# RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN 2015

# Rhode Island's Children At a Glance<sup>1</sup>

State Population <sup>2</sup>	1,051,511	Poverty Rate, Children Under 18 <sup>5</sup> 21.5%
Population, Children Under 18 <sup>3</sup>	212,847	Poverty Rate, Children Ages 5–17 <sup>6</sup> 19.7%
State Poverty Rate <sup>4</sup>	14.3%	Poverty Rate, Children Under 5 <sup>7</sup> 25.8%

#### CHILD ABUSE AND NEGLECT

- In 2013, Rhode Island had 12,560 total referrals for child abuse and neglect. Of those, 6,760 reports were referred for investigation.
- In 2013, 3,132 children were victims of abuse or neglect in Rhode Island, a rate of 14.6 per 1,000 children, representing a 2.7% decrease from 2012. Of these children, 92.3% were neglected, 13.9% were physically abused, and 4.5% were sexually abused.
- The number of child victims has increased 11.7% in comparison to the number of victims in 2009. 10
- In 2013, 1 child in Rhode Island died as a result of abuse or neglect. 11
- In 2013, 1,789 children in Rhode Island lived apart from their families in out-of-home care, compared with 2,112 children in 2009. In 2012, 587 of the children living apart from their families were age 5 or younger, and 435 were 16 or older. 12
- The number of children living apart from their families in out-of-home care has decreased 15.3% in comparison to the number of children in out-of-home care in 2009. 13
- Of Rhode Island children in out-of-home care in 2013, 42.6% were white, 12.3% black, 25.9% Hispanic, 1.2% American Indian/Alaskan Native, 2.5% Asian or Pacific Islander and 14.2% of more than one race or ethnicity.

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

- Of the 1,228 children exiting out-of-home care in Rhode Island in 2012, 54% were reunited with their parents or other family members. <sup>15</sup>
- In 2013, 162 children were legally adopted through the public child welfare agency in Rhode Island, a 15.2% decrease from 191 in 2012. 16
- Of the 1,789 children in out-of-home care in 2013, 250 or 14.0% were waiting to be adopted. 17
- In 2013, approximately 4,967 Rhode Island grandparents had primary responsibility caring for their grandchildren. <sup>18</sup>
- Of the children in out-of-home care in 2012, 494 were living with relatives while in care.

#### CHILD POVERTY AND INCOME SUPPORT

- The total number of individuals receiving Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) in Rhode Island decreased from 178,607 in 2013 to 171,544 in 2014, a decrease of 4.0%. The number of families receiving TANF in 2014 was 69,295, a 4.6% decrease from 2013.<sup>20</sup>
- From 2012-2013, for every 100 Rhode Island families living in poverty, only 26 received TANF benefits.
- In 2013, \$165,721,552 was spent in Rhode Island on TANF assistance, including 26% on basic assistance, 1% on child care, 0% on transportation, and 73% on nonassistance. 22
- In 2013, 13,033,117 was spent on WIC (the Special Supplement Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children) in



Rhode Island, serving 23,333 participants.<sup>23</sup>

- In 2013, Rhode Island distributed \$69,200,964 in child support funds, a 4.3% increase from 2012.<sup>24</sup>
- In 2013 in Rhode Island, 92,000 children lived in households with a high housing burden, where more than 30% of monthly income is spent on housing costs. 25

#### CHILD CARE AND HEAD START

- In 2013, Rhode Island had a monthly average of 5,600 children served by subsidized child care; 5,700 children received subsidized child care in 2012 and 5,500 in 2011.<sup>26</sup>
- In 2014, to be eligible for subsidized child care in Rhode Island, a family of three could make no more than \$35,154, which is equivalent to 48% of the state's median income. <sup>27</sup>
- In 2013, Head Start served 2,561 Rhode Island children, a 13.7% decrease from 2012. <sup>28</sup>

#### HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE

- In 2014, 68,800 children younger than 19 were enrolled in Medicaid in Rhode Island—60% of the total number of
  enrollees in the state.<sup>29</sup>
- In 2012, Rhode Island had 26,968 children enrolled in its State Children's Health Insurance Program, a 8.7% increase from 2011, when 24,815 children were enrolled.<sup>30</sup>
- In 2013, Rhode Island had 11,564 uninsured children. 31
- In 2012, 877 babies were born weighing less than 2,500 grams in Rhode Island.<sup>32</sup>
- In 2011, 70 infants under age 1 died in Rhode Island. 33
- In 2012, the birth rate for teens 15–17 in Rhode Island was 11 births per 1,000 girls; for teens 18–19, the rate was 29. This reflects a total rate of 20 births per 1,000 girls ages 15–19.<sup>34</sup>
- Cumulative through 2013, 3,131 adults and adolescents, as well as 27 children younger than 13, were reported as having HIV/AIDS in Rhode Island.<sup>35</sup>
- In 2013, an estimated 5,000 children ages 12–17 and 74,000 adults age 18 and older were dependent on or abusing illicit drugs or alcohol in Rhode Island.<sup>36</sup>

### **VULNERABLE YOUTH**

- In 2011, 121 children aged out of out-of-home care—exited foster care to emancipation—in Rhode Island.
- In 2013, 4,000 Rhode Island teens ages 16–19 were not enrolled in school and were not working.<sup>38</sup>
- In 2013, 13,000 young adults ages 18–24 were not enrolled in school, were not working, and had no degree beyond high school.<sup>39</sup>
- In 2013, approximately 3,000 children ages 12–17 in Rhode Island needed but had not received treatment for illicit drug
  use in the past year.<sup>40</sup>
- In 2013, approximately 2,000 children ages 12–17 needed but had not received treatment for alcohol use in the past year.<sup>41</sup>
- In 2013, less than 10 Rhode Island children younger than 20 committed suicide. 42

### JUVENILE JUSTICE AND DELINQUENCY PREVENTION

- In 2013, less than 10 children under age 19 were killed by a firearm in Rhode Island, similar to less than 10 in 2012. 43
- In 2013, 3,083 children younger than 18 were arrested in Rhode Island, a 17% decrease from 3,705 arrests in 2012. Of



the arrests in 2013, 108 were for violent crimes. 44

In 2013, 186 children lived in juvenile correction facilities in Rhode Island.

## CHILD WELFARE WORKFORCE<sup>46</sup>

- 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. In Children's
  Rights 2009, A Long Road Home report, similar challenges to the child welfare caseworkers were identified, in addition
  to no standard training or consistent background requirements, need for meaningful supervision, and lack of private
  workspace, technology and other resources.<sup>47</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 those children and families. 48
- 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.
- The National Association of Social Workers 2012 Document to the Obama Administration called for full funding of the Child Abuse Prevention and Treatment Act (CAPTA) and Promoting Safe and Stable Families (PSSF), protection of the Social Security Block Grant (SSBG) from budget cuts and elimination, a variety of child maltreatment prevention services to be available through programs serving children and families (e.g., TANF, Head Start, etc.), maximization of collaboration amongst different systems (e.g., Child Welfare, Public Health, Juvenile Justice, etc.) to improve integration, culturally and linguistically appropriate delivery of services, identification and implementation of evidence-based practices, and incentivization of BSW and MSW students to join the child welfare workforce. <sup>50</sup>

#### FUNDING CHILD WELFARE SERVICES FOR RHODE ISLAND'S CHILDREN

- In 2012, Rhode Island spent \$167,825,001 for child welfare services. Child welfare services are all direct and administrative services the state agency provides to children and families. Of this amount, \$58,819,510 was from federal funds, \$109,005,491 from state funds, and \$0 from local funds.<sup>51</sup>
- In 2012, of the \$58,819,510 in federal funds received for child welfare, 32.7% was from Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance, 3.2% came from Title IV-B Child Welfare Services and Promoting Safe and Stable Families, 43.5% was from Medicaid, 2.0% came from Social Services Block Grant, 12.9% was from TANF, and 5.7% came from other federal sources.<sup>52</sup>
- Rhode Island received \$12,308,104 in federal funds for IV-E foster care expenditures in 2012, including \$4,355,955 for maintenance payments and \$7,952,149 for administration, child placement, the statewide automated child welfare information system, and training.<sup>53</sup>



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  Note: The percentage is a CWLA calculation.



<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> "At A Glance" statistics are from 2013.

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<sup>45</sup> Sickmund, M., Sladky, T.J., Kang, W., & Puzzanchera, C. (2013). *OJJDP's Easy Access to the Census of Juveniles in Residential Placement: 1997-2011: Table: Type of Placement Facility by State, 2011 (Count)*. Retrieved March 24, 2015 from <a href="http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp/asp/State\_Facility.asp">http://ojjdp.gov/ojstatbb/ezacjrp/asp/State\_Facility.asp</a>.

Note: The dearth in current state-by-state workforce data makes clear the need for critical data on compensation, working conditions including safety issues, academic degrees held, education and training received, and factors contributing to turnover. To address this, CWLA is calling for Congress to authorize the National Academy of Sciences (NAS) to conduct an updated study on the child welfare workforce. It would make recommendations regarding caseloads and workloads, education levels, and training requirements. In addition, the study would examine data reporting and collection and make recommendations on how states might improve these efforts.

<sup>47</sup> U.S. General Accounting Office. (2003). Child Welfare: HHS Could Play a Greater Role in Helping Child Welfare Agencies Recruit and Retain Staff. Retrieved January 19, 2012 from www.gao.gov/new.items/d03357.pdf.

National Association of Social Workers. (2012). 2012 Document to the Obama Administration, Building on Progressive Priorities: Sustaining Our Nation's Safety Net. Retrieved March 31, 2015 from <a href="http://www.naswdc.org/advocacy/documents/nasw-2012-building\_progressive\_priorities.pdf">http://www.naswdc.org/advocacy/documents/nasw-2012-building\_progressive\_priorities.pdf</a>

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Children's Rights.(2009). The Long Road Home: A Study of Children Stranded in New York City Foster Care. Retrieved March 31, 2015 from <a href="http://www.childrensrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2009-11-02">http://www.childrensrights.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/11/2009-11-02</a> long road home full report final.pdf.

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51 DeVooght, K., Allen, T., & Geen, R. (2014). Child Trends:Federal, State, and Local Spending to Address Child Abuse and Neglect in SFY 2012:

Appendix A:SFY 2012 State-by-State Data.2008/2010 Casey Child Welfare Financing Survey and 2012 Casey Child Welfare Financing Survey. Washington, DC. Retrieved April 2, 2015 from <a href="http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-61ChildWelfareSpending-2012-2nd-revision-march.pdf">http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-61ChildWelfareSpending-2012-2nd-revision-march.pdf</a>. Note: Examples of direct services include child abuse/neglect investigations, foster care, community-based programs, case management, and all such services required for the safety, permanency, and well-being of children. Examples of administrative services include management information systems, training programs, eligibility determination processes, and all services that provide the infrastructure supports for the public agency. Current information is also needed in regards to state and local spending on child welfare programs. Particularly, in light of financing reform efforts, it would be helpful to know how state and local budgets have changed in the wake of American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (P.L. 111-5) investments and the ongoing effects of the recession.

Note: The percentage is a CWLA calculation.

<sup>52</sup> Ibid.

DeVooght, K., Allen, T., & Geen, R. (2014). Child Trends:Federal, State, and Local Spending to Address Child Abuse and Neglect in SFY 2012: Appendix B:SFY 2012 State-by-State Data.2008/2010 Casey Child Welfare Financing Survey and 2012 Casey Child Welfare Financing Survey. Washington, DC. Retrieved April 2, 2015 from <a href="http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-61ChildWelfareSpending-2012-2nd-revision-march.pdf">http://www.childtrends.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/09/2014-61ChildWelfareSpending-2012-2nd-revision-march.pdf</a>. Note: The component funding streams may not equal the total, depending on additional child support and demonstration funds for this state.

