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Annie E. Casey Foundation Releases New Report *Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children*

In RI, the Race for Results Index scores for Latino children were the lowest in the country

Non-Latino White and Asian children in Rhode Island have higher Race for Results index scores than African-American and Latino children

PROVIDENCE, R.I., October 24, 2017 – Latino and African-American children face systemic barriers to healthy development in Rhode Island. That’s a key takeaway from a report released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. *2017 Race for Results: Building a Path to Opportunity for All Children* compares how children of different racial and ethnic groups are faring across the country on key indicators of children’s opportunities at the state and national level.

This policy report is the second to provide detailed data for children of all races and in each state (the first *Race for Results* was released in 2014). The Casey Foundation made a commitment to publishing *Race for Results* every three years to track progress, with the hope that life chances for all kids will continuously improve.

This year’s *Race for Results* provides detailed data on disparities by race and ethnicity that must be closed in order to improve outcomes for all children and also includes recommendations to policymakers on addressing the specific barriers immigrant children and children of immigrants face. In addition to presenting data on disparities by race and ethnicity, the report also focuses on the needs of children from immigrant families. “Children from Immigrant families” is defined as children who are themselves foreign born or who reside with at least one foreign-born parent.

Race for Results Index: Measuring Developmental Milestones

The *Race for Results* report contains an index that compares how children are progressing on key milestones across racial and ethnic groups at the national and state level. The index is based on 12 key indicators that measure a child’s success for each stage of life, grouped into four areas: early childhood, education and early work, family supports, and neighborhood context. The index calculates a single composite score for each group based on a scale of one (lowest) to 1,000 (highest). Due to a change in the data, 2014 indexes cannot be compared with 2017 indexes.

Rhode Island: Large Disparities by Race and Ethnicity; Lowest Score for Latino Children in Nation

Rhode Island’s population of children is becoming more racially and ethnically diverse. According to the 2010 US Census, 64% of children were non-Hispanic White (down

from 73% in 2000), 8% of children were Black or African American, 3% were Asian, 9% of children were identified as Some other race, and 7% as Two or more races. In Rhode Island, the non-Hispanic White child population declined by 21% between 2000 and 2010, while the Latino child population grew by 31%. Latino children now make up 21% of the state's child population.

The *Race for Results* report shows stark disparities among racial and ethnic groups in Rhode Island. African American (414) and Latino (341) children continue to have significantly lower *Race for Results* index scores than White (746) and Asian (679) children.

Facing greater barriers to their success, Rhode Island's African-American and Latino children had lower rates of reading and math proficiency and lower educational attainment. Both groups were also more likely to live in single-parent families and were more likely to live in low-income families and high-poverty neighborhoods than other racial and ethnic groups. **Rhode Island's index score for Latino children was the lowest in the nation.**

"Unfortunately, Latino students in Rhode Island faring worse than their peers comes as no surprise," said Latino Policy Institute Director Gabriela Domenzain. "What does, and what should be a wake-up call for all Rhode Islanders, is what the Race for Results report shows: that a Latino student in Rhode Island has the lowest chance of succeeding in the whole nation. Our next steps as a state must be coordinated and urgent."

"The disparities that Race for Results show are extremely concerning," said Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Executive Director Elizabeth Burke Bryant. "Wide gaps continue to exist between Latino and African American children and white children, and these gaps will hold Rhode Island back in terms of our educational and workforce goals and future prosperity." She continued, "The most alarming finding in this report is that Rhode Island's Latino children are ranked last in the nation on the basis of indicators in four key areas of child well-being. Latino children now make up 21% of the state's child population and 25% of Rhode Island public school students —but only 20% of Latino fourth graders are reading at grade-level, and only 13% of Latino eighth graders have age appropriate math skills."

"Increasing access to high-quality early education, including child care, Pre-K, and Head Start, will help give all students — especially low-income students, including Latino and African American students, the support they need to arrive at school ready for success," continued Bryant. "We also need to improve K-12 education for all students and ensure high quality English Language Learning instruction. Until recently, Rhode Island was one of only four states that did not include designated English Language Learner funding. Fortunately ELL funding is now a permanent part of the funding formula and we hope that increasing this funding to support evidence-based programs for ELLs will help improve outcomes."

"According to NAEP, Rhode Island students of color lag far behind their white peers. With 40% of all Rhode Island students being of color, this reality does not bode well for the future of our state," said NAACP Providence Branch President Jim Vincent. "Without a strong emphasis on equity at every public school, our state will not become all that we would want it to be."

A National Perspective

Overall in the U.S., the index shows that there has been improvement across the board in the majority of the indicators, but still no racial group has all children meeting all milestones and disparities still exist. Across the United States, Asian and Pacific Islander children have the highest index score at 783, followed by non-Latino White children at 713. Scores for Latino (429), American Indian (413) and African American (369) children are lower, and this pattern holds true in nearly every state. Nationally, Latino children from immigrant families face obstacles on every measure included in this index with the exception that they were more likely to live in two-parent households.

Nationally, families from the Caribbean, Central America, and Mexico face the biggest barriers to attaining economic stability. In Rhode Island, 21% of immigrant children were born in Central or South America, and 25% were born in the Caribbean.

"The data make it clear: for children of color, a person's race is a leading barrier to success in the United States," said Nonet Sykes, the Casey Foundation's Director of Racial and Ethnic Equity and Inclusion. "With children of immigrants comprising such a significant portion of the youth population, and our future workforce, it is critically urgent that we ensure they grow up with access to the support and resources needed to thrive."

Recommendations for Improvement

The 2014 *Race for Results* report offered policy recommendations that included making use of racial and ethnic data to create policies and programs and increased economic inclusion for vulnerable groups.

The 2017 edition expands on those recommendations to target the barriers facing children in immigrant families:

- Keep families together and in their communities;
- Help children in immigrant families meet key developmental milestones; and
- Increase economic opportunity for immigrant families.

The Casey Foundation believes in using data to create policies that improve the well-being of all children including children in immigrant families. Policymakers and leaders can use the information in this report to improve the opportunities for all children.

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Release Information

The 2017 Race for Results report is available at www.aecf.org/raceforresults/.

Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/. The website also contains the most recent national, state and local data on numerous indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about Race for Results can use the Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

About Rhode Island KIDS COUNT

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.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.