



A Market Research Report

Prepared for

**UAA School of Social Work
for
State of Alaska
Health and Human Services
Department, Division of Family &
Youth Services**

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CONTENTS

	PAGE
I. INTRODUCTION	3
A. Background	
B. Purpose	
II. RESEARCH METHODS	4
III. RESEARCH RESULTS	6
A. The Sample	6
B. Services for Special Needs Children	11
C. Travel Required to Obtain Services	23
D. Household Size	26
E. “What Surprised You the Most?”	30
IV. APPENDIX	32

I. INTRODUCTION

A. BACKGROUND

Dr. Eileen Lally from the University of Alaska School of Social Work contacted Craciun Research Group, Inc. (CRG) to request a proposal to conduct research for the Division of Family & Youth Services Division (DFYS) for the State of Alaska Health and Social Services Department.

B. PURPOSE

The stated objectives for the research were to assess the satisfaction and needs of the families participating in their adoption program for special needs children. Craciun Research Group, Inc. proposed a telephone survey be conducted using the DFYS database of eight hundred (N=800) families. The survey instrument was developed by CRG in collaboration with our client. To ensure the highest response rate, we recommended a letter of introduction be sent by DFYS to the families letting them know about the upcoming survey and requesting their participation.

II. RESEARCH METHODS

Survey Instrument

The survey instrument was developed by CRG in collaboration with the client. Craciun interviewers conducted a pre-test with the draft questionnaire before the study began.

Sample

The actual list of families received from our client totaled seven hundred and forty-four (N=744). A vigorous attempt was made to contact all potential participants (the adoptive parents and guardians) from numbers supplied by the Department of Family and Youth Services. The total of ineligible numbers was three hundred seventy-one (n=371) which included disconnects, business and fax numbers, those who did not pass the screener, those who spoke no English and non-existent long-distance numbers. To eliminate the bias of only speaking with readily available participants all numbers were attempted a minimum of ten times. A total universe of two thousand sixty-three calls was made to secure our sample population.

The final survey sample was two hundred and ninety-four (N=294); the margin of error for this sample is ± 4.5 percent. In other words, the odds are 19 out of 20 that if researchers sought to survey all potential participants from specified geographic areas, the findings would differ from the actual results by no more than 4.5 percentage points in either direction.

The geographic distribution and gender of the respondents are shown in the following table.

+-----+-----+		
+-----+-----+		
Area:		
Anchorage & Mat-Su.	143	48.6%
Kenai.....	18	6.1%
Fairbanks.....	37	12.6%
Rural Alaska.....	44	15.0%
Southeast.....	18	6.1%
Outside/Hawaii.....	34	11.6%
Total.....	294	100.0%
+-----+-----+		
Gender:		
Male.....	71	24.1%
Female.....	223	75.9%
Total.....	294	100.0%
+-----+-----+		

Interviews

Telephone interviews were conducted May 30, 2001 to June 20, 2001. Professional interviewers conducted telephone calls utilizing Alaska's only Computer Assisted Telephone Interviewing (CATI) system.

This state-of-the-art technology allowed the Craciun Research Group interviewing team to conduct customized, interactive interviews with both speed and accuracy. The average length of time to conduct each survey was 11 minutes.

Analysis

Professionally trained Craciun Research Analysts employing the statistical capacity of The Survey System and SPSS¹, analyzed the sample. The primary procedures reported are frequencies and crosstabulations.

Note to Reader

Research results are presented below. Included in the presentation of each response is a short narrative that analyzes some of the significant findings in the table that follows. Except where specifically noted, only tables and narratives that represent statistically significant findings are included in this report. All percentages in the narrative are rounded to the nearest whole percentage point.

For ease of reference, all tables within the body of the report are numbered according to the order in which they appear in the report. For instance: the table entitled "Table A4.2" would be found in Section A of this report; is the fourth table in that section; and is the second table for that particular question within this report.

Frequency tables list categories of response by the actual number of responses and include the percentage of the total responses in each category. Often a few respondents fail to answer a question. Unless the percentage of those who failed to answer is significant, these people are not included in the totals on which the percentages are based.

¹ Trademark registered.

III. RESEARCH RESULTS

A. THE SAMPLE

<p>Question</p> <p><i>Are you an adoptive parent of a child through the DFYS program, a guardian or both?</i></p> <p><i>Do you provide care for more than one child in the DFYS program?</i></p> <p><i>Does the child/do the children live in your home or in residential care or both?</i></p>
--

Eighty-three percent of the respondents were adoptive parents of DFYS children and 34% were guardians. These figures include 17% who were both. Exactly half (50%) of our sample had more than one child in the program; in 97% of the cases all the children live in the home of the respondent.

TABLE A1.1: ROLES OF RESPONDENTS

+-----+		
Respondent is:		
Adoptive parent.....	193	65.6%
Guardian.....	50	17.0%
Both.....	51	17.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
+-----+		
Respondent has:		
One child in the program..	148	50.3%
More than one.....	146	49.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%
+-----+		
Child or children live:		
In the home.....	286	97.3%
In a residence.....	3	1.0%
Both.....	5	1.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%
+-----+		

The ratios of adoptive parents did not differ by location with statistical significance.

TABLE A1.2: ROLES OF RESPONDENTS

	Location:					Total
	Anchorage	Kenai & Southeast	Fairbanks	Rural Alaska	Outside/Hawaii	
Respondent is: *						
Adoptive.....	62.2%	72.2%	73.0%	54.5%	79.4%	65.6%
Guardian.....	18.2%	19.4%	10.8%	20.5%	11.8%	17.0%
Both.....	19.6%	8.3%	16.2%	25.0%	8.8%	17.3%
Total.....	143	36	37	44	34	294

Column percentages

* Indicates that differences are not statistically significant.

Question

Are or were you related to any of your adopted children?

Are or were you related to any of the children for whom you are a guardian?

One in three (37%) of the parents are related to one or more of their adopted children.

One in two (54%) of the guardians are related to one or more of the child/children.

TABLE A2.1: RELATIONSHIPS TO ADOPTED CHILDREN AND GUARDIANSHIP

-----+-----		
+-----+-----		
Parent of adopted child is:		
Related to adopted child.....	90	36.9%
Is not.....	154	63.1%
Total.....	244	100.0%
+-----+-----		
Guardian is:		
Related to child.....	54	53.5%
Is not.....	46	45.5%
No answer.....	1	1.0%
Total.....	101	100.0%
+-----+-----		

In rural Alaska, the relationships are high – 74% of parents are related to an adoptive child and 70% of guardians are related to the child/children.

TABLE A2.2: RELATIONSHIP TO ADOPTED CHILDREN BY LOCATION

	Location:					Total
	Anchor- age & Mat-Su	Kenai & South- east	Fair- banks	Rural Alaska	Outside /Hawaii	
Parent of adopted child is:						
Related to child.....	33.3%	17.2%	30.3%	74.3%	33.3%	36.9%
Is not.....	66.7%	82.8%	69.7%	25.7%	66.7%	63.1%
Total.....	117	29	33	35	30	244
Guardian is: *						
Related to child.....	49.1%	50.0%	40.0%	70.0%	71.4%	54.0%
Is not.....	50.9%	50.0%	60.0%	30.0%	28.6%	46.0%
Total.....	53	10	10	20	7	100

Column percentages

* Indicates that differences are not statistically significant.

B. SERVICES FOR SPECIAL NEEDS CHILDREN

Question

I am going to read a list of services that help people with special needs children. For each please tell me whether you are now receiving the service, have received the service in the past, or have never received the service?

- ❖ *Personal care attendants in your home? [IF ASKED] Someone who comes in to bathe and dress the child*
- ❖ *Respite care paid by an agency? [IF ASKED] Respite care means time off for you. It can be someone who comes to your home while you go out, or a place you can take the child for a while. It does not include free help given to you by friends or family.*
- ❖ *Counseling services for the family?*
- ❖ *Counseling service for the child or children?*
- ❖ *Psychiatric services for the child or children?*
- ❖ *Help and support services provided by the school, e.g. special education, tutoring, etc?*
- ❖ *Case management services? [IF ASKED] An official who helps you by talking to all the government agencies for you and arranges for services for the child.*
- ❖ *Infant learning services either at home or at a center?*
- ❖ *Physical therapy services for the child or children?*

After each service was read, those who had never received the service were asked:

Did you know that you could have this service?

Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

Those who had ever received the service were asked:

How satisfied are you with the most recent service you have received?

Respondents who have received a service plus those who have not but are aware that they could receive a service, reported the following:

- Eighty-three percent know about services provided by the schools.
- Nearly as many know about the availability of counseling services for the child – 79% and about psychiatric care for the child – 72%.
- Fewer (63%) knew that counseling for the family was available.
- The availability of respite care was known to 58% and case management to 57%.
- Sixty-one percent know that infant learning services are available and 58% knew that physical therapy was available for a child who needs it.
- The availability of personal care in the home was known by 33%. This is a service which may be needed by fewer of the children.

TABLE B1.1: KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICES - ALL RESPONDENTS

	Has used the service	Has not, but knew about it	Did not know
Help and support services provided by the school..	171 58.2%	74 25.2%	49 16.7%
Counseling services for the child.....	163 55.4%	69 23.5%	62 21.1%
Psychiatric services for the child.....	102 34.7%	111 37.8%	81 27.6%
Counseling services for the family.....	102 34.7%	82 27.9%	110 37.4%
Infant learning services, at home or center.....	116 39.5%	63 21.4%	115 39.1%
Respite care paid by an agency.....	71 24.1%	99 33.7%	124 42.2%
Physical therapy services for the child.....	74 25.2%	95 32.3%	125 42.5%
Case management services...	128 43.5%	39 13.3%	127 43.2%
Personal care attendants in your home.....	13 4.4%	83 28.2%	198 67.3%

Percentages are of each row, and services are arranged in descending order of knowledge.

The number for each service is 294.

Although most of the differences in knowledge about services are not statistically significant, it appears that residents of rural Alaska had less information than residents of areas with larger populations. One exception is that rural residents seem to know more than urban residents about what support is available from school systems.

TABLE B1.2: KNOWLEDGE OF SERVICES BY LOCATION

	Location:					Total
	Anchor- age & Mat-Su	Kenai & South- east	Fair- banks	Rural Alaska	Outside /Hawaii	
Personal care attendants						
Has used or knew about service.*.....	36.4%	38.9%	21.6%	25.0%	32.4%	32.7%
Did not know.....	63.6%	61.1%	78.4%	75.0%	67.6%	67.3%
Respite care paid *						
Has used or knew about service.....	60.1%	55.6%	67.6%	40.9%	61.8%	57.8%
Did not know.....	39.9%	44.4%	32.4%	59.1%	38.2%	42.2%
Counseling - family						
Has used or knew about service.....	72.7%	52.8%	51.4%	45.5%	64.7%	62.6%
Did not know.....	27.3%	47.2%	48.6%	54.5%	35.3%	37.4%
Counseling - child *						
Has used or knew about service.....	83.9%	75.0%	75.7%	65.9%	82.4%	78.9%
Did not know.....	16.1%	25.0%	24.3%	34.1%	17.6%	21.1%
Psychiatric - child *						
Has used or knew about service.....	76.2%	75.0%	67.6%	59.1%	76.5%	72.4%
Did not know.....	23.8%	25.0%	32.4%	40.9%	23.5%	27.6%
Help and support from school *						
Has used or knew about service.....	80.4%	94.4%	89.2%	84.1%	76.5%	83.3%
Did not know.....	19.6%	5.6%	10.8%	15.9%	23.5%	16.7%
Case management *						
Has used or knew about service.....	55.9%	63.9%	67.6%	50.0%	50.0%	56.8%
Did not know.....	44.1%	36.1%	32.4%	50.0%	50.0%	43.2%
Infant learning						
Has used or knew about service.....	69.2%	69.4%	48.6%	50.0%	44.1%	60.9%
Did not know.....	30.8%	30.6%	51.4%	50.0%	55.9%	39.1%
Physical therapy - child *						
Has used or knew about service.....	64.3%	50.0%	51.4%	47.7%	55.9%	57.5%
Did not know.....	35.7%	50.0%	48.6%	52.3%	44.1%	42.5%

Totals.....	143	36	37	44	34	294
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Column percentages

* Indicates that differences are not statistically significant.

Forty percent of respondents are currently receiving help and support from the school systems and 21% are currently receiving case management services.

TABLE B1.3: CURRENT AND PAST USE OF SERVICES

	Now	In the past	Never	Unsure
Help and support services provided by the school..	116 39.5%	55 18.7%	120 40.8%	3 1.0%
Counseling services for the child.....	62 21.1%	101 34.4%	128 43.5%	3 1.0%
Counseling services for the family.....	43 14.6%	59 20.1%	191 65.0%	1 .3%
Psychiatric services for the child.....	40 13.6%	62 21.1%	186 63.3%	6 2.0%
Case management services...	35 11.9%	93 31.6%	153 52.0%	13 4.4%
Respite care paid by an agency.....	34 11.6%	37 12.6%	223 75.9%	
Infant learning services, at home or center.....	30 10.2%	86 29.3%	173 58.8%	5 1.7%
Physical therapy services for the child.....	27 9.2%	47 16.0%	219 74.5%	1 .3%
Personal care attendants in				

your home.....	4	1.4%	9	3.1%	281	95.6%
-----+-----+-----+-----+-----						

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Percentages are of each row, and services are arranged in descending order of current use.
The total for each service is 294.

People who had never received the services offered on a list were asked if they would like to receive them. Fifty-one percent of them are interested in case management – 15% now and 36% in the future.

Paid respite care is attractive to 43%. Of those 96 people, 13% expressed immediate interest; while 30% said they would be interested in the future.

While few respondents reported needing child or family counseling at this time, 40% or more expect to need it in the future.

TABLE B1.4: DESIRE FOR SERVICES

	Would like to use it now		Would like it in the future		Not interested		Unsure	
Case management services.....	25	15.1%	60	36.1%	75	45.2%	6	3.6%
166								
Respite care paid by an agency.....	29	13.0%	67	30.0%	123	55.2%	4	1.8%
223								
Help and support services provided by the school....	14	11.4%	57	46.3%	44	35.8%	8	6.5%
123								
Counseling services for the family...	17	8.9%	76	39.6%	93	48.4%	6	3.1%
192								
Counseling services for the child....	6	4.6%	61	46.6%	59	45.0%	5	3.8%
131								
Physical therapy services for the								

The service reported as most satisfactory was physical therapy. Of the seventy-four people who had used the service, 84% were very satisfied.

The least satisfactory was psychiatric service, with 42% very satisfied. Family counseling received the highest percentage of very unsatisfied answers or 12%. It is important to note, nevertheless, 62% of respondents were very satisfied with that service.

TABLE B1.5: SATISFACTION WITH SERVICES

	Very satisfied		Somewhat satisfied		Somewhat unsatisfied		Very unsatisfied	
Number								
Physical therapy services for the child.....	62	83.8%	10	13.5%	1	1.4%	1	1.4%
74								
Infant learning services, at home or center.....	91	80.5%	15	13.3%	5	4.4%	2	1.8%
113								
Personal care attendants in your home.....	10	76.9%	3	23.1%				
13								
Help and support services provided by the school....	108	63.9%	39	23.1%	10	5.9%	12	7.1%
169								
Counseling services for the family...	62	62.0%	21	21.0%	5	5.0%	12	12.0%
100								
Respite care paid by								

Question

Overall, how do you feel about your experience with the adoption/guardianship program? Is it very satisfactory, somewhat satisfactory, somewhat unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory?

Question

How satisfied are you with the information that you have been given about services available to you when you adopted a special needs child or became a guardian?

Overall, nearly half (48%) of respondents found the program very satisfactory; while 9% found it very unsatisfactory.

One third of our sample (30%) were very satisfied with the information that they had been given about services available to them when they adopted a special needs child or became a guardian.

TABLE B2.1: SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM AND WITH INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES AVAILABLE

-----+		
Program is:		
Very satisfactory.....	141	48.0%
Somewhat satisfactory.....	100	34.0%
Somewhat unsatisfactory.....	21	7.1%
Very unsatisfactory.....	27	9.2%
Unsure.....	5	1.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%
-----+		
Information about services is:		
Very satisfactory.....	87	29.6%
Somewhat satisfactory.....	84	28.6%
Somewhat unsatisfactory.....	62	21.1%
Very unsatisfactory.....	53	18.0%
Unsure.....	8	2.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%
-----+		

Respondents who live Outside or in rural Alaska are more likely than respondents who reside in other parts of Alaska to describe the overall service provided to them by the program as very satisfactory.

Sixty-three percent of respondents who live Outside are satisfied with the information about services that has been provided to them. This is far above the average response of 30%.

TABLE B2.2: SATISFACTION WITH THE PROGRAM AND WITH INFORMATION ABOUT SERVICES AVAILABLE BY LOCATION

	Location:					Total
	Anchor- age & Mat-Su	Kenai & South- east	Fair- banks	Rural Alaska	Outside /Hawaii	
Program is:						
Very satisfactory.....	42.4%	52.8%	45.9%	56.8%	63.6%	48.8%
Somewhat satisfactory....	36.7%	25.0%	43.2%	34.1%	27.3%	34.6%
Somewhat unsatisfactory..	7.9%	13.9%	2.7%	4.5%	6.1%	7.3%
Very unsatisfactory.....	12.9%	8.3%	8.1%	4.5%	3.0%	9.3%
Total.....	139	36	37	44	33	289
Information about services is:						
Very satisfactory.....	23.2%	22.9%	30.6%	36.6%	62.5%	30.4%
Somewhat satisfactory....	30.3%	34.3%	30.6%	26.8%	21.9%	29.4%
Somewhat unsatisfactory..	19.7%	25.7%	30.6%	22.0%	15.6%	21.7%
Very unsatisfactory.....	26.8%	17.1%	8.3%	14.6%		18.5%
Total.....	142	35	36	41	32	286

Column percentages

Question

How satisfied are you with the care provided by the residence? (Asked of those with children in residential care.)

Looking at a very small sub-sample, two of the eight people who had children in a residence (25%) were very satisfied with the residential care.

TABLE B3: SATISFACTION WITH RESIDENCIAL CARE

Residential care is:		
Very satisfactory.....	2	25.0%
Somewhat satisfactory.....	3	37.5%
Somewhat unsatisfactory.....	2	25.0%
Very unsatisfactory.....	1	12.5%
Total.....	8	100.0%

Only eight people had had children in residential care.

Question

Would you like to see any of the following services offered to you for help with your child or children in the DFYS program?

- ❖ *Mentor moms – that is another person you could talk to who has experience with the problems you are facing?*
- ❖ *Camping programs for your special-needs child or children?*
- ❖ *A crisis hot line for advice on serious problems?*
- ❖ *A monthly support group of other DFYS parents or guardians?*

A crisis hot line and camping programs for their special needs children are desired by one in six respondents (61% and 60%, respectively). Mentor moms would be welcomed by 56%; while monthly support groups are of interest to 48%.

TABLE B4: NEW SERVICES DESIRED

	Yes, would like service		No, not interested		Unsure	
Crisis hot line.....	178	60.5%	102	34.7%	14	4.8%
Camping programs.....	177	60.2%	112	38.1%	5	1.7%
Mentor moms.....	165	56.1%	119	40.5%	10	3.4%
Monthly support group...	142	48.3%	143	48.6%	9	3.1%

Percentages are of each row, and services are arranged in descending order of desire.

The number for each service is 294.

Question

What other services do you feel you need to help you with your special needs child or children?

Respondents' suggestions for needed services have been categorized into seven different areas: (1) Financial Services, (2) Medical and Behavioral Health Services, (3) Educational Services, (4) Child and Respite Services, (5) Social Activities, (6) Transportation help, and (7) Improvement of Existing Services. In addition to the above six main areas of services, almost a third of the adoptive parents suggested a seventh issue highlighting existing services that could be improved upon, particularly in the areas of information dissemination, general support and eligibility. Finally, a third of the respondents believed that no other services besides those mentioned in the survey were needed.

Financial Services

Getting more financial assistance was a concern of 15% of the respondents. Three respondents wanted financial support to continue beyond the age of 18, so they could continue to get help for their adopted children as they completed high school. Financial assistance for medical care and school were two other specific areas these respondents included.

Medical and Behavioral Health Services

Most of the 15% who recommended new services in this category were interested in counseling support for their child or family. Opportunities for support groups, both for their adopted child, and for the parents of the adopted child are lacking, reported several respondents. Getting specific medical and physical therapy services were also of interest to three percent of the sample.

Educational Support

Some respondents (11%) reported needing extra service to help their child succeed in school. In addition to academic program support, additional services such as job training and job hunting skills were mentioned.

Child and Respite Care

Several adoptive parents urged that more and better child and respite care be available. They reported that the respite care services currently obtainable need improvement.

Social Activities

Nine percent of parents surveyed said it would be nice if there could be more gatherings for their children to meet other adopted children. For some, they explained how it would serve to provide a peer group for their children. For others, simply getting together to have some fun would be a beneficial service for their families.

Transportation Help

Parents offered that it is hard to get their children to the services or activities that are available to them. Having support with transportation would help overcome this barrier to using much needed services.

The Improvement of Existing Services

For a third of the group surveyed, improving basic services rather than adding new services is what is necessary to support them and their adopted children. Thirteen percent of the respondents want more information about the services available. They believe this would be the best service DFYS or Health and Human Services could provide. For an additional 15%, simply having the agencies be more responsive and provide more support would be helpful. Finally, four percent urged that eligibility requirements for services be reviewed. They report they are not able to get services because they do not meet eligibility guidelines.

TABLE B5: NEEDED SERVICES

	Total respondent s
	142
Financial Services	21 15%
Financial support services	6 4%
Financial help after child turns 18	3 2%
Academic financial support	5 4%
Medical financial support	7 5%
Medical and Mental Health Services	21 15%
Counseling and Support Group Services	17 12%
Medical and Physical Therapy Services	4 3%
Educational Services	24 16%
Academic program support	16 11%
Job training/job hunting skills	2 1%
Social skill development	6 4%
Child or Respite Care	15 11%
Child care for special needs kids	4 3%
Respite care/improved respite	11 8%
Organized Social Activities	7 5%
Social activities/peer group for kids	1 1%
Group activities for fun	6 4%
Transportation Help	5 4%
Overall Improvement of Existing Services	45 32%
More information about service	19 13%
Lack of eligibility for services	6 4%
More staff/division support or responsiveness	21 15%
Other Specific Services	15 10%
No Other Services Needed	42

	30%
Don't Know/No Answer	9
	6%

C. TRAVEL REQUIRED TO OBTAIN SERVICES

Question

Do you have to travel out of town to get some services for your child/children?

How do you travel – by car, by airplane, by ferry, by train?

About how many miles do you travel by car to receive services for your child/children? (Asked of those who travel by car.)

Where do you travel by plane, ferry or train to obtain services for your child/children? (Asked of those who travel by plane, ferry or train.)

- Thirty percent of the respondents must travel out of town to get some of the services they need for their children. Of those who travel, 36% do so only by car and the remaining 64% travel by air, often times also traveling by car, ferry or train.
- The median miles traveled by car were 95 miles.
- For those who fly to get services, the most common destinations are Anchorage (41%) and Seattle (26%).

TABLE C1.1: TRAVELING TO OBTAIN NEEDED SERVICES

Respondent:		
Travels out of town for services..	84	28.6%
Does not.....	208	70.7%
No answer.....	2	.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%

Travels:		
Only by car.....	30	35.7%
By air, with or without other:		
Airplane.....	31	36.9%
Car and airplane.....	16	19.0%
Car, airplane and ferry.....	3	3.6%
Car, airplane and train.....	2	2.4%
Airplane and ferry.....	2	2.4%
Subtotal by air.....	54	64.3%
Total.....	87	100.0%

Travels by car:		
Less than 25 miles.....	7	13.7%
25 to 50 miles.....	8	15.7%
51 to 75 miles.....	4	7.8%
76 to 100 miles.....	8	15.7%
101 to 200 miles.....	8	15.7%
201 to 500 miles.....	12	23.5%
More than 500 miles.....	4	7.8%
Total.....	51	100.0%

Travel by air, ferry or train to:		
Anchorage.....	22	40.7%
Outside other than Seattle.....	14	25.9%
Seattle.....	11	20.4%
Fairbanks.....	7	13.0%
Bethel.....	4	7.4%
Kotzebue.....	3	5.6%
Juneau.....	2	3.7%
Sitka.....	2	3.7%
Aniak.....	2	3.7%
Ketchikan.....	1	1.9%
Valdez.....	1	1.9%
Soldotna.....	1	1.9%
Wasilla.....	1	1.9%
Total Respondents *.....	54	

* Percentages add to more than 100% because many respondents gave more than one response.

Six in ten residents of rural Alaska (59%) and half (51%) of residents on the Kenai Peninsula and Southeast have to travel to obtain some needed services for their DFYS children.

Nearly all (89%) of the rural Alaska residents must fly to obtain needed services.

TABLE C1.2: TRAVELING TO OBTAIN NEEDED SERVICES BY LOCATION

	Location:					Total
	Anchor- age & Mat-Su	Kenai & South- east	Fair- banks	Rural Alaska	Outside /Hawaii	
Respondent:						
Travels out of town for services.....	16.1%	51.4%	16.2%	59.1%	33.3%	28.8%
Does not.....	83.9%	48.6%	83.8%	40.9%	66.7%	71.2%
Total.....	143	35	37	44	33	292
Travels:						
Only by car.....	30.4%	55.6%	16.7%	11.5%	81.8%	35.7%
By airplane.....	69.6%	44.4%	83.3%	88.5%	18.2%	64.3%
Total.....	23	18	6	26	11	84

Column percentages

D. HOUSEHOLD SIZE

Question
How many people are living in your household now?

How many of them are adults?

The average number of people in the households surveyed was 5.2, with a minimum of two and a maximum of seventeen.

Most (68%) households had two adults; but 22% had only one.

**TABLE D1.1: NUMBER OF PEOPLE AND OF ADULTS
 IN THE HOUSEHOLD**

Number of people in household:		
Two.....	15	5.1%
Three.....	59	20.1%
Four.....	47	16.0%
Five.....	53	18.0%
Six.....	54	18.4%
Seven.....	26	8.8%
Eight.....	18	6.1%
Nine.....	11	3.7%
Ten.....	5	1.7%
Eleven.....	3	1.0%
Twelve.....	2	.7%
Seventeen.....	1	.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	5.2	
Adults		
One.....	65	22.1%
Two.....	201	68.4%
Three.....	17	5.8%
Four.....	6	2.0%
Five.....	4	1.4%
Seven.....	1	.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	1.9	

The average number of people per household was higher in rural Alaska (6) than the other locations, which all averaged approximately five.

TABLE D1.2: AVERAGE NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN THE HOUSEHOLD BY LOCATION

	Average number of people in household:
Location:	
Anchorage.....	5.1
Kenai.....	5.2
Fairbanks.....	4.9
Rural Alaska.....	6.0
Southeast.....	5.1
Outside/Hawaii.....	5.3
TOTAL.....	5.2

Question

How many of them are...

- ❖ *Children born to you?*
- ❖ *Children you have adopted or are adopting?*
- ❖ *Children under guardianship?*
- ❖ *Foster children?*
- ❖ *Other children?*
- ❖ *Adults?*

The average number of adoptive children per household was 1.7; while 43% had more than one adopted child, and one household had fifteen.

TABLE D2: NUMBER OF CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD

Natural born children		
None.....	139	47.3%
One.....	50	17.0%
Two.....	44	15.0%
Three.....	37	12.6%
Four.....	15	5.1%
Five.....	2	.7%
Six.....	3	1.0%
Seven.....	2	.7%
Eight.....	2	.7%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	1.3	

Adoptive children		
None.....	42	14.3%
One.....	125	42.5%
Two.....	63	21.4%
Three.....	35	11.9%
Four.....	14	4.8%
Five.....	10	3.4%
Six.....	1	.3%
Seven.....	3	1.0%
Fifteen.....	1	.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	1.7	

Children under guardianship		
None.....	213	72.4%
One.....	46	15.6%
Two.....	24	8.2%
Three.....	9	3.1%
Five.....	1	.3%
Six.....	1	.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	.5	

Foster children		
None.....	251	85.4%
One.....	28	9.5%
Two.....	9	3.1%
Three.....	5	1.7%
Four.....	1	.3%
Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	.2	

Other children		
None.....	254	86.4%
One.....	21	7.1%
Two.....	13	4.4%
Three.....	3	1.0%
Four.....	1	.3%
Five.....	1	.3%
Six.....	1	.3%

Total.....	294	100.0%
Average.....	.2	

E. “WHAT SURPRISED YOU THE MOST?”

Question

After your adoption or guardianship was finalized, what surprised you the most?

Responses to this question could be summarized into four categories: (1) communication, (2) time and effort, (3) family changes, and (4) lack of a surprise .

Communication Surprises

Almost half of all respondents reported being surprised by the communication between themselves and DFYS or Health and Human Services. While a few (2%) were surprised at the positive communication or response they received, most were unhappily surprised by the lack of communication in several areas including: lack of contact or follow up, lack of overall information, and lack of responsiveness to questions they posed.

Time and Effort Surprises

Nine percent of the respondents were surprised at the ease and speed of the adoption process. For another 12%, however, the process seemed time consuming and difficult. Six percent of the respondents reported being surprised not only at how much they believed they had fought to reach the end point, but also at their feelings of insecurity even when the process was complete.

Relations with Their Child and/or Family

About a third of the respondents reported their biggest surprise rested with their relationship with the adopted child or with other family members after the adoption. For some, this was a pleasant surprise, and for others it was described as negative, challenging, or difficult. Some adoptive parents reported positive changes in their child due to the adoption (4%) while a couple reported negative changes (1%). The process of becoming a family after the adoption was a surprise to 14%, while another six percent reported that they did not anticipate how difficult it would be to parent their adoptive child. Several respondents simply shared their personal reflections on having an adopted child and what that meant to them.

No Surprises

Approximately a quarter of the adoptive parents reported that they had experienced no surprises after adopting their child. For a couple of new parents, it was too soon to tell. For others, the process was predictable and familiar because they had adopted in the past, or the process had been so long ago that they could not remember.

TABLE E1: SURPRISES AFTER ADOPTION

	Total respondents
	142
Communication with DFYS/HHS	68 47%
No follow-up after adoption over	20 14%
Lack of information about programs, program rules	16 11%
Responsiveness negative	15 10%
Responsiveness positive	3 2%
Received benefits not aware of	6 4%
Other communication issues	8 6%
Time and Effort of the Process	43 30%
Process is easy/fast	13 9%
Process is difficult	4 3%
Process is time consuming	18 12%
Feelings of insecurity/fight to adopt	8 6%
Changed relations with the Child or Family	48 33%
Positive changes in the child	6 4%
Negative changes in the child	2 1%
Difficulty/challenges with parenting	8 6%
Becoming a parent/family	20 14%
Other personal reflections	12 8%
No Surprises	38 24%
Too soon to tell	2 1%

Past experiences made process familiar and predictable	11 8%
No surprises/can't think of any	22 15%
Don't know/no answer	3 2%

IV. APPENDIX

1. Hello, may I speak to _____? (IF NOT THE PERSON YOU ARE SPEAKING WITH ASK FOR HER/HIM AND CONTINUE OR MAKE APPOINTMENT FOR CALL BACK) WHEN PERSON FROM DATA BASE IS CONTACTED BEGIN HERE) Hello, my name is _____ with Craciun Research Group, an Alaska company.

We are conducting a VOLUNTARY survey for the University of Alaska and the Division of Family and Youth Services (AS NEEDED: STATE OF ALASKA). The survey is for families who have adopted children who were in the custody of the division of Family and Youth Services. The survey is to find out how well services used by families and their adoptive children are doing and to see if other services are needed.

Your identity and answers will be kept strictly confidential.

Your participation in the interview is strictly voluntary, and you may refuse to answer any question that I ask you. You may decide to stop the interview at any time. You will not lose any benefits or services if you do not want to participate or decide to stop.

We would like to speak with someone who is involved in the care of a child or children right now. (SECURE RIGHT PERSON AND CONTINUE) This will take less than ten minutes of your time. Would you be willing to help us by answering some questions? I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have at the end of the survey.

(5)

₁ Male

₂ Female

2. Are you an adoptive parent of a child through the DFYS program, a guardian or both?

(6)

₁ Adoptive

₂ Guardian

₃ Both

₄ None of the above (ESCAPE OUT)

3. Can we use our computers to digitally record your answers to certain questions? (OFFER THIS AS NEEDED TO REASSURE RESPONDENTS) That's just to make sure that we accurately type every piece of advice that you voluntarily offer in this survey especially for general questions that allow you to offer any opinion you might have.

(7)

₁ Yes

₂ No

4. Do you provide care for more than one child in the DFYS program?

(8)

₁ Child

₂ Children

5. Overall, how do you feel about your experience with the adoption/guardianship program? Is it very satisfactory, somewhat satisfactory, somewhat unsatisfactory or very unsatisfactory?

(9)

₁ Very satisfactory

₄ Very unsatisfactory

₂ Somewhat satisfactory

₅ Don't know/No answer

₃ Somewhat unsatisfactory

6. Do(es) the [Answer to Q.4] live in your home or in residential care?

(10)

₁ In the home

₃ Both

₂ Residence

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 6 IS 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 8]

7. How satisfied are you with the care provided by the residence? (READ LIST)

(11)

₁ Very satisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

8. I am going to read a list of services that help people with special needs children. For each, please tell me whether you are now receiving the service, have received the service in the past, or have never received the service.

(12)

₁ PRESS "1" TO CONTINUE

9. Personal care attendants in your home? (IF ASKED) Someone who comes in to bathe and dress the [Answer to Q.4].

(13)

₁ Now

₃ Never

₂ In the past

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 12]

10. Did you know that you could have this service?

(14)

₁ Yes

₂ No

11. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(15)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 13]

12. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(16)

₁ Very satisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

13. Respite care paid by an agency? (IF ASKED) Respite care means time off for you. It can be someone who comes to your home while you go out, or a place you can take the [Answer to Q.4] for a while. It does not include free help given to you by friends or family.

(17)

₁ Now

₂ In the past

₃ Never

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 16]

14. Did you know that you could have this service?

(18)

₁ Yes

₂ No

15. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(19)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 17]

16. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(20)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Very unsatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ Don't know/No answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ Somewhat unsatisfied | |

17. Counseling services for the family?

(21)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Now | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ Never |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Don't know/No answer |

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 20]

18. Did you know that you could have this service?

(22)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ No |
|---|--|

19. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(23)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Now | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ No |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ In the future | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Don't know/No answer |

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 21]

20. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(24)

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Very satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Very unsatisfied |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ Somewhat satisfied | <input type="checkbox"/> ₅ Don't know/No answer |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ Somewhat unsatisfied | |

21. Counseling services for the [Answer to Q.4]

(25)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Now | <input type="checkbox"/> ₃ Never |
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ In the past | <input type="checkbox"/> ₄ Don't know/No answer |

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 24]

22. Did you know that you could have this service?

(26)

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> ₁ Yes | <input type="checkbox"/> ₂ No |
|---|--|

23. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(27)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 25]

24. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(28)

₁ Very satisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

25. Psychiatric services for the [Answer to Q.4]

(29)

₁ Now

₂ In the past

₃ Never

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 28]

26. Did you know that you could have this service?

(30)

₁ Yes

₂ No

27. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(31)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 29]

28. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(32)

₁ Very satisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

29. Help and support services provided by the school, for example, special education, tutoring, etc.

(33)

- ₁ Now
₂ In the past

- ₃ Never
₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 32]

30. Did you know that you could have this service?

(34)

- ₁ Yes

- ₂ No

31. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(35)

- ₁ Now
₂ In the future

- ₃ No
₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 33]

32. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(36)

- ₁ Very satisfied
₂ Somewhat satisfied
₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

- ₄ Very unsatisfied
₅ Don't know/No answer

33. Case management services (IF ASKED) An official who helps you by talking to all the government agencies for you and arranges for services for the [Answer to Q.4].

(37)

- ₁ Now
₂ In the past

- ₃ Never
₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 36]

34. Did you know that you could have this service?

(38)

- ₁ Yes

- ₂ No

35. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(39)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 37]

36. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(40)

₁ Very satisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

37. Infant learning services, either at home or at the center.

(41)

₁ Now

₂ In the past

₃ Never

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 40]

38. Did you know that you could have this service?

(42)

₁ Yes

₂ No

39. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(43)

₁ Now

₂ In the future

₃ No

₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 41]

40. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(44)

₁ Very satisfied

₂ Somewhat satisfied

₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

₄ Very unsatisfied

₅ Don't know/No answer

41. Physical therapy services for the [Answer to Q.4]?

(45)

- ₁ Now
₂ In the past

- ₃ Never
₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 1-2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 44]

42. Did you know that you could have this service?

(46)

- ₁ Yes

- ₂ No

43. Would you like to receive this service now, in the future, or not at all?

(47)

- ₁ Now
₂ In the future

- ₃ No
₄ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS NOT 0, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 45]

44. How satisfied are you with the most recent service you've received? (READ LIST)

(48)

- ₁ Very satisfied
₂ Somewhat satisfied
₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

- ₄ Very unsatisfied
₅ Don't know/No answer

45. How satisfied are you with the information that you have been given about services available to you when you adopted a special needs child or became a guardian? (READ LIST)

(49)

- ₁ Very satisfied
₂ Somewhat satisfied
₃ Somewhat unsatisfied

- ₄ Very unsatisfied
₅ Don't know/No answer

46. Would you like to see any of the following services offered to you for help with your [Answer to Q.4] in the DFYS program?

(50)

- ₁ PRESS "1" TO CONTINUE

47. How about mentor moms? -- that is, another person you could talk to who has experience with the problems you are facing?

(51)

- ₁ Yes
- ₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

48. Camping programs for your special needs [Answer to Q.4]

(52)

- ₁ Yes
- ₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

49. A crisis hot line for advice on serious problems

(53)

- ₁ Yes
- ₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

50. A monthly support group of other DFYS parents or guardians?

(54)

- ₁ Yes
- ₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 3 IS 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 9999]

51. What other services do you feel you need to help with your special needs [Answer to Q.4]?

_____ (5-

204)

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 3 IS 2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 9999]

52. What other services do you feel you need to help with your special needs [Answer to Q.4]?

704) _____ (505-

53. Do you have to travel out of town to get some services for your child?

(55)

₁ Yes

₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER IS 2-3, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 58]

54. How do you travel -- by airplane, car, ferry or train?

(56-59)

₁ Airplane

₂ Car

₃ Ferry

₄ Train

₅ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 54 IS NOT 2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 56]

55. About how many miles do you travel by car to receive services for your [Answer to Q.4]?

(60)

₁ Less than 25

₂ 25 to 50

₃ 51 to 75

₄ 76 to 100

₅ 101 to 200

₆ 201 to 500

₇ More than five hundred

₈ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 54 IS NOT 1 OR 3-4, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 58]

56. Where do you travel by plane, ferry or train to receive services for your [Answer to Q.4]?

(61-68)

₀₁ Anchorage

₀₂ Barrow

₀₃ Bethel

₀₄ Fairbanks

₀₅ Juneau

₀₆ Ketchikan

₀₇ Kodiak

₀₈ Kotzebue

₀₉ Nome

₁₀ Seattle

₁₁ Sitka

₁₂ OTHER

₁₃ Don't know/No answer

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 56 IS NOT 12, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 58]

57. SPECIFY OTHER LOCATION

_____ (205-254)

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 3 IS 1, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 9999]

58. After your adoption or guardianship was finalized, what surprised you the most?

_____ (255-504)

[IF THE ANSWER TO QUESTION 3 IS 2, THEN SKIP TO QUESTION 9999]

59. After your adoption or guardianship was finalized, what surprised you the most?

_____ (705-954)

60. The following questions are for statistical purposes only. How many people are living in your household now? (ENTER "99" FOR REFUSED/NO ANSWER)

NUMBER OF PEOPLE IN HOUSEHOLD .. _____ (69-70)

61. How many of them are...(USE 99 FOR REFUSED/NO ANSWER)

Children born to you? _____ (71-72)

Children you have adopted or are adopting? .. _____ (73-74)

Children under guardianship? _____ (75-76)
Foster children? _____ (77-78)
Other children? _____ (79-80)
Adults? _____ (81-82)

62. Were you related to any of your adopted children?

(83)

₁ Yes

₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

63. Were you related to any of the children for whom you are the guardian?

(84)

₁ Yes

₂ No

₃ Don't know/No answer

64. That was the last of the questions. Thank you so much for your time.

(85)

₁ PRESS "1" TO CONTINUE