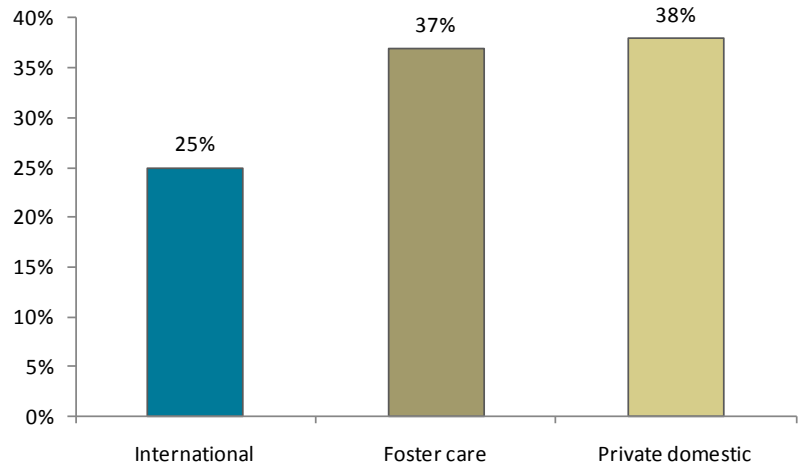


Adoption Motivations Among U.S. Parents

At the end of fiscal year 2010, it is estimated that about half of children in the U.S. foster care system waiting to be adopted received an adoption placement (AFCARS data, U.S. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, 2011). While this figure represents a substantial improvement since 2002—where only about 38% were adopted—progress remains to be made (AFCARS data, U.S. Children's Bureau, Administration for Children, Youth and Families, 2011). Key to finding adoptive homes for these children is an understanding of the motivations to adopt among adoptive parents. Using the National Survey of Adoptive Parents (NSAP), this Family Profile describes the adoption motivations of approximately 1.8 million adopted children's parents in the U.S.

Figure 1: Distribution of Adoption Types



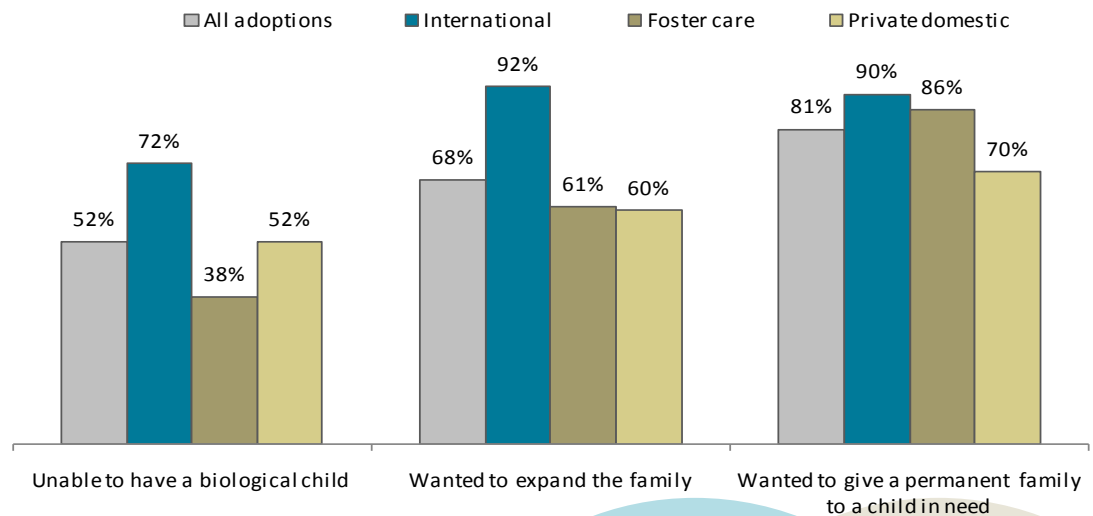
Source: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents, NCFMR tabulations

Family Profiles examine topics related to NCFMR's core research themes. Data are presented at both the national and state levels using new data sources. Written for both researchers and broad communities, these profiles summarize the latest statistics on U.S. families.

Choosing to Adopt

- Across adoption types, the two most common reasons that parents adopt children are to give a child a permanent home (81%) and to expand their families (68%).
- Over half of the parents list an inability to have a biological child as their reason to adopt.

Figure 2: Parents' Reasons for Adopting a Child, by Adoption Type



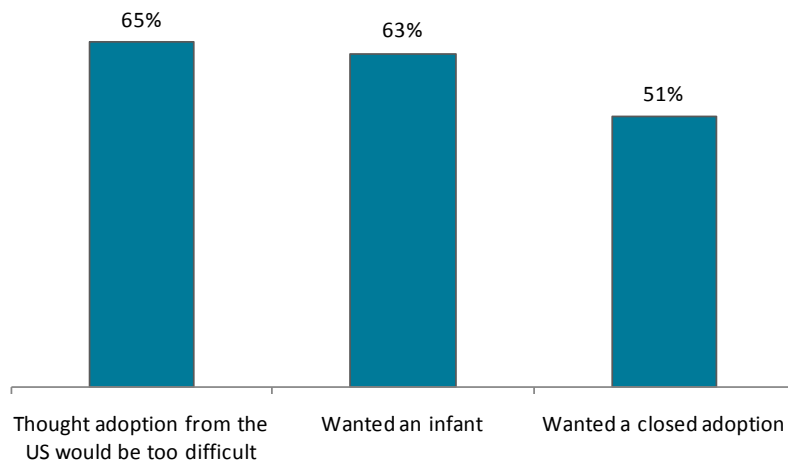
Source: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents, NCFMR tabulations

Choosing an Adoption Type

- *International Adoptions*

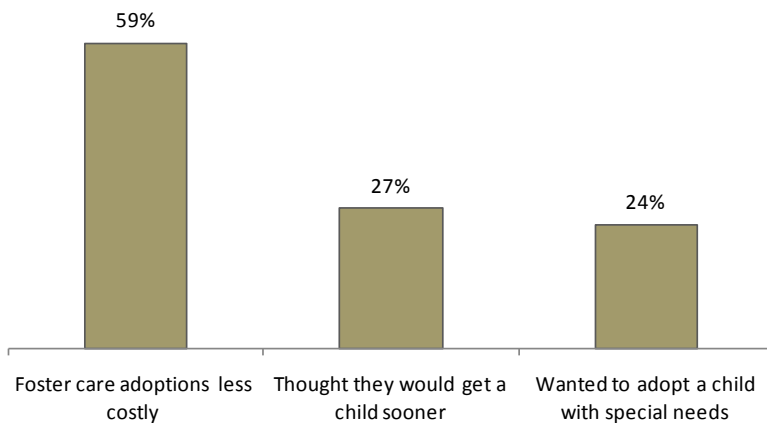
- Parents report pursuing an international adoption because they...
 - » thought adoption from the U.S. would be too difficult (65%),
 - » wanted an infant (63%), and/or
 - » wanted a closed adoption (no contact between birth and adoptive families) (51%).

Figure 3. Parents' Reasons for Adopting Internationally



Source: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents, NCFMR tabulations

Figure 4. Parents' Reasons for Adopting From Public Foster Care



Source: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents, NCFMR tabulations

- *Foster Care Adoptions*

- Common reasons given by parents for choosing foster care adoptions ...
 - » low cost relative to other adoption types (59%),
 - » belief that they would get a child sooner (27%), and/or
 - » desire to adopt a child with special needs (24%).

Suggested Citation:

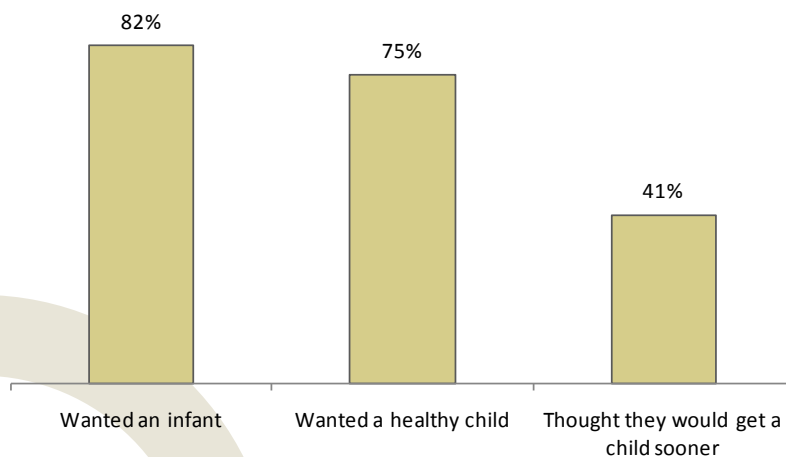
Ela, E. J. (2011). Adoption Motivations Among U.S. Parents (FP-11-06). National Center for Family & Marriage Research. Retrieved from http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu/pdf/family_profiles/file99486.pdf

This project was supported with a grant from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation, grant number 5 UOI AEOOOOOI-04. The opinions and conclusions expressed herein are solely those of the author(s) and should not be construed as representing the opinions or policy of any agency of the Federal government.

- *Private Agency Adoptions*

- Parents who have adopted through a private, domestic agency report doing so because they wanted ...
 - » an infant (82%),
 - » a healthy child (75%), and/or
 - » to get a child sooner (41%).

Figure 5. Parents' Reasons for Adopting Through a Private Agency



Source: 2007 National Survey of Adoptive Parents, NCFMR tabulations