

Review of Economic Bases for Child Support Guidelines

Consumer Expenditures Survey

All three of the methodologies below use data collected by the Consumer Expenditures Survey (CES) that is conducted by the US Bureau of Labor Statistics.

For more information, please visit <https://www.bls.gov/cex/>

Consumer Price Index

The Consumer Price Index is a measure of the average change over time in prices paid by urban consumers for a mark basket of consumer goods and services. It is the most widely used measure of inflation.

For more information, please visit <https://www.bls.gov/cpi/>

Economic Basis Options

Economic Basis	Description	Number of States that Use
USDA	USDA study estimates child-rearing expenditures individually for 7 expenditure categories (food, transportation, housing, clothing, health care, child care and education, and miscellaneous expenses), then combines expenses for a total amount.	1 (Minnesota)
Bettson-Rothbarth	Marginal cost approach that compares the expenditures of two sets of equally well-off households: one set of 2-parent families with children and one set of couples without children. The difference in their expenditures is presumed to be spent on child rearing.	29
Comanor	Comanor is critical of USDA and Bettson-Rothbarth because he believes that they overstate actual child-rearing expenditures and do not take into account either the opportunity costs or non-economic benefits associated with having a child. Comanor's estimates of child-rearing expenditures are often below or near poverty amounts for the child's basic needs.	0

For more information, please visit https://mn.gov/dhs/assets/MN_CPR_deliverable1_July17_tcm1053-303782.pdf