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Costs and Consequences of Placing Children in Care

Harriet Ward, Lisa Holmes and Jean Soper

Child Welfare Outcomes

July 2008 • 288pp • ISBN: 9781843102731 • hb • £39.99

It costs more to place a child in the care of a local authority than it does to send a child to a top boarding school, and there are substantial variations in costs both between and within authorities.

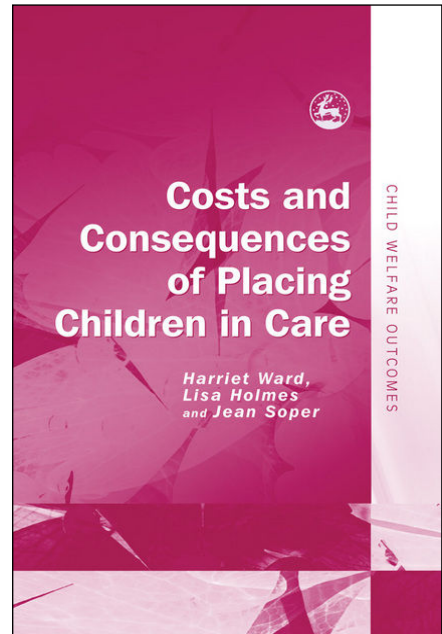
Costs and Consequences of Placing Children in Care draws on original research to investigate the costs of care, provide an insight into how these variations in cost relate to differences in children's needs and, most importantly, establish whether higher costs reflect better services and better outcomes for children.

The book also describes how the research has led to a newly pioneered resource: a fully workable cost calculator model designed for use in local authorities, which is able to calculate the probable cost consequences of difference placement choices.

This book offers grounded advice on best practice and future policy, and will be invaluable to both social work managers and policy makers working in children's services.

Harriet Ward is a Professor and Director of the Centre for Child and Family Research (CCFR) at Loughborough University, UK. She has undertaken extensive research in the field of assessing need and evaluating outcomes in children's services. **Lisa Holmes** is Senior Research Associate at CCFR. Her research interests include commissioning and costs of placements for looked after children and the provision of support services for foster carers. **Jean Soper** is Visiting Research Fellow at CCFR. She is an economist whose recent work has been to design the cost calculator model and to support the centre's extensive programme of research on the costs and consequences of children's services.

Contents: Preface. Authors' note. 1. Introduction. 2. Identifying Local Authorities and Children for Exploring the Costs of Care. 3. The Development of Unit Costs for Social Care Processes. 4. Placement Patterns, Processes and Costs. 5. Children and Costs. 6. Need, Cost, Service and Outcome. 7. The Relationship Between Cost and Value: Children's Views of the Value of Services. 8. The Cost Calculator for Children's Services. 9. Conclusion: Cost Calculations and their Implications for Policy and Practice. References. Index.



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