



Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

2024 Budgetary & Legislative Priorities

Health

- Adopt continuous Medicaid coverage for children under age 6.* [S2161 \(Lauria\)](#); [H7998 \(Slater\)](#)
- Provide funding to sustain Mobile Response Stabilization Services to support mental health. [H7874 \(Tanzi\)](#); [S2607 \(DiMario\)](#)

Child Welfare and Juvenile Justice

- Provide financial support to youth aging out of foster care by increasing funding for the higher education incentive grant and establishing a tuition waiver program. [H7905 \(Casimiro\)](#)
- Stop charging parents for costs associated with their child being in foster care. [H7904 \(Casimiro\)](#)
- Prohibit the questioning of a juvenile suspected of delinquent or criminal behavior unless the parent or guardian is present. [H7096 \(Kislak\)](#); [S2116 \(Kallman\)](#)
- Prohibit the incarceration of children under the age of 14 for any offense other than murder, first degree sexual assault, or an attempt to commit such offenses. [H7642 \(Stewart\)](#); [S2775 \(Acosta\)](#)

Education

- Increase access to mental health supports in schools. [H7397 \(Alzate\)](#); [H7545 \(Shallcross Smith\)](#)
- Increase the amount and predictability of funding for Multilingual Learners in the school funding formula [S2558 \(Cano\)](#); [H7907 \(Felix\)](#) and create a dual language program fund to be administered by RIDE. [H7514 \(Felix\)](#); [H 7594 \(Morales\)](#); [S-2917 \(Cano\)](#)
- Reduce the use of suspensions by providing alternative programs and student support. [H7869 \(Morales\)](#); [S2525 \(Mack\)](#)
- Make the student representative on the Council on Elementary and Secondary Education a voting member. [H7614 \(Morales\)](#); [S2287 \(Lawson\)](#)

Economic Well-Being

- Improve the RI Works Program by updating the cash assistance benefit annually, repealing the full family sanction, and restoring eligibility to legal permanent residents.* [H7686 \(Handy\)](#); [S2337 \(Murray\)](#)
- Increase the State Earned Income Tax Credit.* [H7589 \(O'Brien\)](#); [S2054 \(Felag\)](#)

Early Childhood Development*

- Solve the early educator staffing crisis. [H7251 \(Donovan\)](#); [S2038 \(Cano\)](#) [H7123 \(Diaz\)](#); [S2344 \(DiMario\)](#); [H7291 \(Shallcross Smith\)](#); [S2142 \(Cano\)](#)
- Expand and strengthen the RI Childcare Assistance Program. [H7124 \(Diaz\)](#); [S2847 \(Cano\)](#); [H7122 \(Diaz\)](#); [S2459 \(DiMario\)](#)
- Expand RI Pre-K equitably in Birth-Five context. [Governor's Proposed Budget](#); [H7497 \(McNamara\)](#); [S2843 \(Gallo\)](#)
- Sustain and strengthen Early Head Start and Head Start. [H7496 \(McNamara\)](#); [S2843 \(Gallo\)](#)
- End waiting lists for Early Intervention. [Governor's Proposed Budget, Article 9](#); [S2359 \(Valverde\)](#); [H7334 \(Cotter\)](#)
- Establish an Early Childhood IDEA B-5 Task Force. [H7438 \(Carson\)](#); [S2512 \(Valverde\)](#)
- Meet maternal and young children's mental health needs. [H7900 \(Fogarty\)](#); [S2608 \(DiMario\)](#); [H7204 \(Shallcross Smith\)](#); [S2072 \(DiMario\)](#)
- Save First Connections newborn family home visiting. [S2360 \(Valverde\)](#); [H7899 \(Giraldo\)](#)
- Improve paid family leave. [H7171 \(Giraldo\)](#); [S2121 \(Lawson\)](#)
- Raise more state general revenue for child care/early learning. [H7338 \(Alzate\)](#); [S2355 \(Murray\)](#)

*[Right from the Start](#) priority

+Raising RI priority

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT also strongly supports:

- Healthy School Meals for All [H7400 \(Caldwell\)](#); [S2320 \(Cano\)](#)
- Commonsense gun safety laws, including an assault weapon ban and safe storage laws. [H7373 \(Caldwell\)](#); [S2202 \(Lauria\)](#) [H7217 \(Knight\)](#); [S2653 \(DiPalma\)](#)
- Increasing access to affordable high-quality Out-Of-School Time programs. (Cano); (Shallcross Smith)
- Increasing the percentage of Educators of Color. [H7514 \(Felix\)](#)
- Increasing equitable access to college and career readiness opportunities.
- Amend the Rhode Island Constitution so all Rhode Islanders must be provided with an education that is adequate and that this right is judicially enforceable. [H7396 \(Messier\)](#); [S2147 \(Picard\)](#)
- Eliminating payday lending. [H7211 \(Alzate\)](#); [S2141 \(Quezada\)](#)
- Expanding the use of Equity Impact Statements in budget and legislative proposals. [S2668 \(Mack\)](#)
- Expanding the supply of safe, healthy, and affordable homes. [Governor's Proposed Budget, Article 5](#)
- Eliminate barriers to voter participation by allowing same-day voting. [H7474 \(Alzate\)](#); DiMario

For more information on specific bills and priorities in our issue areas, please contact the following Rhode Island KIDS COUNT staff:

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