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 Washington, DC 20009
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Interviews: 812 voters
 Dates: April 14-15, 2003

FINAL

Pew Commission on Children in Foster Care
 April 2003

48 Male
52 Female

Please note: all results are shown as percentages unless otherwise stated.

1a. Are you currently registered to vote at this address?

Registered.....	100	CONTINUE
Not registered	-	
Not sure.....	-	TERMINATE

1b. First, in general, how familiar would you say that you are with the issue of foster care--very familiar, fairly familiar, only somewhat familiar, or not at all familiar?

Very familiar	12
Fairly familiar.....	21
Only somewhat familiar	40
Not at all familiar.....	27
Not sure.....	-

2a. And from what you know, do you have a favorable or unfavorable opinion of foster care in your community?
(IF "FAVORABLE" OR "UNFAVORABLE," ASK:) Is that very or somewhat (favorable/unfavorable)?

Very favorable.....	21
Somewhat favorable	35
Somewhat unfavorable	10
Very unfavorable	6
Not sure.....	28

2b. Why do you feel that way about foster care in your community?

(PROBE:) What are some of your positive impressions of foster care in your community?
(PROBE:) What are some of your negative impressions of foster care in your community?

Net Positive Impressions	44%	Net Negative Impressions	28%
Every child needs a good home	16	Some parents in it for the money, don't care about the kids	6
Good, caring, loving parents, good people involved	11	Child abuse, neglect, children treated poorly	5
Experience of family member or friend	8	Should screen foster parents better	3
A good thing, a good idea, people should do it	3	Some kids get lost in the system, not enough follow up	2
It's needed, necessary, a necessity	2	Criticisms of the government/the court/foster care agencies	2
		Don't know; no response	29%

3. How much have you seen, heard, or read about the issue of foster care in the past two or three months--a lot, a fair amount, only a little, or nothing at all?

A lot.....	6
A fair amount.....	16
Only a little.....	37
Nothing at all	41
Not sure.....	-

4. Based on your knowledge of the foster care system, would you say that this system needs a complete overhaul, needs quite a few changes and improvements, needs only some minor changes, or is fine as it is and needs no changes?

Needs complete overhaul	15
Needs quite a few changes and improvements	38
Needs some minor changes.....	24
Fine as it is, no changes needed.....	5
Not sure.....	18

5. Where do you get most of your information about foster care--from the news and other media, from the experiences of friends and family, from your own personal experiences, or from some other source? **(ACCEPT ONLY ONE RESPONSE. IF "SOME OTHER SOURCE," ASK:)** From what source do you get most of your information about foster care?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

News and other media	56
Experiences of friends and family.....	26
Personal experiences	10
Other	6
Not sure	2

6. In your opinion, which of the following reasons BEST describes why most children are placed in foster care? **(IF MORE THAN ONE, ASK:)** If you had to choose one of these, which would it be?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

They are taken away from their parents because of abuse.....	37
They are taken away from their parents because their health and safety needs are neglected.....	36
Their parents decide they cannot afford to raise the children.....	7
Their parents are deceased.....	2
They are taken away from their parents because the children have a physical or mental disability.....	1
All (VOL).....	14
Not sure.....	3

7. Which of the following reasons BEST describes why most children end up leaving foster care? **(IF MORE THAN ONE, ASK:)** If you had to choose one of these, which would it be?

THIS TABLE HAS BEEN RANKED BY THE HIGHEST PERCENTAGE

They stay in foster care until they are old enough to be considered legally independent.....	21
They go to live with a blood relative other than their parents	20
They are reunited with their parents	18
They are adopted.....	9
They run away, or otherwise cannot be found	9
All (VOL).....	11
Not sure.....	12

8. How much confidence do you have that **(READ ITEM)** making the decisions about placing children in foster care and overseeing the care of those children once they are in foster care have the resources, skills, and time they need to make the right decisions for these children--a lot, a fair amount, only a little, or none at all?

	<u>A Lot Of Confidence</u>	<u>A Fair Amount Of Confidence</u>	<u>Only A Little Confidence</u>	<u>No Confidence At All</u>	<u>Not Sure</u>
The judges	8	35	37	16	4
The caseworkers	10	32	37	15	6

9. As you may know, judges and the courts have the primary responsibility for overseeing the foster care system across the country, including decisions about whether children go into foster care, or whether they can return home. If you knew that, in many cases, judges have very little time to devote to individual foster care cases and very little information about the children and their families to make these decisions, would you be extremely concerned, very concerned, somewhat concerned, not too concerned, or not at all concerned?

Extremely concerned	39
Very concerned	38
Somewhat concerned	17
Not too concerned.....	3
Not at all concerned.....	2
Not sure.....	1

10. If there were a report of child abuse or neglect made against a person who is a member of a racial or ethnic minority, do you think that the child would be more likely to be placed in foster care, less likely to be placed in foster care, or do you think that it would not make a difference either way?

More likely.....	35
Less likely	8
No difference either way.....	47
Not sure.....	10

11. Which of the following BETTER describes why you think most people become foster parents? Do you think that most people become foster parents **(A)** because of their concern for children, or **(B)** because of the financial payments that they receive?

A /because of their concern for children	42
B /because of the financial payments they receive	29
Both equally (VOL).....	24
Not sure.....	5

FACTUALS: Now I am going to ask you a few questions for statistical purposes only.

F1. How old are you? **(IF "REFUSED," ASK:)** Well, would you tell me which age group you belong to?

18-24.....	7	[179-180]
25-29.....	8	
30-34.....	9	
35-39.....	11	
40-44.....	11	
45-49.....	10	
50-54.....	9	
55-59.....	8	
60-64.....	6	
65-69.....	5	
70-74.....	6	
75 and over.....	7	
Refused.....	3	

F2. What is the last grade that you completed in school?

Grade school	1	[208-209]
Some high school	5	
High school graduate	28	
Some college, no degree.....	17	
Vocational training/2-year college	10	
4-year college/bachelor's degree	22	
Some postgraduate work, no degree	3	
2-3 years postgraduate work/master's degree.....	10	
Doctoral/law degree.....	2	
Not sure/refused.....	2	

F3a. Do you have any children under age 18 currently living in your household?

Yes, kids under 18 in household	36	Skip to Q.F4	[210]
No, no kids under 18 in household	62		
Not sure.....	2	CONTINUE	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY THEY DO NOT HAVE CHILDREN UNDER AGE 18 LIVING IN THE HOUSEHOLD OR ARE NOT SURE IN Q.F3a.)

F3b. Have you EVER been the parent or guardian of a child under age 18 who lived in your home with you?

Yes	54	[211]
No.....	44	
Not sure.....	2	

F4. Are you currently single and never married, married, separated, widowed, or divorced?

Single.....	21	[212]
Married.....	55	
Separated	2	
Widowed	9	
Divorced	10	
Other (VOL).....	1	
Not sure/refused.....	2	

F5. In terms of the way you think about social and political issues, would you consider yourself to be liberal, moderate, or conservative?

Liberal.....	21	[213]
Moderate	37	
Conservative	35	
Not sure.....	7	

F6. Regardless of how you may be registered, how would you describe your overall point of view in terms of the political parties? Would you say that you are mostly Democratic, leaning Democratic, completely independent, leaning Republican, or mostly Republican?

Mostly Democratic.....	27	[214]
Leaning Democratic	10	
Completely independent.....	21	
Leaning Republican	10	
Mostly Republican.....	25	
Not sure.....	7	

F7. Are you from a Hispanic or Spanish-speaking background?

Yes, Hispanic.....	7	Skip to Q.F9	[215]
No, not Hispanic.....	91		
Not sure/refused.....	2	CONTINUE	

(ASK ONLY OF RESPONDENTS WHO SAY NO, NOT HISPANIC OR NOT SURE/REFUSED IN Q.F7.)

F8. What is your race--white, black, Asian, or something else?

White	72	[216]
Black	13	
Asian	2	
Other	3	
Not sure/refused.....	3	
Hispanics (Q.F7)	7	

F9. If you added together the yearly income of all the members of your family who were living at home last year, would the total be less than ten thousand dollars, between ten thousand dollars and twenty thousand dollars, between twenty thousand dollars and thirty thousand dollars, between thirty thousand dollars and forty thousand dollars, between forty thousand dollars and fifty thousand dollars, between fifty thousand dollars and seventy-five thousand dollars, between seventy-five thousand dollars and one hundred thousand dollars, or would the total be more than that?

Less than \$10,000	5	[217]
Between \$10,000 and \$20,000	8	
Between \$20,000 and \$30,000	11	
Between \$30,000 and \$40,000	12	
Between \$40,000 and \$50,000	11	
Between \$50,000 and \$75,000	16	
Between \$75,000 and \$100,000	8	
More than \$100,000	7	
Not sure/refused.....	22	