



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
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Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Luncheon to Celebrate Rhode Island's Excellence in Children's Health Insurance Coverage and Health Outcomes

Luncheon celebrates the progress Rhode Island has made in increasing access to high-quality health coverage — Rhode Island is ranked 3rd best in the nation for children's health coverage

Providence, RI (November 3, 2017) – More than 200 community leaders, elected officials, and health care advocates will gather on November 6, 2017 for the seventeenth annual Celebration of Children's Health Luncheon to reflect on the progress that Rhode Island has made in achieving positive health outcomes for children — including the fact that Rhode Island is now ranked third best in the nation for children's health coverage. In 2016, 98.1% of Rhode Island children under age 18 had health coverage.

Covering Kids Awards will be presented to elected officials for their contributions to increasing access to health insurance coverage and health care for children, including Governor Gina Raimondo, Senator Jack Reed, Congressman James Langevin, Congressman David Cicilline, House Finance Chairman Marvin Abney (representing the House), and Senator Josh Miller (representing the Senate).

Carrie Bridges Feliz, of Lifespan Community Health Services, and Samara Viner-Brown, Rhode Island Department of Health are this year's community leaders and partners honored with *Covering Kids Awards* for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that children have primary health and dental care.

Two families will share their perspective as RIte Care members.

More Rhode Island children have health coverage

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT will highlight new data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2016 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS provides national and state-level data on health insurance coverage. The latest data shows that 98.1% of Rhode Island's children under age 18 had health insurance coverage, and that Rhode Island is ranked third best in the nation. Data includes private coverage and public coverage, including Medicaid/CHIP (known as RIte Care in Rhode Island).

Rhode Island's positive health outcomes for children

Rhode Island also leads the nation in many children's health outcomes:

- Adolescent Cigarette Use (1st)
- Adolescent Immunization (1st)
- Children's Health Coverage (3rd)
- Child and Teen Deaths (4th)
- Preventive Dental Care (5th)
- Adolescent Obesity (7th)
- Teen Births (7th)
- Adolescent Overweight (9th)

Rite Care's national excellence

In 2015, Rite Care was named the best Medicaid managed health care program for children by the federal Centers for Medicare and Medicaid Service (CMS), which administers Medicaid and CHIP programs throughout the country. While CMS no longer ranks states, Rite Care continues to be recognized as a top quality performer on CMS' child core quality measure set in 2017, specifically in two domains (primary care access/preventive care as well as with maternal and perinatal health).

The National Committee on Quality Assurance also gave Rite Care Health Plans Top Medicaid Ratings in 2017 (Neighborhood Health Plan of RI and United Healthcare).

"It's fantastic news for Rhode Island that we are now third best in the nation for children's health insurance coverage. This demonstrates Rhode Island's long-term commitment to children's health, and builds on the success of Rite Care's 2015 ranking of best quality children's health insurance program in the country," said Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. "Rhode Island's steadfast commitment to high-quality healthcare for children through the Rite Care program has resulted in improved child health outcomes. And positive health outcomes yield great results far beyond the health arena — the classroom, the community, the workforce, and the economy; to name a few."

"As we see in the remarkable progress reflected in the ACS rankings, the *Affordable Care Act* (ACA) has been a very important part of Rhode Island's success in connecting children and families to health insurance. We're also celebrating the fact that nationally, more children (95.5%) have health insurance coverage than ever before. We need to ensure continued progress in Rhode Island and the nation through a strong reauthorization by Congress of the Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP), and continued support for Medicaid."

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[Rhode Island KIDS COUNT](#) is a statewide children's policy organization that works to improve the health, economic well-being, safety, education and development of Rhode Island children.