

R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 5

Rhode Island's Children At a Glance

State Population (2003) ¹	1,076,164
State Population, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ²	244,049
State Poverty Rate (2003) ³	11.3%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Under 18 (2003) ⁴	16.7%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Ages 5-17 (2003) ⁵	14.8%
Poverty Rate, Children	
Birth to Age 4 (2003) ⁶	20.5%

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

- In 2002, 10,772 children were referred for investigation of child abuse and neglect in Rhode Island, a rate of 44.1 per 1,000 children.⁷
- In 2002, 3,247 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Rhode Island, a rate of 13.6 per 1,000 children, representing a 2% decrease from 2000. Of these children, 76.3% were neglected, 19.8% were physically abused, and 7.0% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2002, one child died as a result of abuse or neglect in Rhode Island.⁹
- On September 30, 2002, 2,383 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,414 children on September 30, 2001. In 2002, 22.7% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 30.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- On September 30, 2002, 55.9% white children, 19.6% black children, 16.8% Hispanic children, 1.5% American Indian/Alaskan Native children, and 6.1% children of other races and ethnicities were living in out-of-home care in Rhode Island.¹¹

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 1,378 children exiting out-of-home care in 2002, 69.7% were reunited with their birthfamilies.¹²
- In 2002, 256 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, a 4.1% decrease from 267 in 2001.¹³
- Of the 2,383 children in out-of-home care in 2002, 391 or 16.4% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

K I N S H I P S U P P O R T

- In 2003, more than 4,176 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility for caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,383 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2002, 22.0% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Rhode Island children in kinship care on September 30, 2002, 53.3% were white, 22.5% were black, 17.0% were Hispanic, 2.3% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 5.0% 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 declined from 39,292 in March 2002 to 35,714 in March 2003, a decrease of 9.1%. The number of *families* receiving TANF in March 2003 was 13,424, a 7.8% decrease from March 2002.¹⁸
- In 2001, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamps in Rhode Island was 27% below the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2003, Rhode Island spent \$162,311,103 in TANF funds, including 51.0% on cash assistance, 5.0% on child care, 0.3% on transportation and support activities, and 43.8% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2002, Rhode Island collected and distributed \$53,269,669 in child support funds, an increase of 8.9% from 2001.²¹

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- In 2003, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$698 per month, or 71% of the average monthly income for a worker earning the state minimum wage of \$6.15 per hour.²²

C H I L D C A R E A N D H E A D S T A R T

- In 2001, Rhode Island served an estimated monthly average of 4,300 children with subsidized child care, a decrease from 2000, when 7,000 children were served, and in 1999, when 6,400 children were served.²³
- In 2003, a family of three could make no more than 58% of Rhode Island's median income, or \$32,917, to be eligible for subsidized child care.²⁴
- In 2001, Rhode Island had no children on the waiting list for subsidized child care.²⁵
- In 2003, 3,150 Rhode Island children were served by Head Start, the same as in 2002.²⁶

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

- In 2001, 90,575 Rhode Island children under age 19 were enrolled in Medicaid, representing 48.1% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2003, Rhode Island had 24,505 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 25.6% increase from 2002, when 19,515 children were enrolled.²⁸
- In 2002, 21 babies were born to girls younger than 15 in Rhode Island. In 2002, the number of babies born to teens ages 15–19 was 1,197, reflecting a rate of 35.6 births per 1,000 girls.²⁹
- As of December 2002, 2,236 adults and adolescents, as well as 25 children under age 13, had been diagnosed with HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.³⁰
- In 2001, 4 children under age 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.46 per 100,000 children in the population.³¹
- In 2002, an estimated 8,000 children ages 12–17, and 92,000 adults 18 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol.³²

V U L N E R A B L E Y O U T H

- In 2003, 7% of teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts, a 3% decrease from 2000.³³
- In 2002, 14% of young adults ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.³⁴

J U V E N I L E J U S T I C E A N D D E L I N Q U E N C Y P R E V E N T I O N

- In 2001, three children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Rhode Island, compared with four in 2000.³⁵
- In 2003, 7,605 children under age 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 1% decrease from 7,681 arrests in 2002. Of the 2003 arrests, 334 were for violent crimes and 186 were for possession of weapons.³⁶
- A 2001 census of juvenile offenders showed 311 children in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.³⁷

F U N D I N G C H I L D W E L F A R E S E R V I C E S F O R R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N

- In 2002, Rhode Island spent \$166,940,105 for child welfare services. Child welfare services refer to all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families.³⁸ Of this amount, 47% was from federal funds, and 53% was from state funds.³⁹

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- In 2002, of the \$166,940,105 spent for child welfare, 12% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 2% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 25% was from Medicaid, 5% came from TANF, 1% was from Supplemental Security Income, and 3% was from other federal sources. The remaining funds (53%) came from state and local sources.⁴⁰
- Out of 2,383 children in out-of-home care in Rhode Island on September 30, 2002, only 553 or 23% received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴¹

R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D W E L F A R E W O R K F O R C E

- 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.⁴²
- 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.⁴³
- According to the 2003 GAO report, the average caseload for child welfare/foster care caseworkers is 24–31 children and that 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.⁴⁴
- In 2002, 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 \$67,646.⁴⁵

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