



The Cost of Raising a Child

In 2001, the Department of Agriculture released a report which estimated the cost of raising a child from birth through the age of 18. If you adjust the numbers in the report for inflation since 2001, for a middle income family, the estimated total cost, in current dollars, is \$178,544. And that doesn't even cover college tuition!

But the \$178,544 isn't so bad if you break it down. It's less than \$10,000 per year, a little more than \$825 a month, a little less than \$200 per week. It's about 27 bucks a day, or a little more than a dollar an hour.

Still, you might think that the best financial advice is to not have children if you want to be "rich". It's not the case at all.

What do you get for your \$178,544?

- Naming rights. First, middle and last!
- Glimpses of miracles everyday
- Giggles under the covers every night
- More love than your heart can hold
- Butterfly kisses and Velcro hugs
- Endless wonder over rocks, ants, clouds and warm cookies.
- A hand to hold, usually covered with jam.
- A partner for blowing bubbles, flying kites, building sandcastles, and skipping down the sidewalk in the pouring rain.
- Someone to laugh yourself silly with no matter what the boss said or how your stocks performed that day.

For \$178,544, you never have to grow up!

- You get to finger paint, carve pumpkins, play hide and seek, catch lightning bugs, and never stop believing in Santa Claus.
- You have an excuse to keep reading the Adventures of Piglet and Pooh, watching Spongebob Squarepants, going to Disney movies and wishing on stars.
- You get to frame rainbows, hearts, and flowers under refrigerator magnets and collect spray painted noodle wreaths for Christmas, hand prints set in clay for Mother's Day, and cards with backward letters for Father's Day.



For \$178,544, there is no greater bang for your buck.

- You get to be a hero just for retrieving a frisbee off the garage roof, taking the training wheels off the bike, removing a splinter, filling a wading pool, coaxing a wad of gum out of bangs, and coaching a baseball team that never wins but always get treated to ice cream regardless.
- You get a front row seat to history to witness the first step, first word, first bra, first date, and first time behind the wheel.
- You get an education in psychology, nursing, criminal justice, communications, and human sexuality that no college can match.
- You get to be immortal.
- You get another branch added to your family tree, and if you're lucky, a long list of limbs in your obituary called grandchildren.
- In the eyes of a child, you are their #1 hero.
- You have all the power to heal a boo-boo, scare away the monsters under the bed, patch a broken heart, police a slumber party, ground them forever, and love them without limits, so one day they will, like you, love without counting the cost.

ENJOY YOUR KIDS AND GRANDKIDS!

THE RETURN ON YOUR INVESTMENT COULDN'T BE BETTER!

The passage above has been modified from an anonymous author's original text. The original has been circulating on the internet for several years. We have "slightly" updated and revised the original to keep a perennial message "current".

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