.

## Executive Summary

This report marks the fourth annual release of *Adoption in Massachusetts: Private and Public Agency Placements and Practices* by the Center for Adoption Research at the University of Massachusetts Medical School. Findings are based on the responses received from a survey sent to all licensed private adoption agencies and the Department of Social Services (DSS) regarding adoption placement practices for 2004. All 50 private adoption agencies<sup>1</sup> in Massachusetts that facilitated adoptions during 2004 responded to the survey, a 100 percent response rate for the second year in a row.

The goal of this research is to continue to develop a consolidated, statewide information source of common practices, services and fees, and to document the different types and total numbers of adoptions completed in Massachusetts. Not only will such a complete information source allow agencies to better understand the context of adoption in Massachusetts in terms of fees, waiting times and participating international countries, but it will also provide important facts about foster children and their path to permanent adoptive homes. Massachusetts, Connecticut, Delaware and Minnesota are the only states that require the use of a licensed adoption agency to place a child in an adoptive home. The licensing authority for the Commonwealth of Massachusetts is the Department of Early Education and Care, previously called the Office of Child Care Services. Adoption in Massachusetts falls into three broad categories: public adoption from foster care, domestic private adoption, and international private adoption.

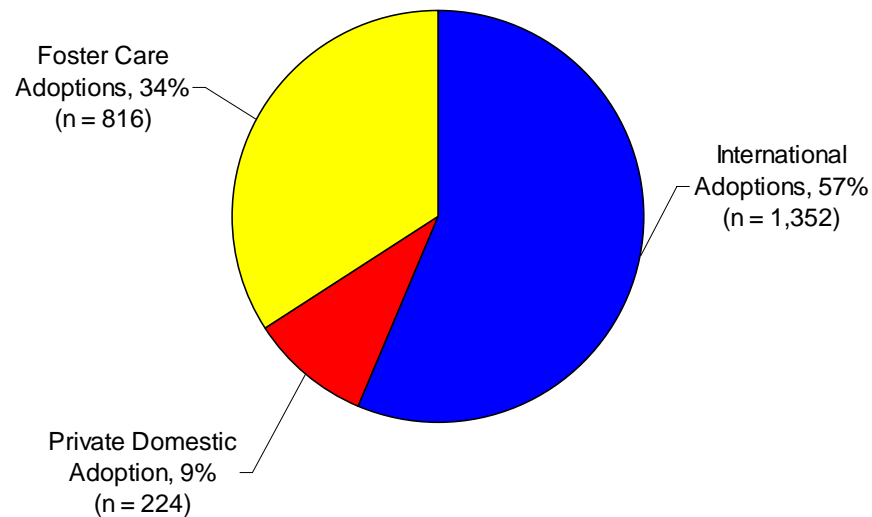
### 2004 Findings Highlights:

- **Total numbers and types:** There were a total of 2,392 adoptions finalized in Massachusetts in 2004. The distribution of adoptions by type is illustrated in Figure 1. Of the total number of adoptions, 1,584 were through private agencies, including 1,352 international and 224 private domestic adoptions.
  - **From our backyard:** Eight hundred and eight foster children from Massachusetts were adopted in 2004. Of these adoptions, 87% were facilitated by the Department of Social Services while the remaining 13% were privately facilitated. There were also eight adoptions of out-of-state foster children to adoptive parents in Massachusetts.
  - **From around the world:** There were 1,352 international adoptions in Massachusetts during 2004. China sent the largest number of children, accounting for 35% of all international adoptions, followed by Russia (22%), South Korea (16%) and Guatemala (10%). China and Russia are also the top two sending countries for international adoptions in all of the U.S., and have been since 1995 (they have switched places between first and second during this time, but both have been consistently the top two). The U.S. Department of State reports that in fiscal year 2004, the number of orphan visas issued nationally for children adopted from mainland China was 7,044 and from Russia was 5,865. ([http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/stats/stats\\_451.html](http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/stats/stats_451.html))

---

<sup>1</sup> Fifty-four agencies were listed, but only 50 had active private domestic and/or international programs at the time of the survey administration. One of the 50 programs is a subsidiary of another one of the programs, so only 49 surveys were completed and returned.

**Figure 1: Total Adoptions in Massachusetts by Type of Adoption, n = 2,392**



- **Family type:** The majority of children adopted through private agencies in Massachusetts in 2004 were adopted into two-parent families. Adoptions by single people and by same-sex couples are legal in Massachusetts. Of the 1,576 private adoptions, 178 (11%) were by single individuals. One hundred and forty (79%) of these single-parent adoptions were international. Forty-eight (3%) children were privately adopted by same-sex couples. Of the 48, 16 were international adoptions.
- **Waiting time:** For private adoptions the waiting time between approval of a home study and placement of a child into the home depended on the type of adoption. Domestic Infant adoptions, cases in which the adoptive parent has identified the birth parent and the agency is assisting the process (known in the survey as Domestic Infant Parent Identified/Agency Assisted adoptions, or DIPI) had a relatively short average waiting time of 7.3 months. International Network adoptions (IN) had a longer average waiting time of 11.4 months. The overall average waiting time was 9.9 months.
- **Fees:** The cost of adoptions varies greatly depending on the type of adoption. Private agency adoptions can cost up to \$36,000, while adoptions through foster care do not involve any fees and may in fact provide funds to the adopting family through post-adoption subsidies or related support services. In Massachusetts, the most expensive type of private adoption was Domestic Infant using Agency Resources (DIA), with a high fee of \$36,000 and an average fee of \$16,463. The least expensive type of private adoption was International Network, with a high fee of \$35,000 and an

average fee of \$8,371. The overall average cost for private agency adoption in 2004 was \$12,422.

- **Communication:** The majority (57%) of private domestic adoption agencies surveyed report some level of communication, or openness, between adoptive families and birth parents. The most common practice reported was the non-identifying exchange of photos and letters between adopted and birth parent(s).

## Introduction

The Center for Adoption Research has been legislatively charged<sup>2</sup> to collect information from Massachusetts licensed agencies that provide private adoption placement services. This information is collected in collaboration with the Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS) and the Department of Early Education and Care (EEC, previously called the Office of Child Care Services). This is the fourth annual report of findings; previous reports can be viewed and downloaded at [www.centerforadoptionresearch.org](http://www.centerforadoptionresearch.org).

In the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, only licensed adoption agencies may legally place children for adoption. The EEC regulates adoption agencies in accordance with Massachusetts statutes. Information regarding the regulations governing adoption and the requirements for agency licensure, as well as a listing of licensed agencies, are available from the EEC.<sup>3</sup>

The 2004 survey was sent to 54 agencies identified by the EEC. Four of the agencies did not complete the survey: one agency only served Romania (a country currently closed for international adoptions), one agency did not offer adoption services, and two agencies had not completed the licensure process. The agencies that completed and returned the survey are listed with their contact information in Appendix A. A separate survey was sent to DSS requesting information on finalized adoptions from foster care. While reading this report it is important to note that DSS collects data based on the fiscal year July 1, 2003 – June 30, 2004, which is different than the calendar year 2004 upon which private agencies base their reports.

The following report summarizes the findings of the 2004 agency survey on adoption in Massachusetts in the categories listed below:

- Agency information
- Placement programs
- Birth parent information
- Home study services
- Finalized adoptions in 2004
- Reported single parent and co-parent (gay/lesbian) adoptions in 2004
- Length of wait
- Adoption fees
- Adoption placement practices
- Adoption related services
- Adoptions from foster care

<sup>2</sup> Since 1999, Massachusetts law requires reports by placement agencies detailing the number and nature of legal adoptions processed during each calendar quarter to be filed with the Center for Adoption Research [1999, HB 4900 37 amended M.G.L. 28A §10 (c) (8)]

<sup>3</sup> The Department of Early Education and Care: [www.eec.state.ma.us](http://www.eec.state.ma.us) Central Office: 600 Washington St., 6<sup>th</sup> Floor, Suite 6100, Boston, MA 02111 (617) 988-6600

## Results

### Agency Information

Of the 54 licensed agencies in Massachusetts, 50 were identified as having provided private domestic, contracted foster care, and/or international adoption placement services in 2004. Since one of the agencies is a subsidiary of another agency, only one survey was completed containing data for both. In total, 49 surveys were completed and analyzed. Information regarding the number of adoptions by DSS is also included in this report. All responding agencies provided full contact information, which is attached in Appendix A, along with Regional DSS office information.

### Types of Placement Programs

Agencies were asked to report the types of adoption placement services they offered to adoptive parents. Most agencies reported providing more than one type of service. Table 1 includes definitions of the different types of adoption placement services available, the number of agencies that offered each of these services, and the number of adoptions finalized by type. As previously noted, agencies may provide more than one type of placement program; therefore the numbers in the agency column may exceed the total number of agencies surveyed.

The most common type of placement program offered (61%) was the International Network adoption program in which the agency networks with other professionals to provide placements (referred to as IN in Table 1). Agencies offering this type of service coordinate with other agencies, organizations, or facilitators throughout the U.S. and abroad that have programs in specific countries. These agencies work with parents to complete the requirements for adoption in Massachusetts, and, in 2004, facilitated 242 adoptions.

The domestic infant adoption programs were the next most common type of placement programs (DIA, DIPI and DIN). Agencies providing this type of service facilitate adoptions using their own resources (51%), those identified by adoptive parents (51%), or by networking with other agencies (49%). In 2004 there were 224 domestic infant adoptions.

Foster care adoption services are provided by DSS and 17 private agencies (35%). Eight hundred and eight foster children from Massachusetts were adopted - 705 through DSS directly and 103 through private agencies. In addition, eight out-of-state foster children were adopted by Massachusetts families.

*Working in the adoption field is such a privilege! I have found adoption work to be tremendously rewarding while still challenging and interesting. In adoption we (the adoption professionals) and our clients (the families) are working toward a common goal; securing permanent, nurturing homes for children in need. This work is infinitely interesting and meaningful as we help Birthparents and Pre-Adoptive parents make decisions that will affect the rest of their lives. Today, with open domestic adoptions and the variety of international choices available, decisions around openness, race and culture bring a whole new dimension to the work, but the real "pay off", so to speak, is the joy and satisfaction we feel watching the children unite with their new families.*

*—Pat Hoopes, Regional Manager, Wide Horizons for Children*

**Table 1: Definitions of Placement Programs**

<b>Placement Program</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Number of Agencies*</b>	<b>Number of Adoptions</b>
<b>1.</b> Domestic Infant Adoption with Agency Resources (DIA)	Agency matches birth parents with prospective adoptive parents, coordinates, and finalizes the adoption.	25 (51%)	137 (6%)
<b>2.</b> Domestic Infant Adoption Parent Identified/Agency Assisted (DIPI)	Prospective adoptive parents have an identified birth mother (parents) and use the assistance of a licensed agency to coordinate and finalize the adoption process.	25 (51%)	30 (1%)
<b>3.</b> Domestic Infant Adoption by Networking with Other Programs (DIN)	Agency uses outside resources to both match prospective adoptive parents with birth parents and to manage the adoption process.	24 (49%)	57 (2%)
<b>4.</b> International Adoption with Agency's Program (IA)	Agency has an internal international adoption program and coordinates all services needed for adoptions from specific countries with which the agency conducts adoptions.	15 (31%)	1,110 (46%)
<b>5.</b> International Adoption by Networking with Other Programs (IN)	Agency does not have their own international adoption program; they coordinate with other agencies, organizations, or facilitators throughout the U.S. and abroad that have programs in specific countries. The agency works with parents to complete the requirements for adoption in MA, and other resources are used to coordinate the services to complete the adoption in a specific foreign country.	30 (61%)	242 (10%)
<b>6.</b> DSS Contracted Agencies (DSS Contracts)	Agency has a contract with the Department of Social Services to find adoptive homes for children in foster care who are free for adoption.	16 (33%)	103 (4%)
<b>7.</b> Foster Care/Non-MA (no affiliation with MA DSS)	Agency places waiting, special needs foster children from other states into adoptive homes in MA.	1 (2%)	8
<b>8.</b> Foster Care Adoptions through DSS	Adoptions from foster care finalized through DSS. This number includes the placements made through DSS contracted agencies (see row 6 above).	n/a	**705 (29%)
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,392</b>

\*Agencies may provide more than one type of service, so the numbers in this column may exceed the total number of agencies surveyed.

\*\* DSS reported 808 finalized adoptions; however, this reported number included the 103 adoptions facilitated by contracted private agencies.

## Birth Parent Information

Thirty agencies (61%) reported that they provided counseling to a total of 509 birth parents during 2004<sup>4</sup>. Nineteen of these agencies provided counseling to birth fathers as well as birth mothers and 20 agencies reported providing services to birth parents from states outside of Massachusetts. Also during 2004, these agencies reported that 136 children were placed for adoption by their birth parents. In Massachusetts birth parents have the right to independent legal counsel when making an adoption plan, and private agencies reported that 52 birth parents were referred for independent legal consultations in 2004.

## Home Study Services in Coordination with Non-Massachusetts Agencies

Agencies were asked if they provided home studies and required post-placement services for Massachusetts residents adopting a child through another agency or through a parent-identified

*Adoption touches people in so many ways -- probably because it goes to the very heart of who we are as individuals and what "family" truly means. I want to believe that we can find ways to make each adoption all that we know it can be - for each child, birth parent and adoptive parent whom we serve. If we can do that, we will have truly made a difference in this world.*  
 —Madelyn Freundlich, national adoption expert

adoption. During 2004, 332 home studies were conducted for people using an agency or provider outside of Massachusetts and 95% (317) were approved. The majority of these home studies were for international adoptions, including children from Guatemala (58), Russia (42), China (41) and Kazakhstan (24). Eighteen agencies (37%) reported that they provided these services and charged a comprehensive fee. Four agencies reported a single fee ranging from \$2,000 - \$4,500 for both home study and post-placement services. Other agencies reported fees for home studies and post-placement services separately. In these cases the home study fees ranged from \$1,500 to \$4,000 and the post-placement services fees ranging from \$350 to \$2,500. Additional information on fees is included in the section on Adoption Fees on pages 15 and 16.

### Finalized Adoptions in 2004

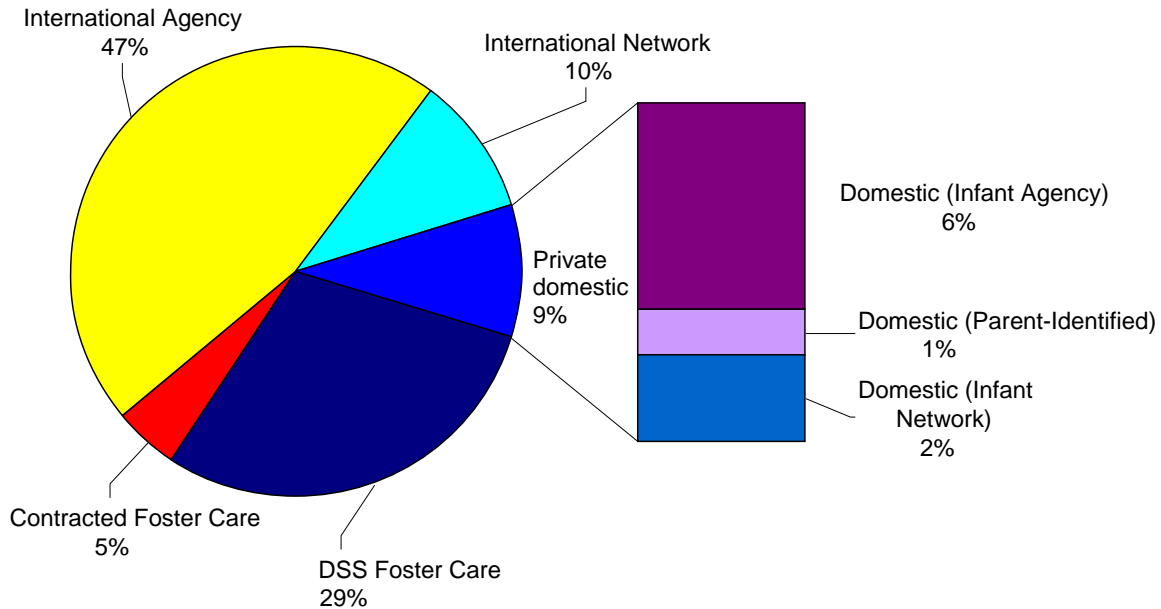
According to survey respondents and DSS, 2,392 adoptions were finalized in Massachusetts in 2004. Of these adoptions, 1,584 were finalized by private agencies independent of DSS and 808 were finalized through DSS. See Figure 2 for a graphic representation of the types of adoptions finalized.

International adoptions were the most common type of adoption (57%), followed by adoption of foster children through DSS and contracted agencies (34%). According to the Child Welfare League of America, in 2000 and 2001 adoptions from foster care accounted for 40% of all adoptions nationally.<sup>5</sup>

<sup>4</sup> Please note that no distinctions were made between working with an individual or a couple.

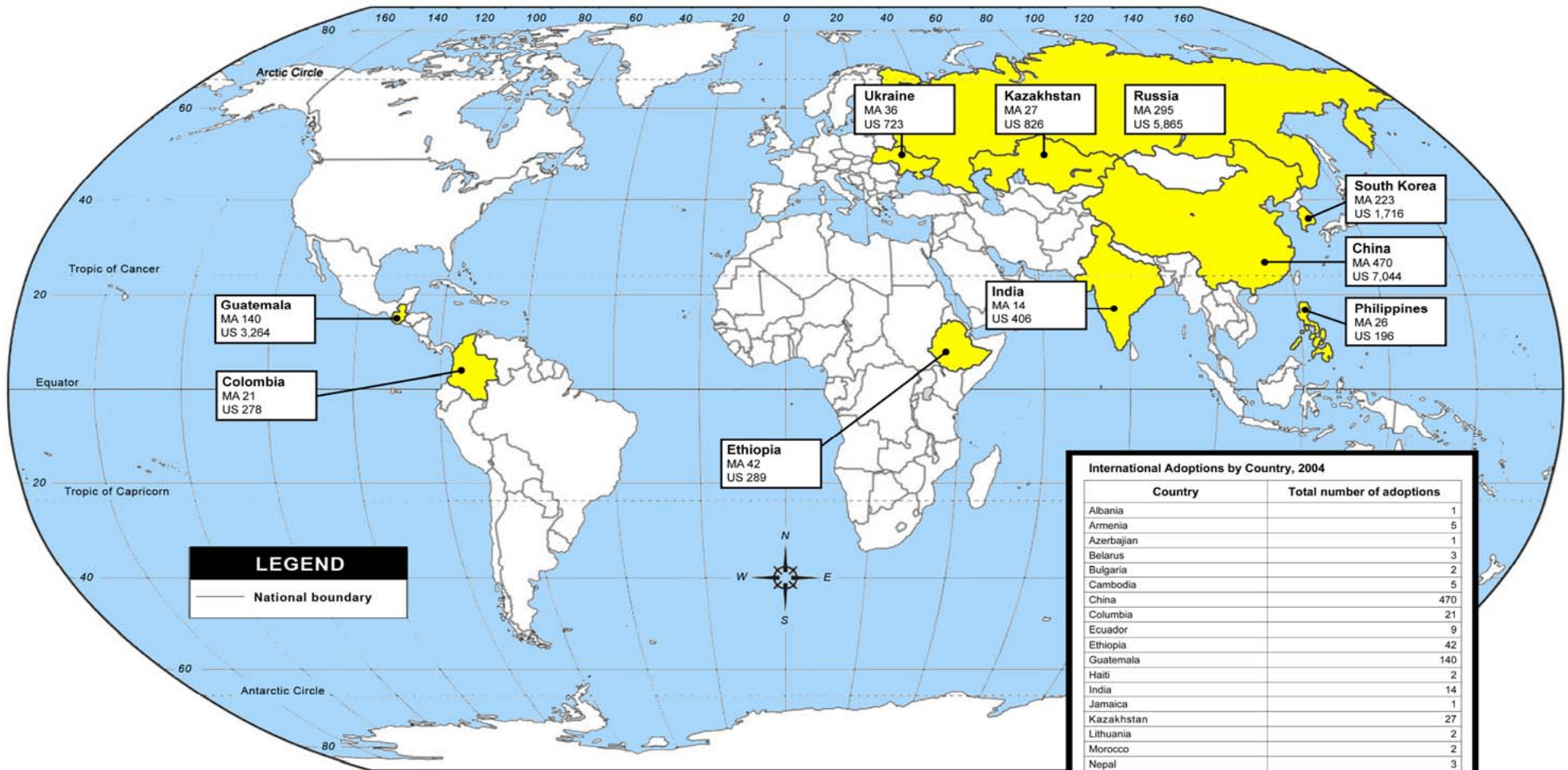
<sup>5</sup> Child Welfare League of America National Conference 2006 Adoption Services Fact Sheet.

**Figure 2: Total Number of Adoptions by Type  
(n = 2,392)**



As indicated in Figure 2, the majority of adoptions were international (57% of all adoptions, and 85% of private adoptions), with China (35%), Russia (22%), South Korea (16%) and Guatemala (10%) as the top four sending countries. See Figure 3 for an illustration of sending countries in 2004. The map presents the top ten sending countries for international adoptions to residents of Massachusetts, with totals for the United States as well. Nine of the top 10 sending countries for Massachusetts were also within the top 10 sending countries for the entire United States (Haiti was in the top 10 sending countries for the United States, but not for Massachusetts).

# International Adoptions: Top Ten Sending Countries through Massachusetts Agencies, 2004



Totals for the U.S. are included for comparison purposes. Nine of the top sending nations to MA are also the top ten for the U.S.

Source: U.S. Department of State: [http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/stats\\_451.html](http://travel.state.gov/family/adoption/stats_451.html)

\*Does not match total for International Adoptions of 1352 because of agencies not including specific sending countries.

## Single Parent and Co-Parent Adoptions in 2004

In Massachusetts, single parent adoptions and gay/lesbian adoptions are legal. Thirty-seven agencies (75.5%) reported offering services to single prospective adoptive parents, and 32 agencies (65.3%) reported offering services to gay/lesbian prospective adoptive parents. Table 2 summarizes finalized single parent and co-parent adoptions. Please note that not all agencies kept statistics on gay/lesbian adoptions, so these numbers are likely underreported.

There were 178 reported single parent adoptions finalized through private agencies. Of these, 140 children (79%) came to this country through international adoptions. The top four sending countries for single adoptions in Massachusetts were China (37%), Guatemala (24%), Russia (19%), and Kazakhstan (7%).

Private agencies reported 48 gay/lesbian adoptions were finalized in 2004. Of these adoptions, one third (16) were international, with the majority of children (12) coming from Guatemala. As mentioned above, these numbers likely under represent the actual numbers of gay/lesbian adoptions as several agencies do not keep statistics on gay/lesbian adoptions.

**Table 2: Number of Adoptions by Placement Program, 2004**

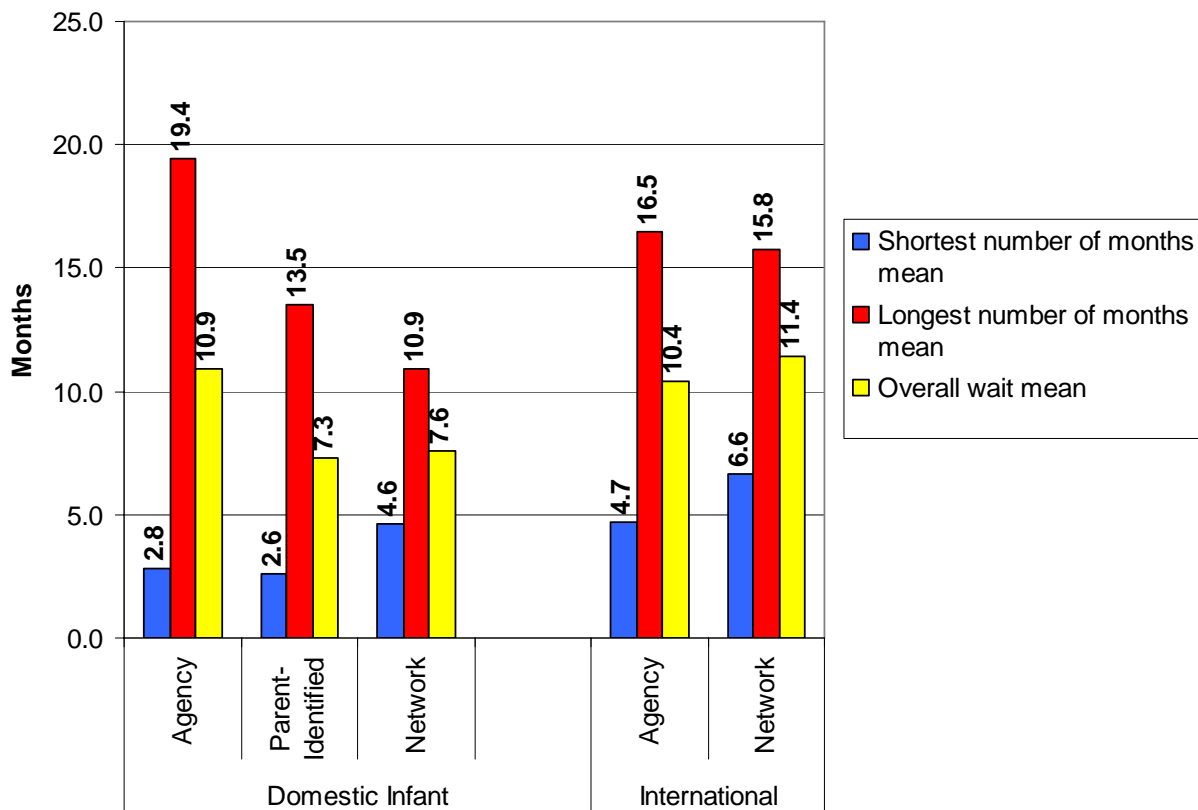
Placement Program	Number of Single Parent Adoptions	Number of Gay/Lesbian Adoptions	Total Number of Adoptions
<i>Private Domestic</i>			
1. Domestic Infant Adoption with Agency Resources (DIA)	6	2	137
2. Domestic Infant Adoption Parent Identified/Agency Assisted (DIPI)	0	0	30
3. Domestic Infant Adoption by Networking with Other Programs (DIN)	16	10	57
<i>International</i>			
4. International Adoption with Agency's Program (IA)	93	1	1,110
5. International Adoption by Networking with Other Programs (IN)	47	15	242
<i>Foster Care</i>			
6. Contracted Foster Care Adoptions Foster Care Adoptions through private agencies contracting with DSS - (DSS Contracts)	16	20	103
7. Children from Foster Care outside of MA (no affiliation with MA DSS)	unknown	unknown	8
8. Foster Care Adoptions/(DSS)	unknown	unknown	*705
<b>Total</b>			<b>2,392</b>

\*DSS reported 808 finalized adoptions; however this reported number included the 103 adoptions facilitated by contracted private agencies.

## Length of Wait: Private Domestic and International Adoption

Once prospective adoptive parents have an approved home study, they become eligible for placement of a child. The waiting time from home study approval to placement of a child into the home varies based on the type of adoption. Domestic Infant - Parent Identified Agency Assisted adoptions had the shortest average waiting time (7.3 months), and International Network adoptions had the longest average waiting time (11.4 months). The overall average waiting time was 9.9 months.

**Figure 4: Average Length of Wait for Placement by Type of Adoption**

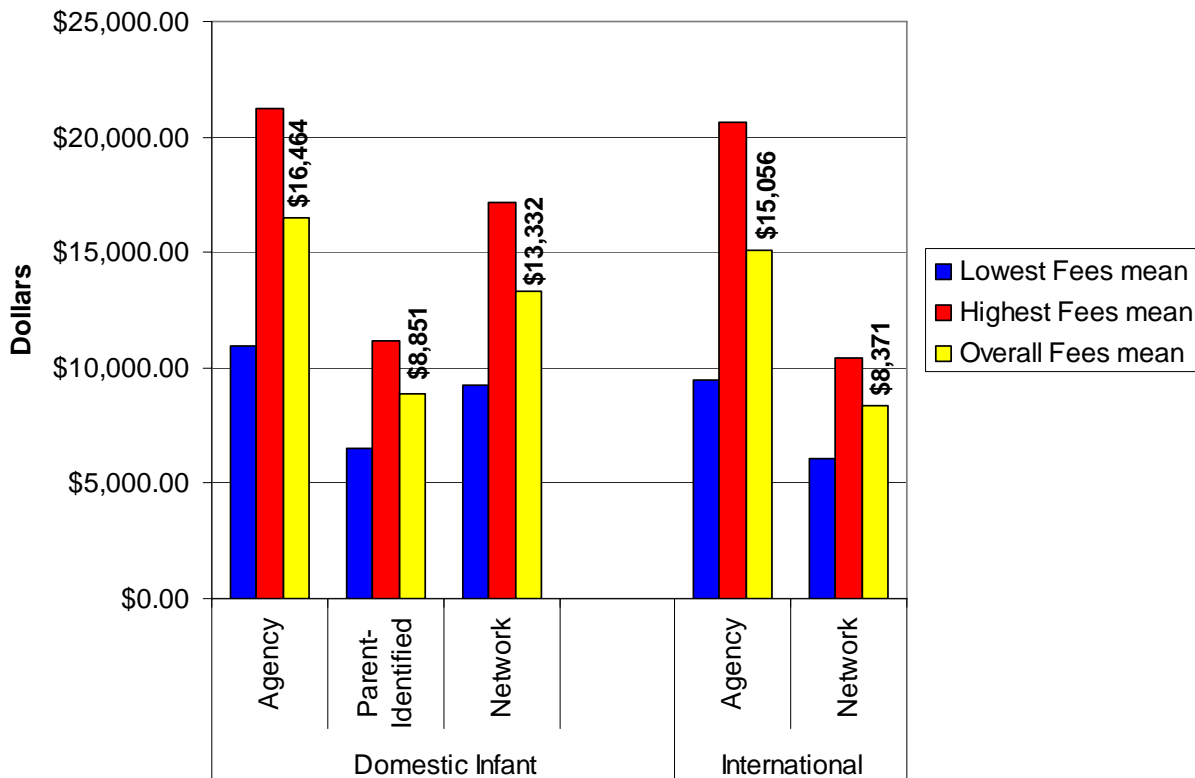


Agencies reported the shortest and longest waiting periods for each type of adoption program - these averages and the overall averages are shown in Figure 4. As illustrated, there is a wide range of variability between the shortest and longest waiting periods, especially within the category of Domestic Infant Adoption Placements using Agency services. There are several factors that can affect the length of wait between approval of home study and placement of child, including timely completion of required paperwork and adherence to government regulations.

## Adoption Fees

The cost of adoption varies greatly depending on the type of adoption. In Massachusetts, private, non-foster care agency adoptions can cost up to \$36,000, while adoptions through foster care do not generate any fees. The most expensive type of adoption was Domestic Infant Adoption Placements using Agency services, with a high fee of \$36,000 and an average fee of \$16,464. The overall average cost for private agency adoption in 2004 was \$12,422. See Figure 5 for a summary of the total cost of adoption by type.

**Figure 5: Average Total Cost of Adoption by Type of Adoption**



Agencies were asked to report lowest and highest total fees for each type of adoption placement. These averages, as well as the overall averages, are reported above. It is important to note that the reported adoption fees for international adoptions may or may not include costs incurred by the adoptive parents for expenses such as travel and required documentation. Because practices associated with adopting a child internationally differ for each sending country and agency, it is not feasible to calculate a total cost incurred by parents.

Agencies also reported component fees for various parts of the adoption process, including application fees, home-study fees, placement fees, and post-placement fees. These data are summarized in Table 3. Due to the variability within fee components, we have included both the mean (calculated by adding all values and dividing them by the total number of values) and the median (the number in the middle of all the values if they were listed sequentially) in Table 3. As with the overall fee information presented above, there was a wide range of variability among agencies and by type of adoption program.

**Table 3: Component Fees by Type of Adoption (numbers in dollars)**

Types of fees	Domestic Infant – Agency	Domestic Infant Parent Identified	Domestic Infant Network	International Agency	International Network
<b>Application</b>	Mean = \$370 Median = 250	Mean = \$298 Median = 250	Mean = \$442 Median = 250	Mean = \$238 Median = 200	Mean = \$329 Median = 250
<b>Home study</b>	Mean = 2,414 Median = 2,250	Mean = 2,297 Median = 2,250	Mean = 2,545 Median = 2,250	Mean = 2,003 Median = 2,100	Mean = 2,057 Median = 2,000
<b>Placement</b>	Mean = 13,218 Median = 13,400	Mean = 6,536 Median = 5,000	Mean = 4,835 Median = 3,675	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>Post-placement</b>	Mean = 1,652 Median = 1,500	Mean = 1,343 Median = 1,200	Mean = 1,316 Median = 1,200	Mean = 1,204 Median = 1,200	Mean = 1,268 Median = 1,200
<b>Legal fees</b>	Mean = 1,130 Median = 1,000	Mean = 1,211 Median = 1,050	Mean = 511 Median = 500	Mean = 528 Median = 583	Mean = 813 Median = 500
<b>Birth parent expenses</b>	Mean = 2,160 Median = 2,150	Mean = 2,396 Median = 3,000	Mean = 1,493 Median = 980	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>ICPC,<sup>6</sup> Sending</b>	Mean = 766 Median = 750	Mean = 799 Median = 1,000	Mean = 598 Median = 750	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>ICPC, receiving</b>	Mean = 548 Median = 600	Mean = 684 Median = 1,000	Mean = 548 Median = 600	Not applicable	Not applicable
<b>In country fees</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Mean = 11,035 Median = 11,235	Mean = 8,808 Median = 7,425
<b>Travel fees</b>	Not applicable	Not applicable	Not applicable	Mean = 3,706 Median = 2,500	Mean = 1,750 Median = 1,500

The placement fees were the most expensive component of adoption fees for domestic adoption placements, accounting for up to 61% of the total cost. For international adoption programs, the in-country fees were the most expensive component, accounting for up to 83% of the total cost. There was a wide range of variability across agencies in component fees and total cost of adoption.

### Adoption Placement Practices

Practices related to communication between birth and adoptive families have changed dramatically in the past 30 years. Throughout most of the 20<sup>th</sup> century the most common type of domestic adoption was confidential adoption, which meant that little, if any, information was exchanged between the parties involved in the adoption process. Today, the most common types of domestic adoption practices involve some level of communication between birth parents and adoptive families. This is referred to as openness in adoption. Table 4 summarizes agency responses regarding five specified practices related to openness in adoption. The most common practice reported was non-identifying exchange of photos and letters, and the least common practice was no contact between the birth parents and adoptive families.

<sup>6</sup> ICPC stands for the Interstate Compact on the Placement of Children, agreed to by all states, and designed to facilitate adoptions between states.

**Table 4: Practices Related to Contact and Communication\***

Type of Practice	Very Common	Common	Uncommon	Very Uncommon
No contact between birth parents and adoptive families, no agreement for update or communication through agency (n=34)	14.7%	0	26.5%	59.2%
Non-identifying exchange of photos and letters (n=34)	47.1%	17.6%	14.7%	17.6%
Non-identifying face-to-face meetings between birth and adoptive families (n=34)	38.2%	23.5%	17.6%	17.6%
Identifying information exchanged (i.e. full names and addresses) (n=33)	0	21.2%	36.4%	36.4%
Placement including formal plan for ongoing contact after finalization (n=33)	30.3%	27.3%	15.2%	21.2%

\*Indicates percentage of private agencies that consider the various practices more or less common.

Agencies with their own international adoption programs require that post-finalization update information from the adoptive families be sent to authorities, orphanages, or other official entities in the child's country of origin. The sending countries have different requirements surrounding this reporting. See Table 5 for the number of years these reports are required by each sending country.

*Adoption is an integral part of my life. Our two children, now young adults, joined our family by adoption, coming from El Salvador and Colombia in the early 1980s... I had always thought I would return to teaching when my children went to school, but being an adoptive parent and volunteer completely changed my career path. I thoroughly enjoy people telling me how my work has influenced their lives and, in so many situations, led them to adoption.*  
 -Joan Clark, Executive Director, Open Door Society Adoption Community of New England, Inc.

**Table 5: Post-Finalization Update Requirements for International Adoptions**

Country	Minimum Reporting Time	Maximum Reporting Time
Bulgaria	3 years	3 years
Cambodia	18 years	18 years
China	1 year	12 years
Colombia	1 year	2 years
Ecuador	2 years	4 years
Guatemala	0 years	2 years
India	1 year	18 years
Kazakhstan	3 years	3 years
Philippines	1 year	1 year
Romania	2 years	2 years
Russia	3 years	3 years
South Korea	1 year	1 year
Ukraine	1 year	18 years
Other	3 years	18 years

Reporting requirements are important. For example, Ukraine terminated adoptions to the U.S. and France because of less than full compliance with the post-finalization reporting requirements. Sending countries differ in the specific reporting requirements and the importance attached to these requirements.

### Adoption Related Services

Agencies were asked to report whether they offered any of 24 services commonly provided by adoption agencies or identified as important services by parties involved in the adoption process. The most common service provided is individual orientation meetings, provided by more than 80% of agencies. Fifty-one percent of agencies reported providing pre-placement counseling to birth parents, and 49% of agencies provided post-placement counseling to birth parents. A table summarizing responses on all 24 services is included in Appendix B. Two categories in Appendix B refer to services related to *search in adoption*. The term *search in adoption* can mean either a birth parent seeking information about a child for whom an adoption plan was completed, or an adopted person seeking information about their birth parent(s).

*A temporary family can minimize the damage of prior abuse and neglect on a child, but only a permanent family has the incentive to help a child reach her full potential.*  
- Mary Eschelbach Hansen, economist, adoption researcher, adoptive mother

### Adoptions from Foster Care

The Massachusetts Department of Social Services (DSS) completes adoptions for children from foster care whose birth parents' parental rights have been terminated. DSS also contracts with private adoption agencies to facilitate the permanent placement of children from foster care into adoptive homes.

Sixteen of the 50 private adoption agencies have contracts with DSS and placed foster children into adoptive homes in 2004. During 2004, there were 103 adoptions finalized from foster care by private agencies working with DSS. The survey collected additional information about these adoptions from foster care, including demographic information for the children and type of placement (see Table 6).

**Table 6: Characteristics of Foster Care Adoptions through Private Agencies**

Characteristics of Children and Placements	Number of Adoption Placements in 2004 (n=103)	
Age Range *	Under 1 year	5
	1-5 years	42
	6-10 years	32
	11-15 years	20
	16-18 years	1
Gender	Male	57
	Female	46
Race/Ethnicity	Caucasian	38
	African American	21
	Hispanic	29
	Other	15
Type of Placement **	Sibling Groups	49
	Specialized	20
	Medically Fragile	2
	Residential Care	7
	Transracial Adoptions	32
	Interstate Adoption Placements	24
Adoptive Parent Information	Single adoptive parents	16
	Same-sex adoptive parents	20

\* Missing data (n=3)

\*\* Categories not mutually exclusive

*I started working in adoption 11 days before my first child was born. While I was experiencing the incredible power of the bond between parent and child, I became painfully aware of children who don't have that bond. At every step of parenthood I am aware that my children have something other children don't. I know that some children are separated from their parents and their siblings with less preparation than my kids get for two weeks of summer camp. I feel called to do whatever I can so that every child has a loving family.*  
- Jeff Katz, Adoption and Foster Care Consultant and Trainer

As shown in Table 6, private agencies finalized 103 adoptions from foster care under contract with DSS. The majority of foster children adopted were male. Caucasian children were adopted most frequently (38%), followed by Hispanic children (29%) and African American children (21%). Forty-two percent of foster care adoptions were of children between the ages of 1 and 5 years old.

DSS completes a separate survey regarding adoptions finalized from foster care and provided limited information on these adoptions. The data which were available for this report are presented in Table 7.

**Table7: Adoption Legalizations by DSS in FY 2004 by DSS Region**

DSS Region	Number of Adoptions in FY 2004
West	183
Central	124
Northeast	99
Metro	55
Southeast	159
Boston	86
Contracted Private Agencies	*102
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>808</b>

*\*The number of contracted private agency adoptions reported by DSS (102) does not match the number reported by the private agencies surveyed (103). This could be due to the discrepancy in reporting timelines (fiscal year versus calendar year).*

The West region reported the greatest number of adoptions, followed by the Southeast and Central regions.

On a national level, according to Adoption and Foster Care Analysis and Reporting System (AFCARS) data, as of September 30, 2004 there were 518,000 children in the U.S. foster care system.<sup>7</sup> The average age of these children was 10.1 years, and 53% were male. While child abuse

*MARE is proud to partner with the Department of Social Services and the private contracted agencies in all of the outstanding work they do for waiting children and families. Particularly in the past few years, this collaboration has increased the number of children registered with MARE who have found permanency and improved services to families.*

*- Carolyn E. Smith, Executive Director of MARE*

and neglect occur at similar rates across racial/ethnic groups, there were proportionally more children of color in the foster care system than in the general population. According to statistics from National Foster Care Month, in 2004, 59% of children adopted from foster care were adopted by their foster parents, and 24% were adopted by a relative. Nationally, 53% of the children leaving the foster care system in 2004 were reunited with their parents or primary caregivers. In Massachusetts, 59% of children leaving the foster care system were reunited with their parents or primary caregivers in 2001.

<sup>7</sup> National foster care statistics from the National Foster Care Month website, [www.fostercaremonth.org](http://www.fostercaremonth.org), downloaded May 2006 and Child Welfare in Massachusetts Fact Sheet, Children's Defense Fund, <http://www.childrensdefense.org/>

## Future Directions

The *Adoption in Massachusetts* report is one of the few sources of comprehensive, ongoing data collection on private and public adoption placements and practices in the United States. The goal of this research is to provide consolidated information on adoption in Massachusetts to benefit providers, consumers and other stakeholders in the adoption process. The survey benefits both the consumers of adoption services and those who supervise adoption service providers by enhancing awareness of emerging trends in adoption in Massachusetts.

*After adopting 8 children, I know how challenging going through the adoption process can be. I am so grateful to the work of the Massachusetts Department of Social Services and its private adoption agency partners who make that process as easy as it can be, and through their work create forever families. I am also so grateful to the agencies that report their information annually, making us the only state in the nation that tracks its adoption statistics this way.*

*—Aaron Lazare, Chancellor and Dean of the University of Massachusetts Medical School, Executive Director, Center for Adoption Research*

In the future, the Center for Adoption Research would like to work with adoption agencies and the Massachusetts Department of Social Services to improve data collection methods and tools. A web-based survey collection protocol will be piloted to ease survey completion and data collection. Also, future reports will begin to analyze trends in adoption placements and practices, as the Center for Adoption Research increases the amount of consistent data on adoptions in Massachusetts.

---

## Appendix A: Listing of Licensed Adoption Providers in Massachusetts

### **A Full Circle Adoptions**

39 Main Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
(413) 587-0007  
Marla Ruth Allison, JD, LICSW

### **A Red Thread Adoption Services**

681 Washington Street, Suite 12  
Norwood, MA 02062  
(781) 762-2428  
Leah O’Leary LICSW

### **Act of Love, MSPCC**

99 Summer Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
(617) 587-1554  
Mary Lou Sadders

### **Adoption and Aid International Jewish Family Services of North Shore**

17 Front Street, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor  
Salem, MA 01970  
(978) 741-7878  
Jon Firger

### **Adoption by Choice Catholic Charities of Fall River**

1600 Bay Street  
Fall River, MA 02724  
(508) 674-4681  
Arlene McNamee

### **Adoption Choices Jewish Family Services Metrowest**

475 Franklin Street  
Framingham, MA 01702  
(508) 875-3100  
Marc Jacobs

### **Adoption Link**

**JFS of Greater Springfield**  
15 Lenox Street  
Springfield, MA 01108  
(413) 737-2601  
Robert Marmor, LICSW, MBA

### **Adoption Options of JFS**

366 Winthrop Street  
Rehoboth, MA 02769  
(800) 337-6513  
John Shallet

### **Adoption Resource Associates**

262 Upland Road  
Cambridge, MA 02140  
(617) 492-2888  
Dr. Laura NeMeyer

### **Adoption Resources**

**JCFS Boston**  
1430 Main Street  
Waltham, MA 02451  
(617) 332-2218  
Sy Friedlander

### **Adoptions with Love, Inc.**

188 Needham Street, Suite 250  
Newton, MA 02464  
(617) 964-4357  
Amy Cohen

### **Alliance for Children, Inc.**

55 William Street, Suite G-10  
Wellesley, MA 02481  
(781) 431-7148  
Filis Casey

**American International Children's Alliance, Inc.**

100 Cummings Center, Suite 330A  
 Beverly, MA 01915  
 (781) 631-7900  
 Kim Menard

**Angel Adoptions**

11 Dix Street  
 Waltham, MA 02453  
 (781) 899-9222  
 Laura Weingast

**Beacon Adoption Center, Inc.**

66 Lake Buel Road  
 Great Barrington, MA 01230  
 (413) 528-2749  
 Michael McCurdy

**Bethany Christian Services New England**

820 Turnpike Street, Suite 101  
 North Andover, MA 01845  
 (978) 794-9800  
 Pamela Wood

**Boston Adoption Bureau**

14 Beacon Street, #616  
 Boston, MA 02108  
 (617) 227-1336  
 Marilyn Speiser, LICSW

**Bright Futures Adoption Center**

5 Broadview Street  
 Acton, MA 01720  
 (978) 263-5400  
 Karen Cheyney

**Brightside for Families and Children**

2112 Riverdale Street  
 West Springfield, MA 01089  
 (413) 827-4315  
 Linda Foster

**Brightside, Inc**

480 West Street  
 Pittsfield, MA 01201  
 (413) 496-9491  
 Claudia Coplan

**Cambridge Family and Children's Services**

60 Gore Street  
 Cambridge, MA 02141  
 (617) 661-9749  
 Denise Maguire

**Catholic Charitable Bureau – Boston**

Laboure Center, 275 West Broadway  
 South Boston, MA 02127  
 (617) 268-9670  
 Vivian Soper

**Catholic Charities – Worcester**

10 Hammond Street  
 Worcester, MA 01610  
 (508) 798-0191  
 Catherine Loeffler

**Catholic Charities – North Shore**

55 LynnShore Drive  
 Lynn, MA 01902  
 (781) 593-2312  
 Virginia Doocy

**Child Adoption Associates, Inc.**

200 Swanton Street, #635  
 Winchester, MA 01890  
 (781) 929-1313  
 Ida Rozhitskaya

**Child and Family Services**

800 Purchase Street  
 New Bedford, MA 02740  
 (508) 990-0894  
 John Jackson

**Children's Aid and Family Service**

8 Trumbull Road  
 Northampton, MA 01060  
 (413) 584-5690  
 Jeffrey Roth-Howe

**Children's Friend, Inc.**

21 Cedar Street  
 Worcester, MA 01608  
 (508) 753-5425  
 Karen Ludington

**Children's International Choice, Inc.**

66 Marlborough Street  
Boston, MA 02116  
(617) 369-7755  
Irina Christie

**Children's Legal Services, Inc.**

4 Cypress Street, Suite 3  
Brookline, MA 02445  
(617) 264-7333  
Henry Bock

**Children's Services of Roxbury**

520 Dudley Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119  
(617) 445-6655  
Rev. Richard Richardson

**China Adoption with Love, Inc.**

251 Harvard Street, #17 & 19  
Brookline, MA 02446  
(617) 731-0748  
Lillian Zhang

**Communities for People, Inc.**

**Special Adoption Family Services**

418 Commonwealth Avenue  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 572-3678  
Joseph Leavey

**Dare Family Services**

504 Dudley Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119  
(617) 427-6500  
Gregory McDermott

**Downey Side Adoptions**

999 Liberty Street  
Springfield, MA 01104  
(413) 781-2123  
Fr. Paul Engel

**Florence Crittendon League**

119 Hall Street  
Lowell, MA 01854  
(978) 452-9671  
Ilze Keegan

**Gift of Life Adoption Services**

1087 Newman Avenue  
Seekonk, MA 02771  
(508) 761-5661  
Donna Ricci

**Good Hope Adoption Services, Inc.**

708 Route 134  
South Dennis, MA 02664  
(508)385-7815  
Karen Medre, M.Ed.

**Jewish Family Service of Worcester, Inc.**

646 Salisbury Street  
Worcester, MA 01609  
(508) 755-3101  
Stephen Slaten, Ph.D.

**LDS Family Services**

385 Concord Avenue Suite 100  
Belmont, MA 02478  
(800) 735-0149  
Ken Nixon

**Love the Children of Mass.**

2 Perry Drive  
Duxbury, MA 02332  
(781) 934-0063  
Cecelia Park

**Lutheran Community Services**

20 Hamilton Street  
Worcester, MA 01604  
(508) 791-4488  
Lauren Payne

**MAPS International**

400 Commonwealth Ave  
Boston, MA 02215  
(617) 267-2222  
Stephanie Mitchell

**Merrimack Valley Catholic Charities**

439 South Union Street  
Lawrence, MA 01843  
(978) 685-5930 x241  
Patricia Kirwin

**Southeastern Adoption Services**

8 Prospect Drive  
Mattapoisett, MA 02739  
(508) 758-4801  
Beverly Baccelli

**The Children's International Adoption Project**

15 Standish Avenue  
Plymouth, MA 02360  
(508) 747-3331  
Nancy Conant

**The Home for Little Wanderers**

271 Huntington Avenue  
Boston, MA 02115  
(617) 267-3700  
Joan Wallace Benjamin

**The Way to Be Home, Inc.**

958 River Street  
Hyde Park, MA 02136  
(617) 361-6626  
Marie Sonnia Borgard

**United Homes for Children**

1147 Main Street  
Tewksbury, MA 01876  
(978) 640-0089  
Jestina Richardson

**Wide Horizons for Children, Inc.**

38 Edge Hill Road  
Waltham, MA 02451  
(781) 894-5330  
Vicki Peterson

## **Massachusetts Department of Social Services Directory**

### **Central Office**

#### **Massachusetts Department of Social Services**

Harry Spence, Commissioner  
24 Farnsworth Street  
Boston, MA 02210  
(617) 748-2000 operator  
(617) 748-2400 auto attendant  
Fax: (617) 261-7435

Website: [www.mass.gov/dss](http://www.mass.gov/dss)

### **Statewide Adoption Information: 1-800-KIDS-508**

### **Western Massachusetts:**

#### **Western Regional Office**

1537 Main Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 452-3350

#### **Robert Van Wart Center**

112 Industry Avenue  
Springfield, MA 01104  
(413) 205-0500

#### **Greenfield Area Office**

One Arch Place, 1<sup>st</sup> Floor  
Greenfield, MA 01301  
(413) 775-5000

#### **Springfield Area Office**

1537 Main Street, 4<sup>th</sup> Floor  
Springfield, MA 01103  
(413) 452-3200

#### **Holyoke Area Office**

261 High Street  
Holyoke, MA 01040  
(413) 493-2600

#### **Northampton Social Service Center**

1 Prince Street  
Northampton, MA 01060  
(413) 586-6776

#### **Pittsfield Area Office**

53 Eagle Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Pittsfield, MA 01201  
(413) 236-1800

## Central Massachusetts

### Central Regional Office

340 Main Street, Suite 720  
Worcester, MA 01608  
(508) 929-2130

### Worcester Area Office

340 Main Street, Suite 525  
Worcester, MA 01608  
(508) 929-2000

### North Central Area Office

215 Hamilton Street  
Leominster, MA 01453  
(978) 466-1500

### South Central/Blackstone Valley Area Office

185 Church Street  
Whitinsville, MA 01588  
(508) 234-1000

## Northeastern Massachusetts

### Northeast Regional Office

Everett Mills  
15 Union Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Lawrence, MA 01840  
(978) 557-2700

### Lawrence Area Office

Everett Mills  
15 Union Street, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor  
Lawrence, MA 01840  
(978) 557-2500

### Cape Ann Area Office

45 Congress Street, Building 4  
Salem, MA 01970  
(978) 825-3800

### Lowell Area Office

33 East Merrimack Street  
Lowell, MA 01852  
(978) 275-6800

### Haverhill Area Office

3 Ferry Street  
Bradford, MA 01835  
(978) 469-8800

### Lynn Area Office

20 Wheeler Street  
Lynn, MA 01902  
(781) 477-1600

## Metro Massachusetts

### Metro Regional Office

30 Mystic Street  
Arlington, MA 02474  
(781) 641-8200

### Coastal Area Office

541 Main Street  
Weymouth, MA 02190  
(781) 682-0800

### Arlington Area Office

30 Mystic Street  
Arlington, MA 02474  
(781) 641-8500

### Framingham Area Office

63 Fountain Street  
Framingham, MA 01702  
(508) 424-0100

### Cambridge/Somerville Area Office

810 Memorial Drive  
Cambridge, MA  
(617) 520-8700

### Malden Area Office

22 Pleasant Street  
Malden, MA 02148  
(781) 388-7100

## **Southeastern Massachusetts**

### **Southeast Regional Office**

141 Main Street  
Brockton, MA 02401  
(508) 894-3700

### **Attleboro Area Office**

67 Mechanic Street  
Attleboro, MA 02703  
(508) 431-9500

### **Brockton Area Office**

110 Mulberry Street  
Brockton, MA 02302  
(508) 894-3700

### **Cape Cod Area Office**

500 Main Street  
Hyannis, MA 02601  
(508) 760-0200

### **Fall River Area Office**

1567 North Main Street  
Fall River, MA 02720  
(508) 235-9800

### **New Bedford Area Office**

100 North Front Street  
New Bedford, MA 02740  
(508) 910-1000

### **Plymouth Area Office**

61 Industrial Park Road  
Plymouth, MA 02360  
(508) 732-6200

## **Boston Area**

### **Boston Regional Office**

Esquire Building  
50b Park Street  
Dorchester, MA 02122  
(617) 822-4840

### **Park Street Area Office**

Esquire Building  
50 Park Street  
Dorchester, MA 02122  
(617) 822-4700

### **Dimock Street Area Office**

30 Dimock Street  
Roxbury, MA 02119  
(617) 989-2800

### **New Chardon Street Shelter**

41 New Chardon Street  
Boston, MA 02114  
(617) 720-3611

### **Harbor Area Office**

45 Spruce Street  
Chelsea, MA 02150  
(617) 660-3400

### **Hyde Park Area Office**

1530 River Street  
Hyde Park, MA 02136  
(617) 360-2500

**Appendix B: Percentage of Agencies Offering Adoption Services to Families**

<b>Type of Service</b>	<b>Pre-Placement</b>	<b>Post-Placement</b>
Information/Orientation meetings – Individual	81.6%	26.5%
Information/Orientation meetings – Groups	59.2%	10.2%
Educational Programs – Individuals	46.9%	28.6%
Educational Programs – Groups	55.1%	40.8%
Birth Parent Counseling	51.0%	49.0%
Birth Parent Support Groups	6.1%	4.1%
Birth Parent Housing	12.2%	10.2%
Birth Parent Living Expenses	38.8%	28.6%
Individual and Family Counseling	51.0%	46.9%
Parent Training for Special Needs Adoption	42.9%	20.4%
Adoptive Parent Support Groups	40.8%	32.7%
Support Groups for Children who were Adopted	4.1%	14.3%
Support Groups for Adults who were Adopted	6.1%	8.2%
Intermediary Services Related to Search in Adoption	12.2%	34.7%
Counseling Services Related to Search in Adoption	12.2%	40.8%
Intermediary Services Related to Reunion	10.2%	34.7%
Counseling Services Related to Reunion	12.2%	34.7%
Support Groups for Adoptive Families (including Children)	16.3%	28.6%
Therapeutic Day Services	2.0%	4.1%
Crisis Intervention	26.5%	30.6%
Mentor Families	22.4%	22.4%
Recreational/Social Activities	32.7%	46.9%
Advocacy	32.7%	30.6%
Referrals to Other Services	55.1%	53.1%

For more information, please contact:  
Jennifer Ellingwood at (508) 856-8514



Center for Adoption Research  
University of Massachusetts Medical School  
Reed, Rose & Gordon Building  
196 Maple Avenue  
Shrewsbury, MA 01545-8222  
[CAR@umassmed.edu](mailto:CAR@umassmed.edu)  
508-856-5397