

R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 8

Rhode Island's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	1,067,610
Population, Children Under 18 ²	245,354
State Poverty Rate ³	10.5
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	15.7
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	15.3
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	16.3

All statistics are for 2006.

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

- In 2005, Rhode Island had 11,859 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 7,101 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2005, 2,175 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Rhode Island, a rate of 13.7 per 1,000 children, and representing an 8% increase from 2004. Of these children, 82.9% were neglected, 14.2% were physically abused, and 5% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2005, 5 children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Rhode Island.⁹
- In 2005, 2,509 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,414 children in 2004. In 2005, 23.4% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 33.6% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care in 2005, 51.8% were white, 17.6% black, 20% Hispanic, 1.6% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 9% children of other races and ethnicities.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 1,358 children exiting out-of-home care in 2005, 66% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2005, 217 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, an 8.3% decrease from 235 in 2004.¹³
- Of the 2,509 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 413, or 16.5%, were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

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

- In 2005, approximately 6,116 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,509 children in out-of-home care in 2005, 23.3% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Rhode Island children in kinship care in 2005, 46.2% were white, 21.2% were black, 21.4% were Hispanic, 2.1% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 9.2% 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 individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Rhode Island decreased from 23,560 in March 2006 to 20,193 in March 2007, a decrease of 14.4%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2007 was 8,491, an 18% decrease from March 2006.¹⁸

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- In 2003, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Rhode Island was at 46% of the federal poverty level.¹⁹
- In 2006, Rhode Island spent \$143,930,107 in TANF funds, including 45.1% on basic assistance, 2% on child care, 0.2% on transportation, and 52.6% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2006, Rhode Island collected and distributed \$55,199,480 in child support funds, a decrease of 3% from 2005.²¹
- In 2006, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$1,007 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$19.36 per hour working a 40-hour week.²²

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

- In 2005, Rhode Island had an estimated monthly average of 5,200 children served by subsidized child care; 5,900 children received subsidized child care in 2004, and 5,800 in 2003.²³
- In 2007, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Rhode Island a family of three could make no more than \$37,350, which is equivalent to 61% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2007, no Rhode Island children were on the state's waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2006, Head Start served 3,135 Rhode Island children, a 0.5% increase from 2005.²⁶

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

- In 2004, 98,000 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island, representing 45.4% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2004, 5,413 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island on the basis of being in foster care.²⁸
- In 2004, Rhode Island spent \$127,596,345 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$23,572 per foster care enrollee on Medicaid services.²⁹
- Rhode Island reported spending \$580,241 of its total Medicaid spending in 2004 for children in foster care on targeted case management services.³⁰
- Rhode Island reported spending \$4,752,410 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2004 for foster children on rehabilitative services.³¹
- In 2006, Rhode Island had 25,492 children enrolled in its Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), a 6.48% decrease from 2005, when 27,144 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2004, 1,025 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Rhode Island a rank of 22 nationally in percent of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2004, 68 infants younger than age 1 died in Rhode Island, giving it a rank of 8 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴

- In 2004, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Rhode Island was 17.1 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 56.7. This reflects a total rate of 32.9 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.³⁵
- Cumulative through 2005, 1,235 adults and adolescents, as well as 9 children under the age of 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.³⁶
- In 2005, an estimated 9,000 children ages 12–17, and 52,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Rhode Island.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2005, 103 children aged out of out-of-home care in Rhode Island.³⁸
- In 2005, 4,000 Rhode Island teens ages 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2005, 9% of teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2005, approximately 5,000 children ages 12–17 in Rhode Island needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2005, approximately 5,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2004, 7 children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 2.47 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2004, 2 children younger than 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Rhode Island, the same as in 2003.⁴⁴
- In 2006, 4,900 children younger than 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 7.3% increase from 5,286 arrests in 2005. Of the arrests in 2006, 144 were for violent crimes and 132 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 342 children in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.⁴⁶

FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN

- In 2004, Rhode Island spent \$194,549,091 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, 46% was from federal funds, and 54% was from state funds.⁴⁷
- In 2004, of the \$88,803,537 in federal funds received for child welfare, 23% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 3% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 62% was from Medicaid, 9% was from TANF, and 3% came from other federal sources.⁴⁸
- Out of 2,509 children in out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2005, only 654 children, or 26.1%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.⁴⁹

CHILD WELFARE LEAGUE OF AMERICA

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.⁵⁰
- 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.⁵¹
- 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.⁵²
- 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 was \$71,098.⁵³

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