



# R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 1 0

## CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

### Rhode Island's Children At a Glance\*

State Population <sup>1</sup> .....	1,050,788
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>2</sup> .....	228,501
State Poverty Rate <sup>3</sup> .....	12.7%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>4</sup> .....	19.3%
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 <sup>5</sup> .....	16.2%
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>6</sup> .....	17.4%

\*All statistics are for 2008.

- In 2007, Rhode Island had 12,443 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 7,710 reports were referred for investigation.<sup>7</sup>
- In 2007, 3,857 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Rhode Island, a rate of 16.5 per 1,000 children, representing a 12.3% decrease from 2006. Of these children, 3,176 were neglected, 248 were physically abused, and 155 were sexually abused.<sup>8</sup>
- In 2007, 0 children in Rhode Island died as a result of abuse or neglect.<sup>9</sup>
- In 2007, 2,722 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,842 children in 2006. In 2007, 715 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 821 were 16 or older.<sup>10</sup>
- Of Rhode Island children in out-of-home care in 2007, 47.6% were white, 19.3% black, 23.2% Hispanic, 1.1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 8.9% children of other races and ethnicities.<sup>11</sup>

## ADOPTION, KINSHIP CARE, AND PERMANENT FAMILIES FOR CHILDREN

- Of the 1,730 children exiting out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2007, 63.9% were reunited with their parents or other family members.<sup>12</sup>
- In 2007, 234 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, a 9.3% decrease from 258 in 2006.<sup>13</sup>
- Of the 2,722 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 399 or 14.7% were waiting to be adopted.<sup>14</sup>
- In 2008, approximately 4,061 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.<sup>15</sup>
- Of the 2,722 children in out-of-home care in 2007, 26.5% were living with relatives while in care.<sup>16</sup>
- Of all Rhode Island children in kinship care in 2007, 47.6% were white, 19.8% were black, 21.2% were Hispanic, 0.6% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.8% were other races.<sup>17</sup>

## CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Rhode Island decreased from 19,030 in March 2008 to 17,501 in March 2009, a decrease of 8.0%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2009 was 7,629, a 5.3% decrease from March 2008.<sup>18</sup>
- 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.<sup>19</sup>
- In 2007, Rhode Island spent \$142,214,976 in TANF funds, including 40.4% on basic assistance, 3.9% on child care, <1% on transportation, and 56% on nonassistance.<sup>20</sup>
- In 2008, Rhode Island spent \$13,469,665 on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children), serving 25,823 participants.<sup>21</sup>
- In 2008, Rhode Island collected and distributed \$60,919,775 in child support funds, an increase of 8.9% from 2007.<sup>22</sup>
- In 2009, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$976 per month. The wage needed to afford this rent was \$18.76 per hour, working a 40-hour week.<sup>23</sup>

## CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2007, Rhode Island had a monthly average of 7,700 children served by subsidized child care; 7,100 children received subsidized child care in 2006, and 5,200 in 2005.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2009, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Rhode Island, a family of three could make no more than \$31,680, which is equivalent to 48% of the state's median income.<sup>25</sup>
- As of early 2009, Rhode Island had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2007, Head Start served 3,104 Rhode Island children, a 1.5% decrease from 2001.<sup>27</sup>

## HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2006, 91,600 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island—46.3% of the total number of enrollees.<sup>28</sup>
- In 2007, 6,082 children were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island on the basis of being in foster care.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2007, of the 6,082 children enrolled in Medicaid on the basis of being in foster care, 759 received Targeted Case Management services, and 1,337 received Rehabilitative Services.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2008, Rhode Island had 12,348 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 2.1% decrease from 2007, when 12,612 children were enrolled.<sup>31</sup>
- In 2008, Rhode Island had 19,000 uninsured children, representing 8.1% of its child population.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2006, 988 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Rhode Island a rank of 20 nationally in percent of low-weight births (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>33</sup>
- In 2006, 76 infants under age 1 died in Rhode Island, giving it a rank of 17 nationally in terms of infant mortality rates (a rank of 1 being the best, and 50 the worst).<sup>34</sup>
- In 2006, the birthrate for teens 15–17 in Rhode Island was 18 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 39. This reflects a total rate of 28 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>35</sup>
- Cumulative through 2007, 2,648 adults and adolescents, as well as 28 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.<sup>36</sup>
- In 2007, an estimated 8,000 children ages 12–17, and 60,000 adults age 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Rhode Island.<sup>37</sup>

## VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2007, 161 children aged out of out-of-home care in Rhode Island.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2008, 4,000 Rhode Island teens ages 16–19 were high-school dropouts.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2008, 5,000 teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2007, 10,000 people ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 4,000 children ages 12–17 in Rhode Island needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.<sup>42</sup>
- In 2007, approximately 5,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>43</sup>
- In 2006, 4 Rhode Island children younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 1.38 per 100,000 children.<sup>44</sup>

## JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2006, 3 children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Rhode Island, a 40% decrease from 5 in 2005.<sup>45</sup>
- In 2008, 5,576 children younger than 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 34.4% increase from 4,149 arrests in 2007. Of the arrests in 2008, 200 were for violent crimes and 138 were for possession of a weapon.<sup>46</sup>

- A 2006 census of juvenile offenders showed 348 children in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.<sup>47</sup>

### **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, 58% from state funds, and 0.0% from local funds.<sup>48</sup>
- In 2006, of the \$86,579,417 in federal funds received for child welfare, 26% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 4% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 58% was from Medicaid, 0% came from the Social Services Block Grant, 9% was from TANF, and 4% came from other federal sources.<sup>49</sup>
- Out of 2,722 children in out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2007, only 604, or 22.2%, received Title IV-E federal foster care assistance.<sup>50</sup>

### **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.<sup>51</sup>
  - 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 that child and family.<sup>52</sup>
  - 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.<sup>53</sup>
  - 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 \$70,446.<sup>54</sup>
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## NOTES AND REFERENCES

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