

Worth Every Penny

According to the Department of Agriculture, it costs about \$11,610 a year to raise a child in a two-parent household in the United States. This figure increases if the child is a member of a single-parent household, is in a family with greater-than-average income, and/or has siblings.



If you break it down, it's about \$967.50 a month, or \$223.37 a week, or \$31.81 a day. There is also the rate of inflation to consider over time, but it's safe to say that it can cost you roughly \$210,340 over the next 18 years if you are a parent.

What these numbers don't tell you are the priceless treasures you get for that money. Roger Knapp, author, proud parent and grandparent, offers just a few from a list of millions:

- Naming rights – first, middle, and last.
- An awesome list of firsts: steps, words, teeth, days of school, recitals, dates, etc.
- Knowing that your hugs and kisses can heal a multitude of hurts.
- The chance to once again ... believe in fairies, play hide and seek, throw a Frisbee, have afternoon tea with the dolls and the bears, catch fireflies and let them go.
- A collection of original artwork made from macaroni, paper plates and clay.
- A special day in your honor every spring that usually includes breakfast in bed.
- Being there the day she decides the training wheels can come off.
- Giving a nod from the sidelines to encourage him throughout the game.
- Explaining the answer to that famous question, "Why?"
- More love than your heart can hold.



No doubt, anyone who has children can offer his or her long list of precious treasures stored forever in a memory lockbox.

– Beecher Hunter