Danielle Johnson
Susan Wentworth
November 13, 2013
FIN 3060

Family Planning

Introduction

Family planning is involved in all stages of life and revolves around many aspects such as raising children and purchasing a home. At birth, parents must plan how to financially afford childrearing, which typically includes the cost of housing, food, medical and insurance expenses, etc. When children reach the years of secondary school and college, many financial decisions arise regarding planning for educational needs, college, and how to obtain financial aid. At the years of adulthood, life-changing events such as choosing a job and buying a home must be addressed. At all of these stages, family planning is at the core. Without a strong financial plan, families cannot reasonably expect to meet or surpass all of their short and long-term goals.

Cost of Raising Children

According to the U.S. Department of Agriculture raising a child until it reaches adulthood, age 18, costs roughly $234,000, depending on the family's income levels and whether or not the child has special needs. These costs can be broken down between childcare, food, housing, clothing, and education.

The average family spends roughly $13,300 a year per child. This number decreases to around $11,200 once the child reaches its teenage years. When raising children, housing can cost an additional $4,000 a year, a total of $72,000, which includes bedding, costs for an additional bedroom, and utilities. Medical and insurance expenses are the second most expensive, totaling $41,100 total, or $2,300 per year. Each year approximately $2,129 is contributed to food, and during adolescence $750 can be contributed to clothing. These costs tend to decrease as the child gets older, however this does depend on the activity level of the child and the environment of upbringing.

Raising a child with special needs can quadruple these costs, even with proper planning and support with additional expenditures arising from extra medical, physical, and personal care needs. While costs can depend greatly on the severity of the disability, early planning can go a long way in easing the financial burden of raising a child with special needs. Necessities for children with disabilities range well beyond food, clothing, and housing. On average, additional expenses can comprise of a caregiver, $10,000, diapers, $1,700, occupational therapy $10,200, and out-of-pocket expenses, $5,400. These expenses can average up to an additional $27,000 a year. Even with health insurance, out-of-pocket medical expenses can cost families of disabled children more than triple the typical medical expense of disabled children; however, these families can often have the same coverage under their health insurance plans.

One important step parents of disabled children should take is to purchase a larger life insurance plan to cover the child's expenses for the remainder of his or her life. With proper treatment and care, disabled children can live a normal life expectancy of over 70 years, implying many will still need financial support long after their parents are deceased. Government aid is available but tends to vary between states. With the current tax and inflation rate, the suggested amount of life insurance needed is around $4 million per family. Families should seek out a financial planner or another form of legal advice in order to catch every loophole and to understand the contents of each policy available.

Overall, the highest cost of raising a child continues to be the cost of a college education. The College Board reports the budget for an in-state, public, college to average $8,655 a year and a private college to average $22,300 a year. Tuition is strictly the cost of academic instruction. Additional costs occur from room and board, meal plans, technology fees, and miscellaneous service fees. The cost of housing and meals depend on the plans chosen by the student and parents. While the types of housing vary substantially depending on location, the average cost of room and board is around $9,500 a year, including off campus housing and utilities. The cost for books and supplies averages to $1,200 per semester. Additional fees are paid for services such as technology fees, recreational services, academic excellence fees, and utility surcharge fees. These fees allow students to utilize library access, student government services, registration, ID cards, student union access, and even health care services. One of the larger fees charged to students is an out-of-state fee, or non-residence fees, which can be up to three times the amount of tuition fees. Therefore, many parents must plan and decide how to fund their children's educations whether through educational savings plans, loans, or other forms of financial aid early in their children's lives.

Along with new life come many new responsibilities. When children enter the world, their parents must plan to afford the costs associated with their birth, development, education, and health. While these costs are substantially higher for families of disabled children and tend to fluctuate more, all families should utilize savings and investment accounts to accumulate funds to distribute towards rearing children. With proper organization and planning, a family can better prepare for these substantial additional expenses.

Saving for Education

Since the cost of a college education tends to be one of the most expensive responsibilities of rearing a child, parents should consider creating education plans for the purpose of funding their child's education. Coverdell ESAs and 529 Plans were created for the purpose of providing individuals with savings plans to help reduce the financial burden of paying for college. These savings plans vary in aspects like contribution limits, age limits, distribution purposes, etc., but each is useful for separate and distinct needs. Coverdell ESAs specifically benefit education between 1st-12th grades, yet 529 plans are distinctly used to fund higher education.

When parents are planning for their children's immediate educational needs, Coverdell ESAs are a useful savings tool. These accounts are created as an incentive to help parents and students save for education expenses related to private schooling in grades 1-12. Annual contributions to this account cannot exceed $2,000, no matter how many accounts have been established. Also, contributions to an ESA are not deductible from one's income taxes. Deposits in the account grow tax free until distributed. The beneficiary of the account is someone who is under age 18 or is a special needs beneficiary. He or she will not owe tax on distributions as long as they are used for qualified education expenses, such as tuition and fees, books, supplies, and room and board. If the distribution exceeds the qualified education expenses, a percentage will be taxable to the beneficiary and will be subject to an additional 10% tax. Lastly, if there is a balance in the Coverdell ESA when the beneficiary is 30 years old, it must be distributed within 30 days.

Another advantageous savings plan is the 529 plan, which is a tax-advantaged savings plan designed to encourage saving for future college costs. 529 plans, legally known as "qualified tuition plans", are sponsored by states, state agencies, and educational institutions. Currently two types of 529 plans exist: prepaid tuition plans and college savings plans. Prepaid tuition plans cover tuition and mandatory fees and are typically paid through lump sums or installments. College savings plans, however, are limited to a total amount of $200,000, cover tuition and fees, have no age limits, and have no residency requirement. 529 plans have no age limitations in contrast to Coverdell ESAs. Also, they may only be used for higher education, not grade school or high school. Other major benefits of 529 plans include federal and state tax benefits, donor control of funds, low maintenance, simplified tax reporting, flexibility, and substantial deposit allowances.

In comparison, a Coverdell ESA and a 529 Plan are both beneficial tools for saving for education, but the distinction between the two can be found in their purposes. On the surface it would appear that the 529 plans would be better. 529 plans permit higher contribution levels and there are no age limits. Yet, ESAs allow for greater flexibility in investments and in what the funds may be used for. If parents are saving for a child's college education, can contribute more than $2,000 per year, and are starting relatively early, the 529 plan would be the better choice. If parents are looking to save in order to fund their child's private grade schooling, the ESA would be the better choice. Whatever the decision is, parents should begin to contribute to these plans early in their child's life since starting later will decrease the full potential of the accounts.

Value of a College Degree

A college degree is a formal recognition of the education accumulated in college and its dual value. An intrinsic value enhances the student's personality and a market value makes getting a rewarding job more feasible. Therefore, when graduating from high school, children and their parents should consider whether or not pursuing higher education is worth possibly accruing high levels of debt into adulthood or whether the child is more inclined towards blue collar work. In order to determine the value of a specific college degree, one should consider his or her history of academic performance, the major to pursue, and the reputation of the school.

Before applying to an undergraduate degree program, students and their parents should openly discuss whether the child is prepared for the responsibility of college life. Individuals who have a history of academic success throughout grade and secondary school are more likely to succeed in the college atmosphere than their academically inept peers. Students can reference their grade record as well as standardized testing scores, such as the SAT and ACT, in order to access their potential academic performance. Once in college, those at the top of their class tend to have more job opportunities than their less academically stellar peers, and their financial compensation is typically higher.

According to USA Today, studies have shown that the value of an undergraduate degree is impacted greater by the major one pursues rather than the university the degree is obtained from. Therefore, going to a more expensive (flagship) school does not necessarily directly impact one's potential earnings. Graduates of liberal arts colleges such as photography, music, and philosophy typically have the lowest salaries. However, on average, engineering graduates earn the most in every state, followed by nursing and then business graduates. To understand this concept, one can review the basic laws of supply and demand; since the demand and supply of these majors differ, so does the compensation. Liberal arts degrees are in much greater supply than engineering degrees. Therefore, the demand for these majors is low and so is the average compensation. However, because there is a shortage of engineering majors, the demand is high for these majors and so is the compensation. Therefore, before applying to an undergraduate program, potential students should weigh the cost of obtaining a particular degree with its expected salary to analyze the monetary value the degree will hold.

When considering where to attend college, potential students should consider the reputation of an alma mater, since the university a degree is awarded from tends to play a small role in the overall value of the degree. In some cases, students who attended top ranking colleges earned up to 20% more than students in lower ranking universities. For example, those that attend esteemed universities may rank higher than their lower ranking counterparts in the same industry, such as in a situation where a MIT engineering graduate may dominate an engineering graduate of LSU if competing for the same job with the same credentials. Even so, personal skills and ability tend to dominate when comparing similar candidates. Hence potential students should attempt to balance the amount of debt they are willing to assume with the prestige they seek from their alma mater.

Lastly, if an individual is considering seeking a graduate or doctorate degree, he or she should determine the benefits and future value of doing so. According to www.mba.com, graduates of masters programs remain highly employable and consistently credit their degrees for offering valuable opportunities for career advancement, professional development, and personal satisfaction. Graduates have constantly agreed that an MBA or Doctorate can boost one's career through faster career advancement, increased earnings potential, further preparation for leadership positions, quantitative analytical skills, and developing professional networks. Also, higher-level education rates high in value with greater opportunities for progressively challenging and interesting work, developing managerial skills, and starting a business. The degrees will increase one's chances of finding a job and of becoming financially successful. When trying to decide whether or not to enroll in a graduate program, undergraduates should pursue the further education if their career can be advanced by its attainment and the benefits outweigh the cost.

If a child is unsure if obtaining a college degree is the right choice, following these decision-making guidelines can help children and parents make an informed decision. Consider the student's past academic success and his or her potential performance in college. Then determine what major will best suit the student's interests and abilities while also considering the demand of the major since this affects the compensation received within the field. Lastly, decide which school to attend by researching the college's prestige, history, and academic programs. By keeping these facts in mind, the student can potentially determine the value of the college degree they want to pursue.

Financial Aid

As students prepare to enroll in a college or university, most are faced with the obstacle of obtaining financial aid. To prepare for a child's college education, parents should prepare for the financial aid process to begin. First, students must complete the FAFSA application in order to discover the amount and types of financial aid in which they are eligible. A prospective college student should begin to search for scholarships offered at their university, online, and in the community. Students can also decrease the cost of their college education through scholarships, grants, work-studies, and loans.

As you begin planning, you'll find that taking a financial inventory is the best way to start. Gather academic and financial records, and begin searching available grants, loans, and scholarships. You can file a Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) as soon as January for fall semester enrollment. This application is the only method to apply for federal financial aid. The FAFSA application must be completed online at www.fafsa.gov each year a student is in college. After submitting the application, FAFSA helps the student's school determine the types of financial aid he or she is eligible for.

Even though educational plans such as Coverdell ESAs and 529 plans are advantageous for saving for college, many individuals will find that the cost of college may exceed the amount of savings one has accumulated. As an initial step towards reducing the cost of a college education, students should search for scholarships through their state, college, and community organizations, as well as online and through family employers. Scholarships are typically awarded based on academic success or merit, which usually reflect the values and purposes of the donor of the award. Students must apply to receive this type of funding, and the funds do not need to be repaid. Many universities offer scholarships for students who enroll and meet an exceptionally high standard of academic success. Scholarships are also awarded based on criteria such as a student's nationality, career choice, volunteer activities, disabilities, etc.

One type of federal student aid that permits students to decrease their financial burden is grants. A grant is money given freely to a student that does not need to be repaid. Although state or federal governments generally fund grants, some institutions award grants as well. Two common types of grants include the Federal Pell Grant and the Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant. Federal Pell Grants are distributed to undergraduates who have not yet earned a degree and who demonstrates a financial need. Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants are typically only available to students with the greatest financial need. In general, grants are only available to students with a low family income and, for this reason, the greatest financial need.

Work-studies also allow students to reduce the cost of education. These jobs allow students to participate in on-campus jobs, where he or she can earn money that can be used to help pay education expenses. Work-study programs are regulated the university it serves, so requirements vary between institutions. Generally, students with the most financial need, based on FAFSA applications, are given these positions.

Lastly, need-based and non-need-based Federal loans make up a large portion of the total aid awarded to undergraduates each year. Need-based loans generally provide lower interest rates and delayed prepayment features. Also, the government pays the accrued interest on the loan while the student is still in school and sometimes up to six months afterward, reducing the total cost of the loan. Non-need-based loans are available to families who can't pay their expected contribution from savings or current income. These loans have higher interest rates and require a speedier repayment. In contrast to need-based loans, the government does not pay the accrued interest while the student is in school, so the payments are due while he or she is in school, increasing the total cost of the loan. All in all, an excessive selection of student loans exists today making it simple to find a student loan to meet one's individual needs.

Because a college education is a substantial financial investment, students need to obtain aid in order to reduce the total cost. All students should apply for aid through the FAFSA application process, especially if they believe they will qualify for need-based aid. Students in financial need can typically attain aid through federal grants, need-based scholarships, work-studies, and loans. Students who do not qualify as need-based students can obtain funding through non-need-based or academic scholarships and loans. All in all, many opportunities exist for students to decrease the amount of debt accrued while in college.

Certified Financial Planners

When considering the needs and wants involved in a family's future, consider consulting a certified financial advisor to help make all financial goals a possible reality. These professionals are uniquely qualified to help individuals organize their finances, solve problems, and make a plan to achieve their financial goals. Only a select group of planners have met the rigid requirements to be called Certified Financial Planners (CFP), and this group is recognized as one of the most desired designations in the financial planning field. In order to obtain certification, planners must complete the four E's: Education, Examination, Experience, and Ethics.

The first step to obtaining the CFP certification is to acquire the education required to service clients with professional, competent, and ethical financial planning. The CFP Board requires the examinee to complete a college-level program of study in personal financial planning, or an accepted equivalent, including the completion of a financial plan development course registered with CFP Board. The examinee must have also earned a bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university; however, the bachelor's degree requirement does not apply when considering eligibility to sit for the exam and must not be met before registering for the examination. The CFP Board does not grant alternatives or exceptions to the bachelor's degree education requirement. Therefore, all applicants must obtain a bachelor's degree before becoming certified.

Once candidates meet the education requirement, they will be eligible to register for the CFP Certification examination. This exam assesses the examinee's ability to apply one's financial planning knowledge to financial planning situations. It is also designed to assure the public that the student has met a level of competency appropriate for professional practice. Before registering for the examination, all individuals should compare the status of their degree program to the requirements set by the CFP Board. If these requirements are satisfied and a bachelor's degree will be attained before the examination date, the individual may register. Once the individual receives notification from the CFP Board of a passing grade, he or she is must satisfy the next step of the CFP certification process, experience.

CFP Board requires its candidates to have three years of professional experience in the financial planning process, or two years of apprenticeship experience that meets additional requirements. By meeting the experience requirements, an individual indicates to the public that he or she is capable of providing financial planning without supervision. One may meet the qualifying experience requirements through a variety of activities and professional settings including personal delivery, supervision, direct support, or teaching.

Once the first three E's are met, applicants must promise to uphold the high standards of ethics and practice outlined in the CFP Board's Standards of Professional Conduct and must recognize CFP Board's right to enforce the standards through disciplinary actions. When a professional has met the education, examination, and experience components of the certification process, he/she will be directed to complete a certification application. The document will ask each applicant to disclose information for a background check, including a review of all information disclosed on an application. Any matters that may or will bar from someone from obtaining certification are investigated. Authorization to use the CFP marks will not be granted until background checks and investigations are concluded. Then the candidate may introduce his or herself as a Certified Financial Planner.

By meeting the rigorous requirements set by the CFP Board, Certified Financial Planners prove their competency in the area of financial planning. In all financial situations, whether a crisis or a surplus, individuals should be able to trust in their financial planner to understand what decisions need to be made, to be independent, and be able to create a financial plan to meet one's goals, and to have the moral character to make the best decision in tough situations.

Evaluating a Job Offer

With the job market constantly changing, finding a job after graduation in a particular field can often be difficult. The first instinct individuals have when looking at jobs is the annual salary. However, candidates should consider multiple characteristics of prospective job offers, such as the amount of experience they will gain, promotional opportunities, company history, and the overall culture within the office.

College graduates with little work experience are likely to learn more in the first year of working than in all four years of college, so it is important to gain a variety of professional experiences, in a variety of trades. No matter what direction one's career goes, having skills in multiple areas is always valuable.

Promotions and raises are key drivers in providing incentives for employees to work harder. This includes how quickly individuals are promoted and the turnover rate within the company. High turnover rates could indicate poor or inefficient management, low employee moral, and low opportunities for advancement. It is also good to find an employer that internally promotes employees, in order to better utilize their skills, interests, and experiences.

The benefit package can be as important as your actual salary. Contrary to belief, taking a job with a higher salary does not guarantee increased benefits. Whether packages include health insurance or 401(k) retirement plans, benefits are set in place to aid the employee in future planning. For example, out-of-pocket health insurance can cost several hundred dollars per month, while health insurance from your employer would be a fraction of the cost. Benefit packages can also say a great deal about a company. With a family and children, additional benefits are needed in case of emergency.

Company history can give additional insight into the company's growth, reputation, and stability. The U.S. economy is still recovering, and companies are constantly going out of business, laying off employees, closing branches, and sending work overseas. Because of these facts, it may be beneficial to research the company to see how and what they have been doing over the last few years. Expansion is always a good sign that a business is growing, taking on new employees, and stable. The last point to consider is how long the company has been in business. Mature companies tend to be more stable and able to adapt to fluctuating economies, and are more likely to expand, while working at a startup companies can be risky.

Since individuals spend over 40 hours a week at work, it is very important to pick a job in which one can utilize skills and education, while also maintaining flexibility in case of family emergencies or obligations. Consider not only the compensation of a job, but also the employee benefits, employee turnover rate, and company history. All of these factors play key roles in the total satisfaction someone has with their job.

Buying a Home

For most Americans, purchasing a home is the most expensive investment they will make. Homeownership has become vary popular due to returns on equity, which allocates capital gains when home values increase and individuals make payments. However, homeownership requires a great deal of long-term responsibility, including mortgage payments, additional repairs, and fluctuation property values. The process can be difficult and stressful, but when addressing housing needs there are four steps individuals can follow.

The first step is to analyze an individual's wants and what he or she can afford. The rule of thumb is to purchase a house that costs two and a half times one's annual salary. There are many calculators available online, allowing users to compare rates and plans to see what is affordable and in line with the current debt level and expenses.

A family's wants include the fundamentals necessary for the family such as the numbers of bathrooms, bedrooms, and closets or amount of square feet. Homebuyers should come up with a list of items that are absolutely no's and items that are flexible. When making this list it is important to take into account, not only the home and property, but also the surrounding area. This includes neighborhoods, schools, proximity to shopping centers, airports, hospital, railroad tracks, or police stations, etc.

Additional costs can incur when purchasing a home and living in a home. One-time costs include the down payment and closing costs. Down payments, typically 20% of the home value, can be paid through cash savings or gifts. Even though it is possible to obtain a mortgage loan without having a full down payment saved up, it could add additional interest to you mortgage payments, thus costing you more in the long run. Closing costs include, but are not limited to, discount points, loan origination fee, appraisal fee, and title searches. Discount points can be purchased to lower interest rates on payments. Each point generally costs 1% of the total loan and can lower your interest rate by one-sixth to one-fourth of your interest rate. Loan origination fee is the payment associated with the establishment of a mortgage loan. Appraisal fees can vary depending on the size of your property and is an estimate of the true value of your property. Title search is the process of retrieving documents showing the history of a piece of property, including ownership, restrictions, or any liens on the property that need to be paid off. In comparison to the total home cost, and the mortgage loan, these costs are minimal but should be calculated because they must be paid before you purchase a home.

Once you determine that you can afford the cost of home ownership, the next step is picking a house. This can be done through a traditional real estate agent, and independent broker, or the Internet. Using a realtor can include additional costs such as commission and closing costs. Typical commission is about 6% of the closing cost. Real estate agents can be helpful in educating their clients about the market, analyzing their wants and need and guiding you to homes that meet your criteria. They negotiate on your behalf and are there to double-check paper work and deadlines. So when looking for a home in a new area or when someone is unsuccessful at finding a home for him or herself, realtors can simplify the process on your behalf.

Danielle Johnson
Susan Wentworth
November 13, 2013
FIN 3060

Once you have made your selection it is important to hire an inspector to obtain a second opinion on the homes total worth and the overall condition of the dwelling. In reality, all houses have defects or things that should be fixed before new ownership moves in. Some defects are easily to fix, while others are large projects. It is also important to get detailed records of past improvements. This is beneficial to see what repairs were done and their costs. For example, if a project was done with cheaper materials, then you will be likely to update these changes in the near future. This also gives the buyer leverage when negotiating the closing price or when having the current owners pay for any current contingencies that can easily be fixed or replaced.

The third step is financing the home through a mortgage. Most individuals spend a good majority of their adult lives paying off mortgage loans. Mortgages can be very flexible in terms of interest rates, duration, and type. Most interest rates are determined by lending standards such as financial history, ability to pay, and appraised value of the home. Financial history includes previous credit history. It benefits the buyer greatly when finances are in order before shopping for a mortgage. The majority of the reason consumers get rejected for loans is due to poor or non-existent credit history. The most an individual should be paying on a mortgage payment is 28% of his or her income. Total long-term debt ratio, including housing and car loans, should be less than 36% of gross income. These percentages contribute to determining an individual's ability to pay the recurring costs of homeownership.

There are various types of mortgages offered such as fixed-rate loans and variable loans. Fixed-rate mortgage loans include assumable loans and prepayment privileges. Assumable loans allow for the outstanding mortgage value to be transferred from the current owner to the buyer. By taking on the previous owner's remaining debt, the buyer can avoid having to obtain his or her own mortgage. These can also be good on years that mortgage rates are on a rise. Prepayment privileges allow the debt holder to increase their monthly payment without a fee, allowing for loans to be paid off more quickly. Fixed-rates are typically lower than adjustable rates and have no risk of negative amortization, making them more attractive.

Duration dictates how much interest is accumulated through the years of the loan. A 15-year mortgage requires less interest paid, yet entails higher monthly payments, allowing the homeowner to pay off the mortgage quicker. 30-year mortgages typically look more affordable and flexible as they have lower monthly payments and provide greater tax advantages. However, more interest is paid in the long run. Regardless of where an individual gets their mortgage, they should always make sure they understand the contract and the various risks involved if they default on their loan.

The fourth step consists of post-purchasing activities. Reoccurring maintenance fees can occur once the buyer moves into the home. These costs include repairs and replacements to dwelling, appliances, or landscaping, not fully covered by insurance. Typically, as long as the homeowner has insurance and a steady flow of income, these costs are not substantial. However, they should be contributed to a savings account in case of emergencies. There are also refinancing opportunities for homeowners, which allow the payee to lower their interest rates. The rule of thumb is that if the new rate is at least 2% lower than the current interest rate, then it is worth it to refinance your home.

Regardless of what decision is right for a person's home purchase, it is always important to keep in mind the future because homeownership is a long-term commitment. Purchasing a home requires personal and lifestyle considerations, as well as financial obligations and reoccurring costs. Homebuyers should prepare ahead of time for the substantial costs associated with this process and remember to live within their means in order to be financially successful in the long run.

Danielle Johnson
Susan Wentworth
November 13, 2013
FIN 3060

Cost of Moving

These days, the cost of moving is just as important as the cost of purchasing a new home. Whether you're moving across the country or across the street, moving costs can accumulate quickly. These costs fluctuate depending on if someone is renting or buying. Before renting, property managers require application fees, security deposits, and first month's rent to be paid before moving in. Once movers have tackled pre-moving fees, they can start looking at the costs associated with moving all material items. Physical expenses can include boxes, packaging material, and tape. These can vary substantially depending on the amount and size of furniture and appliances owned.

Many moving services are available to assist movers in the laborious task of hauling materials between homes. Depending on the level of need, full service companies can be hired to package and box up all belongings and transport them to a future residence. However, this process is very expensive and could range from $6,000 to $10,000, depending on the distance of the move. A self-service move involves personally packaging and loading all belongings and having a moving company transport it to the new address. This is beneficial for long distance moves to save from the cost of insurance, renting a truck and the cost of gas. Moving oneself can significantly lower the total moving cost. However, noteworthy costs include truck rental, insurance, diesel expense, and hotel expenses. Truck rentals can vary depending on state and the distance driven. Be sure to price out the total amount for different companies to ensure the best deal is chosen, because rates are not standardized. Typically local truck rentals are much cheaper than commercial truck rental companies, such as U-Haul, but could charge a substantial amount more for re-location fees. The average cost of truck rental is $60 an hour. Truck rental insurance is typically covered by an individual's car insurance and costs around $160. Also, fuel cost is not included in the rental price. Unlike most cars, rental trucks use up to 10 miles per gallon at approximately $4 per gallon. Depending on the length of the route, this cost can be very expensive.

Whether moving cross-country or locally, it is important to know what the average moving cost is for each option. Whether moving yourself or hiring trained professionals, movers should make sure to avoid any additional fees and to compare different options to ensure the best deal is chosen.

Conclusion

Family planning can have a sizeable impact on an individual's finances, regardless of age. It can affect the way individuals and couples save, invest, and spend their money when planning for the future. Family planning goes beyond the simple calculation of raising children, but can also include purchasing and maintaining a home, educations plans to help save for college expenses, the financial aid process, including loans, government grants and scholarships, and insurance needs. Families and individuals should consult a certified financial planner or other knowledgeable source for personal assistance towards reaching their financial goals.

Danielle Johnson
Susan Wentworth
November 13, 2013
FIN 3060

Sources

"An Introduction to 529 Plans." *An Introduction to 529 Plans*. Securities and Exchange Commission, n.d. Web. 30 Nov. 2013.

"Become a CFP® Professional." *CFP Certification Requirements*. CFP Board, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

Bernard, Paul. "The Right Way to Evaluate a Job Offer." *Next Avenue*. PBS, 20 Dec. 2012. Web. 28 Nov. 2013.

Bortz, Daniel. "8 Ways to Trim Moving Costs." *US News RSS*. US News, 1 Aug. 2012. Web. 27 Nov. 2013.

Bortz, Daniel. "How to Financially Prepare for Raising a Child with Special Needs." *US News RSS*. US News, 5 Sept. 2012. Web. 27 Nov. 2013.

"Coverdell Education Savings Accounts." *Coverdell Education Savings Accounts*. Internal Revenue Service, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

"Data Measure Value of a College Degree." *USA Today*. Gannett, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

"Federal Student Loans for College or Career School Are an Investment in Your Future."*Loans*. Federal Student Aid - An Office of the U.S. Department of Education, n.d. Web. 29 Nov. 2013.

"Find and Apply for as Many Scholarships as You Can-it's Free Money for College or Career School!" *Finding and Applying for Scholarships*. U.S. Department of Education, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

"Four Tips for College Financial Aid." *Investing Services, Financial Advisors*. Wells Fargo Financial Services, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

"Grants and Scholarships Are Free Money to Help Pay for College or Career School."*Grants and Scholarships*. Federal Student Aid - An Office of the U.S. Department of Education, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

Hicken, Melanie. "Average Cost to Raise a Kid: $241,080." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 14 Aug. 2013. Web. 30 Nov. 2013.

Danielle Johnson
Susan Wentworth
November 13, 2013
FIN 3060

Howe, Jeff. "Paying for a Special-needs Child." *CNNMoney*. Cable News Network, 22 Apr. 2013. Web. 27 Nov. 2013.

Mourdoukoutas, Panos. "3 Things That Determine The Market Value Of A College Degree." *Forbes*. Forbes Magazine, 11 May 2013. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

Schoen, John W. "What Are the Steps Involved in Buying a House?" *Msnbc.com*. NBC News, n.d. Web. 28 Nov. 2013.

Schreck, Niccole. "The Real Cost of Moving." *US News RSS*. US News, 31 July 2013. Web. 27 Nov. 2013.

"The Top 7 Benefits of 529 Plans." *Savingforcollege.com*. N.p., n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.

"Types of Student Loans." *Getting Your Head Around Student Loans*. American Student Assistance, n.d. Web. 01 Dec. 2013.