

The Connecticut Adoption Survey

Connecticut Council on Adoption

Final Report

October 2007

Conducted by



341 Mansfield Road
Storrs, CT 06269
860-486-6666

Executive Summary

The Connecticut Council on Adoption commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a state-wide telephone survey to assess state residents' support on a new law that would allow adult adopted children to access their original birth certificate. The study, conducted in September and October 2007, finished with a total of 400 interviews and a response rate of 42%. This section summarizes the key findings of the survey. More detail on these topics can be found in the following sections of this report.

Key Findings

Six in ten Connecticut state residents personally know someone who is adopted. Given this familiarity with adopted persons, it is somewhat surprising that 75% of Connecticut residents are not familiar with the current law that prohibits adult adopted children from accessing their original birth certificate, naming their birth parents – the parents that put them up for adoption.

When asked if they would support a new law that would allow adult adopted children to access their original birth certificate which names their birth parents, 85% of residents (82% of registered voters) say they would support such a law. Over one-third of residents (35%) who would support the law believe that the adopted person is entitled to the information.

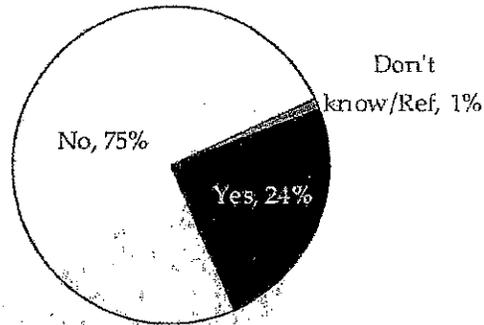
Ninety-five percent of Connecticut residents believe it is important for adopted persons to know their family medical history and an additional 86% believe it is very or somewhat important for them to know their heritage.

Familiarity with the Current Law

The large majority of Connecticut residents are not familiar with the current law that prevents adult adopted children from accessing their original birth certificate, but do personally know someone who is adopted.

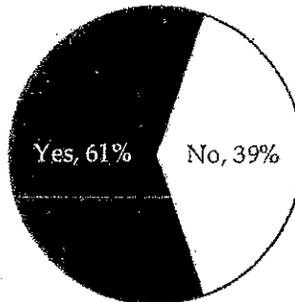
Three-quarters of Connecticut residents (75%) are not aware that adopted persons in the state are currently given a revised birth certificate naming their adoptive parents and do not have access to their original birth certificate naming their birth parents.

Are you aware that adopted persons in Connecticut are given revised birth certificates naming their adoptive parents, but they do not have access to their original birth certificates which name their birth parents?



Although the majority of residents are not familiar with the current law, 61% do personally know someone who is adopted. When asked specifically who they knew, about a quarter (26%) mention a friend and 16% mention a family member.

Do you personally know anyone who is adopted?



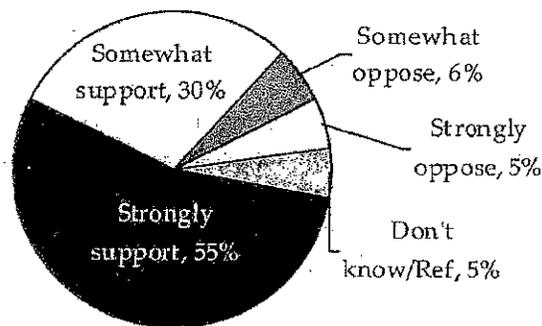
Support for a New Law

Most Connecticut residents and Connecticut registered voters support a new law that would allow adult adopted children to access their original birth certificate, which names their birth parents.

More than four in five Connecticut residents (85%) would support a law that would allow adult adopted children to obtain copies of their original birth certificate naming their birth parents. This legislation would be supported by 82% of Connecticut's registered voters and would garner relatively equal support across party and ideological lines.

Would you support or oppose a law that would allow adopted adults to get copies of their original birth certificates, which name their birth parents?

(Connecticut residents)



Of the 85% of Connecticut residents that support the measure:

- More than one-third (35%) believe adopted persons are entitled to the information.
- Twenty-nine percent believe adoptees are entitled to know who, or where, they come from.
- About one in ten (12%) believe that adopted persons may need to know their medical history.
- Eleven percent believe that it is their civil right to have access to their original birth certificate.

When asked specifically about the importance of adopted persons knowing their medical history, 95% percent of Connecticut residents feel it is important for them to know it, with 85% believing it is very important. Eighty-six percent of Connecticut residents also feel it is important for adopted persons to know their heritage, with four in nine (45%) residents believing it is very important.

Methodology

The Connecticut Council on Adoption commissioned the Center for Survey Research and Analysis (CSRA) at the University of Connecticut to conduct a telephone survey of Connecticut residents on current, and possible future, laws regarding access to original birth certificates by adult adopted children. The 17-item questionnaire was jointly developed by the Council and CSRA. Findings are based on a total of 400 completed interviews with Connecticut residents, ages 18 and over. The telephone interviews were conducted between September 12 and October 5, 2007 by trained interviewers at CSRA with a response rate of 42%.

A random digit dial (RDD) telephone methodology was used to generate the telephone numbers within Connecticut. RDD ensures that each possible residential telephone number has an equal probability of selection. Telephone banks that contain no known residential telephone numbers were removed from the sample selection process. The sample was weighted by census estimates to be representative of the state's characteristics for gender, race and Hispanic ethnicity, age, and level of educational attainment.

The margin of sampling error for the 400 interviews is ± 4.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. This means that there is less than a one in twenty chance that the findings will deviate more than ± 4.9 percentage points from the actual population parameters. The margin of error for sub-groups could be larger.