

R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 9

Rhode Island's Children At a Glance*

State Population ¹	1,057,832
Population, Children Under 18 ²	233,115
State Poverty Rate ³	9.5%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	15.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	12.1%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	12.7%

*All statistics are for 2007.

C H I L D A B U S E A N D N E G L E C T

- In 2006, Rhode Island had 12,739 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 8,441 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2006, 4,400 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Rhode Island, a rate of 18.5 per 1,000 children, representing a 30.7% increase from 2005. Of these children, 3,771 were neglected, 552 were physically abused, and 249 were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2006, no children in Rhode Island died as a result of abuse or neglect.⁹
- In 2006, 2,842 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,509 children in 2005. In 2006, 25.7% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 31.6% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of Rhode Island children in out-of-home care in 2006, 49.2% were white, 19.2% black, 22.2% Hispanic, 1.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 8.2% children of other races and ethnicities.¹¹

A D O P T I O N , K I N S H I P C A R E , A N D P E R M A N E N T F A M I L I E S F O R C H I L D R E N

- Of the 1,582 children exiting out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2006, 64% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2006, 258 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, a 19% increase from 217 in 2005.¹³
- Of the 2,842 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 417 or 14.7% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴
- In 2007, approximately 4,275 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,842 children in out-of-home care in 2006, 26.6% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Rhode Island children in kinship care in 2006, 48.1% were white, 21.6% were black, 20.1% were Hispanic, 1.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 9.0% were other races.¹⁷

C H I L D P O V E R T Y A N D I N C O M E S U P P O R T

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Rhode Island decreased from 19,735 in March 2007 to 19,030 in March 2008, a decrease of 3.6%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2008 was 8,054, a 2.6% decrease from March 2007.¹⁸



- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Rhode Island was at 46.0% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2006, Rhode Island spent \$143,930,107 in TANF funds, including 45.1% on basic assistance, 2.05% on child care, 0.2% on transportation, and 52.6% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2007, Rhode Island spent \$12,649,188 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 199,344 participants.²¹
- In 2007, Rhode Island collected and distributed \$55,940,799 in child support funds, a 1.3% increase from 2006.²²
- In 2008, the fair-market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$1,029 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$19.79 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²³

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2006, Rhode Island had a monthly average of 7,100 children served by subsidized child care; 5,200 children received subsidized child care in 2005, and 5,900 in 2004.²⁴
- In 2008, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Rhode Island, a family of three could make no more than \$30,906, which is equivalent to 47% of the state's median income.²⁵
- As of early 2008, Rhode Island had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁶
- In 2007, Head Start served 3,104 Rhode Island children, a 1.5% decrease from 2001.²⁷

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2005, 99,300 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island—45.3% of the total number of enrollees.²⁸
- In 2005, 5,561 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island on the basis of being in foster care.²⁹
- In 2005, of the 5,561 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 742 received Targeted Case Management services, and 1,750 received Rehabilitative Services.³⁰
- In 2007, Rhode Island had 12,612 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 1.6% increase from 2006, when 12,412 children were enrolled.³¹
- In 2007, Rhode Island had 21,000 uninsured children, representing 8.8% of its child population.³²
- In 2005, 985 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Rhode Island a rank of 8 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2005, 82 infants under age 1 died in Rhode Island, giving it a rank of 7 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2005, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Rhode Island was 17 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 54. This reflects a total rate of 31 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵



- Cumulative through 2006, 2,580 adults and adolescents, as well as 28 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.³⁶
- In 2006, an estimated 8,000 children ages 12–17, and 91,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Rhode Island.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2006, 119 children aged out of out-of-home care in Rhode Island.³⁸
- In 2007, 4,000 Rhode Island teens ages 16-19 were high-school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2007, 6% of teens ages 16-19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.⁴⁰
- In 2006, 11% of people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴¹
- In 2006, approximately 5,000 children ages 12–17 in Rhode Island needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2006, approximately 4,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴³
- In 2005, six Rhode Island children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.04 per 100,000 children.⁴⁴

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2005, five children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Rhode Island, a 400% increase from one in 2004.⁴⁵
- In 2007, 4,149 children younger than 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 15.3% decrease from 4,900 arrests in 2006. Of those arrests, 80 were for violent crimes and 108 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁶
- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 348 children in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.⁴⁷

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN

- In 2006, Rhode Island spent \$207,764,196 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 42% was from federal funds, and 58% from state funds.⁴⁸
- In 2006, of the \$86,579,417 in federal funds received for child welfare, 26% came from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 58% from Medicaid, 9% from TANF, and 4% from other federal sources.⁴⁹
- Out of 2,842 children in out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2006, only 555, or 19.5%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁵⁰



RHODE ISLAND'S CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE

- A 2003 General Accounting Office (GAO) report documented that staff shortages, high caseloads, high worker turnover and low salaries impinge on delivering services to achieve safety, permanence, and well being for children.⁵¹
- The federal Child and Family Service Reviews have clearly demonstrated that the more time a caseworker spends with a child and family, the better the outcomes for those children and families.⁵²
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children; these high caseloads contribute to high worker turnover and insufficient services being provided to children and families. CWLA recommends that foster care caseworkers have caseloads of 12–15 children.⁵³
- In 2004, the minimum annual salary for a caseworker responsible for investigating reports of abuse and neglect in Rhode Island was \$41,566; the median income for a family of four in Rhode Island was \$71,098.⁵⁴

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