

R H O D E I S L A N D ' S C H I L D R E N 2 0 0 7

Rhode Island's Children At a Glance

State Population ¹	1,076,189
Population, Children Under 18 ²	245,354
State Poverty Rate ³	12.1
Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 ⁴	19.5
Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5-17 ⁵	18.2
Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 ⁶	22.1

All statistics are for 2005.

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

- In 2004, Rhode Island had 12,315 total referrals of child abuse and neglect. Of those, 6,707 reports were referred for investigation.⁷
- In 2004, 3,068 children were substantiated or indicated as abused or neglected in Rhode Island, a rate of 12.6 per 1,000 children, and representing a 6.7% decrease from 2003. Of these children, 77.0% were neglected, 19.4% were physically abused, and 5.3% were sexually abused.⁸
- In 2004, three children died as a result of abuse or neglect in Rhode Island.⁹
- On September 30, 2004, 2,414 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,357 children on September 30, 2003. In 2004, 22.9% of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 33.1% were 16 or older.¹⁰
- Of the children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 54.9% were white, 17.4% were black, 18.4% were Hispanic, 1.2% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 8.2% were 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 1,462 children exiting out-of-home care in 2004, 64.9% were reunited with their parents or other family members.¹²
- In 2004, 235 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, a 12.3% decrease from 264 in 2003.¹³
- Of the 2,414 children in out-of-home care in 2004, 334 or 13.8% were waiting to be adopted.¹⁴

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

- In 2005, approximately 3,804 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren.¹⁵
- Of the 2,414 children in out-of-home care on September 30, 2004, 25.0% were living with relatives while in care.¹⁶
- Of all Rhode Island children in kinship care on September 30, 2004, 48.1% were white, 18.9% were black, 20.1% were Hispanic, 2.8% were American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 10.1% were of other races.¹⁷

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CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Rhode Island decreased from 41,910 in March 2005 to 23,918 in March 2006, a decrease of 75.2%. The number of families receiving TANF in March 2006 was 9,683 , a 11.2% decrease from March 2005.¹⁸
- In 2002, a family of three receiving only TANF and food stamp benefits in Rhode Island was at 47.3% of the federal poverty guideline.¹⁹
- In 2004, Rhode Island spent \$155,199,726 in TANF funds, including 50.7% on basic assistance, 3.5% on child care, 0.2% on transportation, and 45.6% on nonassistance.²⁰
- In 2005, Rhode Island collected and distributed \$55,363,526 in child support funds, an increase of 1.3% from 2004.²¹
- In 2005, the fair market rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$958 per month. The wage necessary to afford this two-bedroom apartment was \$18.42 per hour, working a 40-hour week.²²

CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- 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 2006, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Rhode Island, a family of three could make no more than \$36,203, which is equivalent to 61% of the state's median income.²⁴
- In 2006, Rhode Island had no children on its waiting list for child care assistance.²⁵
- In 2005, Head Start served 3,150 Rhode Island children, the same number as in 2004.²⁶

HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2002, 94,300 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island, representing 46.1% of the total number of enrollees.²⁷
- In 2001, 5,537 foster and adopted children were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island, representing 6.2% of all children in Medicaid.²⁸
- In 2001, Rhode Island spent \$57,542,250 on Medicaid services for children in foster care, and \$10,392 on Medicaid services per foster care enrollee.²⁹
- Rhode Island reported spending \$71,011.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on targeted case management services for foster children.³⁰
- Rhode Island reported spending \$6,021,607.00 of its total Medicaid expenditures in 2001 on rehabilitative services for foster children.³¹

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- In 2005, Rhode Island had 27,144 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 6.1% increase from 2004, when 25,573 children were enrolled.³²
- In 2003, 1,127 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams, giving Rhode Island a ranking of 10 nationally in number of low-weight births (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³³
- In 2003, 88 infants younger than 1 year died in Rhode Island, giving the state a ranking of 9 nationally in infant mortality rates (1 being the best, and 50 the worst).³⁴
- In 2004, the birth rate for teens age 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 2004, 2,386 adults and adolescents, as well as 27 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.³⁶
- In 2004, an estimated 9,000 children age 12–17, and 62,000 adults 26 and older, were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Rhode Island.³⁷

VULNERABLE YOUTH

- In 2004, 82 children aged-out of out-of-home care in Rhode Island.³⁸
- In 2004, 4,000 Rhode Island teens age 16–19 were high school dropouts.³⁹
- In 2004, 9% of teens age 16–19 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.⁴⁰
- In 2004, approximately 5,000 children age 12–17 in Rhode Island needed, but had not received, treatment for illicit drug use in the past year.⁴¹
- In 2004, approximately 6,000 children age 12–17 needed, but had not received, treatment for alcohol use in the past year.⁴²
- In 2003, two children and youth younger than 20 committed suicide, a rate of 0.73 per 100,000 children.⁴³

JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2003, two children under age 18 were killed in firearm homicides in Rhode Island, compared with three in 2002.⁴⁴
- In 2005, 5,286 children younger than 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 26.5% decrease from 7,195 arrests in 2004. Of the arrests in 2005, 203 were for violent crimes and 139 were for possession of a weapon.⁴⁵
- A 2003 census of juvenile offenders showed 342 children in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.⁴⁶

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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.⁴⁷ Of this amount, 46% was from federal funds, and 54% was from state funds.⁴⁸
- 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.⁴⁹
- Out of 2,414 children in out-of-home care in Rhode Island on September 30, 2004, only 405, or 16.8%, 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 demonstrated clearly 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 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 was \$71,098.⁵⁴

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