OJP DRUG COURT CLEARINGHOUSE AND TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE PROJECT

ESTIMATED COSTS RELATED TO THE BIRTH OF A DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL EXPOSED BABY

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ESTIMATED COSTS RELATED TO THE BIRTH OF A DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL EXPOSED BABY

PART I: OVERVIEW OF INFORMATION REPORTED

One of the unanticipated impacts of drug court programs, first noted by Judge Harl Haas of Portland, Oregon, has been the birth of drug-free babies to mothers enrolled in drug courts. But for the drug court, it is highly probable that these babies would have been born "drug-addicted", "drug-exposed" or with fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS) or fetal alcohol effect (FAE) and have required special care to keep them alive. Apart from the human and societal benefits resulting from the birth of these drug-free babies, a number of drug court officials have sought to determine the "cost savings" that could be attributed to these births.

The OJP Drug Court Clearinghouse and Technical Assistance Project therefore researched a variety of sources in an attempt to attribute the amount of "cost savings" that could be associated with the birth of a drug free baby. The result of this research has made it apparent that there has yet been no comprehensive assessment of the financial cost for a drug free baby. There are, however, a variety of cost components that can be factored in to the total "cost" associated with the birth of a drug-addicted baby: hospital costs relating to delivery and immediate intensive care of the infant; detox costs for drug-exposed infants; foster care costs; first year medical costs; special education costs; costs relating to developmental deficiencies, etc. Most studies focus on components of these costs, or present summary cost findings without detailed breakdowns of the costs entailed. Costs for a FAS (fetal alcohol syndrome) child appear to be slightly higher than for a child born addicted to cocaine alone. Most studies note that a high proportion of mothers who give birth to drug exposed infants, have been taking a mixture of alcohol and other drugs.

The following data reflects reported costs associated with caring for babies that were prenatally exposed to drugs or alcohol. Total lifetime costs for caring for those children that survive reportedly ranges from $750,000 to $1.4 million.

The data is broken down by type of cost, charted in the following categories:

A. Hospital/Medical Costs for Drug Exposed Babies
B. Costs Related to Cocaine/Crack Exposed Babies
C. Costs Associated with Fetal Alcohol Syndrome (FAS)
D. Costs Associated with Opiate-Exposed Babies
E. Costs Associated with Babies Exposed to Tobacco Smoking
F. In-Hospital Housing Costs for Drug Exposed Babies
G. Outside (Foster/Nursery) Care Costs for Drug Exposed Babies

Where possible, the data is charted on the basis of costs per child as well as aggregate national costs.

In all, information from 35 studies is cited, prepared over a period of 17 years (1985 - 2001). Cost figures cited are derived from relevant costs in the particular jurisdiction studied and may therefore vary from jurisdiction to jurisdiction.

It is hoped that this information will provide drug court practitioners with a sense of available data on this topic and guidance regarding the types of agencies and cost item they might gather in their local jurisdictions relating to the costs for caring for drug-exposed infants.

PART II: SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORTED AND SOURCES

ESTIMATED COSTS RELATED TO THE BIRTH OF A DRUG AND/OR ALCOHOL EXPOSED BABY

PART II: SUMMARY INFORMATION REPORTED AND SOURCES

A. HOSPITAL / MEDICAL COSTS FOR DRUG-EXPOSED BABIES

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Neonatal intensive care for low birth weight newborns	$25,000-$35,000 per child (for DC, 1996, over 20 percent of low birth weight infants have been exposed to alcohol, tobacco or other drugs before birth). Caring for these infants costs the city at least $5.9 million annually.	Drug Strategies (citing DC Kids Count Collaborative, *Every Kid Counts in the District of Columbia: 5th Annual Fact*, 1998, and *Keeping Score 1998*) http://www.drugstrategies.org/ff1999/health.html
Cost of Keeping Drug Exposed Child in Neonatal Unit	$2,700 per child per day, not including doctor costs, equipment costs, or other expenses (in Oregon). Drug addicted babies stay in these units for months.	Editorial, "Now or Later," Mail Tribune, Apr. 4, 2000 http://www.mailtribune.com/archive/2000/april/040400n7.htm Dani Dodge, "Sick Babies Offer Lesson in Value of Prevention," Mail Tribune, Apr. 2, 2000 http://www.mailtribune.com/archive/2000/april/040200n4.htm
Hospital Charges for Drug-Exposed Infants	$1,100-$4,100 per infant *more* than a nonexposed infant (GAO, 1990). Not clear whether study includes marijuana.	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Additional Median Costs for Newborn Medical Care for Drug Exposed Infants	$4,100 *more* than nonexposed infants per infant (in 1989) ($5,500 as opposed to $1,400)	Claran S. Phibbs, The Economic Implications of Prenatal Substance Exposure, The Future of Children, Spring 1991 (citing General Accounting Office, Drug-Exposed Infants: A Generation at Risk, Washington, DC: U.S. General Accounting Office (GAO/HRD-90-

		138), June 1990)
Cost of Caring for a Drug Exposed Child During First Year	$8,000-$10,000 per child, not including neurodevelopmental therapy, special education services, or other intervention services (in 1990, Services for Children and Families Program of Oregon).	Sarojini S. Budden, Intrauterine Exposure to Drugs and Alcohol: How Do the Children Fare?, Medscape Women's Health 1(10), 1996 http://www.unhooked.com/sep/intrauter.htm
First Year Costs to the State for Drug Addicted Newborns	$50,000 per child (S. Carolina Dept. of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services)	Associated Press, "Bill Would Allow Newborn Drug Testing Without Consent," Augusta Chronicle Online: metroaugusta, Apr. 6 1997 http://www.augustachronicle.com/stories/040697/met_cokemoms.html
Lifetime Costs to the State for Drug Addicted Newborns	$1 million per child (S. Carolina Dept. of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Services)	Associated Press, "Bill Would Allow Newborn Drug Testing Without Consent," Augusta Chronicle Online: metroaugusta, Apr. 6 1997 http://www.augustachronicle.com/stories/040697/met_cokemoms.html
Care & Treatment Costs During First Few Years of Drug Exposed Child's Life	$250,000 per child	Office of Justice Programs, Dept of Justice, "New Survey Documents Dramatic Rise in Drug Courts: Substantial Progress Reported," Press Release, Nov. 24, 1997 http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/dcpo/ausum97.htm
Costs of Care for Drug Exposed Babies Due to Medical Expenses and Developmental Delays	At least $750,000 per child	Susan Lundine, "Feeney May Rethink Cuts to Drug Program," Orlando Bus. J., Mar. 30, 2001 http://orlando.bcentral.com/orlando/stories/2001/04/02/story7.html
Daily Costs to Keep Drug-Addicted Babies Alive	$25,000 per child per day	Renee Koury, "Protesters Tear Down Addict Birth Control Ad," San Jose Mercury News, Oct. 20, 1999. http://www.sjmercury.com
Daily Hospital Costs for Drug Addicted Newborn's Care	$1,500-$2,000 per infant per day	House Bill Report: HB 1697 As Reported By House Committee On: Children & Family Services, Mar. 6, 1997 http://www.leg.wa.gov/pub/billinfo/1997-98/house/1675-1699/1697_hbr_030697.txt
Medical Costs of Drug Addicted Babies for First Four Years of Life	Over $40,000 per child (for the 300,000 drug exposed babies in the U.S.)	John Dillin, "US Wasting Funds in Drug Effort," Christian Science Monitor, June 12, 1991

Medical Care Costs for Drug Exposed Infants for First 18 Years of Life	$750,000 per child	Leo Uzych, "The Problem of Drug Babies," Christian Science Monitor, Dec. 10, 1990

2. TOTAL NATIONAL COSTS

Type of Cost	**Amount**	**Source / Website**
Additional Hospital Costs to Treat Drug-Exposed Newborns	$360 million (in 1992)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Direct Costs Related to Prenatal Exposure to Illegal Drugs	$387 million (in 1991, Joyce 1994)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html .
Medicaid Costs	Most of $3 billion spent by Medicaid went towards inpatient hospital care for illness and injury for infants due to mothers' drug abuse	J.A.C., Jr., It's Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco, Stupid!, The National Center on Addiction & Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 1996 http://www.acbr.com/fas/stupid.htm
Number and Cost of Drug Exposed Babies	739,200 infants at annual cost exceeding $13 billion (Ntl. Institute on Drug Abuse)	Louise Marlane Chan, "S.O.S. from the Womb: A Call for New York Legislation Criminalizing Drug Use During Pregnancy," 21 Fordham Urb. L.J. 199, Fall 1993.

B. COSTS RELATED TO COCAINE / CRACK EXPOSED BABIES

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Additional Neonatal Hospital Costs for Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$5,200 per infant (for Harlem Hospital, 1985-86)	http://www.cocaine-facts.org/pages/prenatal_exposure.html
Additional Neonatal Medical (Physician) Costs for Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$2,610 per infant, and 4 additional days of hospital stay (for Harlem Hospital, 1985-86)	http://www.cocaine-facts.org/pages/prenatal_exposure.html
Additional Neonatal Medical (Physician) Costs for Cocaine-Exposed Infants (does not include physician costs for caring for infant or mother).	$2,610 per infant, and 4 additional days of hospital stay (Phibbs study, 1991) (or $4876 and 11 days, including time spent in hospital waiting for social evaluation or foster care placement)	Pregnancy and the Use of Cocaine, John Thomas, Dec. 1994 (citing Ciaran S. Phibbs, et al, The Neonatal Costs of Maternal Cocaine Use, Journal of the American Medical Association, 266:1, 1991) http://www.pioneerplanet.com/uofm/papers/jthomas/jthomas1.htm
Birth and Hospital Care	For normal newborn, $2,000 per infant. For crack exposed neonate, $11,000 per infant (includes round-the-clock nursing, monitors, blood and urine tests, high-tech equipment and social service evaluations)	Crack Babies in Infancy (Part I) http://www.focalpress.com/companions/0240804155/crack/crack1.htm
Hospital Costs for Newborns Exposed to Cocaine Only	*Additional* $1,223 per infant (in 1991, Joyce 1994)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Hospital Costs for Newborns Exposed to Cocaine and One or More Drugs	*Additional* $7,731 per infant (in 1991, Joyce 1994)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Short-Term Neonatal Hospital Costs Attributable to Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$3,182 per infant x 158,000 cocaine exposed children = $504 million total (in 1990, Phibbs 1991) (excludes physician costs which account for 15-20% of NICU costs)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html

Delivery and Neonatal Costs for Caring for Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$7,054 per infant, as opposed to $3,058 for those not exposed to cocaine, a 131% increase. 33% of cocaine exposed infants remained in hospital over 5 days, as opposed to 14% of non-exposed infants. (Behnke, 1997)	Marylou Behnke, How Fetal Cocaine Exposure Increases Neonatal Hospital Costs, Pediatrics, February 1997 http://www.doitnow.org/pages/354.html
Costs for Bringing Surviving Crack Babies to Adulthood	$1 million per child	J.A.C., Jr., It's Drugs, Alcohol and Tobacco, Stupid!, The National Center on Addiction & Substance Abuse at Columbia University, 1996 http://www.acbr.com/fas/stupid.htm
Neonatal Hospital Cost Up to Medical Discharge for Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$5,200 *more* per cocaine-exposed infant than for non-exposed infants	NEDTAC Online Bibliographies (Abstract, C.S. Phibbs, et al, The Neonatal Costs of Maternal Cocaine Use, Journal of the American Medical Association, 266, p. 1521-1526 (1991)) http://www.cesar.umd.edu/www2root/nedtac/docs/COSTBEN.txt
Cost of Boarding Cocaine-Exposed Babies While Awaiting Home and Social Evaluations for Foster Care Placement	*Additional* $3,500 per infant ($5,000 if infant is exposed to crack or cocaine in addition to other drugs)	NEDTAC Online Bibliographies (Abstract, C.S. Phibbs, et al, The Neonatal Costs of Maternal Cocaine Use, Journal of the American Medical Association, 266, p. 1521-1526 (1991)) http://www.cesar.umd.edu/www2root/nedtac/docs/COSTBEN.txt
Labor, Delivery, and Postpartum Care of Cocaine-Positive Mothers	$3,608 per birth (vs. $3,147 for normal babies/ mothers)	Sarojini S. Budden, Intrauterine Exposure to Drugs and Alcohol: How Do the Children Fare?, Medscape Women's Health 1(10), 1996 http://www.unhooked.com/sep/intrauter.htm
Neonatal Charges for Cocaine-Positive Babies	$13,222 per birth (vs. $1,297 for normal babies/ mothers)	Sarojini S. Budden, Intrauterine Exposure to Drugs and Alcohol: How Do the Children Fare?, Medscape Women's Health 1(10), 1996 http://www.unhooked.com/sep/intrauter.htm

2. TOTAL NATIONAL COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Special Education Needs of Children Prenatally Exposed to Cocaine or Crack	$352 million annually	NIDA Press Release (10/22/98) http://www.come-over.to/FAS/NCADDfacts.htm
Additional Medical Expenses for Infants Exposed to Cocaine in Utero	$504 million annually	Physicians Committee for Responsible Medicine, Ethics in Human Research, Birth Defect Statistics http://www.pcrm.org.issues/Ethics_in_Human_Research/ethics_human_birthdefects.html
Short-Term Hospital/Medical-Care Costs Attributable to Cocaine-Exposed Infants	$504 million (in 1990, Phibbs 1991) (excludes physician costs, which account for 15-20% of neonatal intensive care unit costs)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html

C. COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME (FAS)

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Lifetime Institutional and Medical Costs for Child with FAS	$1.4 million, per child (lifetime)	"Pregnancy and Alcohol: A Dangerous Mix," CBS Health Watch, Aug. 2000 www.cbshealthwatch.com/cx/viewarticle/221884

2. TOTAL NATIONAL COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Economic Costs of FAS	$2.1 billion (in 1990)	NIAA, Ninth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health, (6/97) p. 388 http://www.come-over.to/FAS/NCADDfacts.htm
Total Annual Costs for Treating Birth Defects Caused by FAS	$1.6 billion (in 1985)	B. Anderson & E. Novick, Fetal Alcohol Syndrome and Pregnant Women Who Abuse Alcohol: An Overview of the Issue and the Issue and the Federal Response, HHS, 1992, p. 1 http://www.come-over.to/FAS/NCADDfacts.htm
Total Annual Costs for Treating Adults Over 21 with FAS	$1.3 billion (in 1985)	Anderson, p. 1 (see above cite) http://www.come-over.to/FAS/NCADDfacts.htm
Neonatal Intensive Care for Growth Retardation Due to FAS	$118 million (in 1985)	Anderson, p. 1 (see above cite) http://www.come-over.to/FAS/NCADDfacts.htm
Economic Costs Associated with FAS	$1.6 billion annually (800,000 pregnant women consuming alcohol in U.S. annually)	Healthy Start, Programs and Services http://trfn.clpgh.org/hspgh/chemical%20dependency.html
Total Treatment Costs for Infants, Children, and Adults with FAS	$1.9 billion (in 1992)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html

Cost of Treatment for FAS	$249.7 million, not counting supported and institutional living for adults over 21 (Abel and Sokol study, 1991)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Total Annual Cost of Treating FAS Birth Defects	$1.6 billion (in 1985). $1.3 billion for adults over 21 tears old.	NCADWD Fact Sheet (2/94) http://www.ctclearinghouse.org/vfncadd.htm
Neonatal Intensive Care for Growth Retardation Due to FAS	$118 million (in 1985).	NCADWD Fact Sheet (2/94) http://www.ctclearinghouse.org/vfncadd.htm
FAS Direct Care Costs Including Residential Care for Mentally Retarded Adults	$1.61 billion in 1985 (Residential care accounts for almost 80% of direct care costs)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) (citing Rice study, 1990) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html

D. COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH OPIATE-EXPOSED BABIES

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Medical Costs for Opiate-Addicted Children During First Two Months of Life	$32,000 per infant (in 1998, at St. Luke's Hospital in New Bedford, CT)	Polly Saltonstall, Born Addicted, Standard-Times, May 30, 1999 http://www.s-t.com/daily/05-99/05-30-99/a01lo002.htm

E. COSTS ASSOCIATED WITH BABIES EXPOSED TO TOBACCO SMOKING

1. TOTAL NATIONAL COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
First Year Health Costs for Babies with Low Birth Weight Attributed to Mothers' Smoking During Pregnancy	$1 billion-$1.5 billion	Healthy Start, Cost Savings of Preventing Low Weight Births http://trfn.clpgh.org/hspgh/cost%20savings%20low%birth.html

F. IN-HOSPITAL HOUSING COSTS FOR DRUG EXPOSED BABIES

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Costs for Hospitals Housing Boarder Babies	$586 per infant, per day beyond medical discharge date (average 11 days)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Daily Costs for Drug-Exposed Infants Abandoned at Birth or Kept in Hospitals	$460 per infant per day (11,900 infants abandoned at birth or kept in hospitals each year, 78% of them are drug-exposed)	U.S. Dept. of Health & Human Services, National Estimates on the Number of Boarder Babies, the Cost of Their Care, and the Number of Abandoned Infants http://waisgate.hhs.gov/cgi-bin/waisgate
Cost for Withdrawal Crib for Drug Exposed Babies	$1,500 per child per day, for 1-4 months (in Vancouver, Canada)	David Carrigg, "The Love Cure," Vancouver Courier Online Edition, Jan. 19, 2001 http://www.vancourier.com/013a01/top1.htm

2. TOTAL NATIONAL COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Extra Hospital Costs to Treat Drug-Exposed Infants and to House Abandoned Babies	$407 million (in 1992)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html
Additional Cost for Housing "Boarder Babies"	$47 million (in 1992)	National Institute on Drug Abuse, The Economic Costs of Alcohol and Drug Abuse in the United States – 1992, Chapter 4(b) http://www.nida.nih.gov/EconomicCosts/Chapter4b.html

G. OUTSIDE (FOSTER / NURSERY) CARE COSTS FOR DRUG EXPOSED BABIES

1. PER CHILD COSTS

Type of Cost	Amount	Source / Website
Foster Care Costs	$3,600-$5,000 annually per infant for basic foster care. *Additional* $750,000 for special health and educational services, per each drug exposed child from birth through age 18. (30% drug exposed infants need foster care)	Healthy Start, Cost Savings of Preventing Low Weight Births http://trfn.clpgh.org/hspgh/cost%20savings%20low%birth.html
Costs Related to Hospital Care, Foster Care, and Special Education of Drug-Exposed Children Up Until Age 18	Up to $750,000 per child	Office of Justice Programs, Dept of Justice, "New Survey Documents Dramatic Rise in Drug Courts: Substantial Progress Reported," Press Release, Nov. 24, 1997 http://www.ojp.usdoj.gov/dcpo/ausum97.htm
Monthly County Funds (Los Angeles) Paid to Nurseries for Substance Abuse Infants Unable to Be Placed in Foster Care	$3,700 per month per child to Nurseries in Los Angeles (as opposed to $621 per child per month for foster care)	Children Requiring a Caring Kommunity's "Project Prevention," Aug. 16, 2001 http://www.cashforbirthcontrol.com/stats/stats.html