



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
ONE UNION STATION
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903
401/351-9400 • 401/351-1758 (FAX)

Contact: Katherine Linwood Chu, Communications Manager
401.351.9400, Ext. 22 / kchu@rikidscount.org

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 22, 2019) – More than 200 community leaders, elected officials, and health care advocates will gather on November 25, 2019 for the 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 2018, 97.8% of Rhode Island children under age 19 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, Senator Sheldon Whitehouse, Congressman James Langevin, Congressman David Cicilline, Representative Joseph McNamara (representing the House), and Senator Josh Miller (representing the Senate).

Beata Nelken, MD, of Blackstone Valley Community Health Care and Aracelis Aponte of Thundermist Health Center are this year's community leaders and partners honored with *Covering Kids Awards* for their commitment and dedication to ensuring that children have access to primary health and dental care. Allison Smith and Deana Ayanyan will share their perspectives on the importance of RItE Care health insurance coverage for their families.

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT will highlight new data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2018 American Community Survey (ACS). The ACS provides national and state-level data on health insurance coverage. The latest data shows that 97.8% of Rhode Island's children under age 19 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 has maintained health insurance coverage for children while the nation as a whole has seen a marked loss of coverage (from 95.5% in 2016 to 94.5% in 2017).

Rhode Island's positive health outcomes for children

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

- Adolescent HPV Vaccination (1st)
- Children's Health Coverage (3rd)
- Teen Deaths (1st)
- Child Deaths (4th)
- Teen Births (6th)

RIte Care Health Plans Receive Top Ratings Among Medicaid Health Plans in the U.S. in 2019

The National Committee on Quality Assurance (NCQA) evaluates and rates Medicaid plans across the country. In 2019, only 13 Medicaid plans in the country received a NCQA rating of 4.5 or higher including Neighborhood Health Plan of RI and United Healthcare. Rhode Island is fortunate that Neighborhood Health Plan of RI and United Healthcare are regularly among the highest-rated Medicaid health insurance plans in the nation. Tufts, recently joining the Medicaid market in Rhode Island, is not yet rated in Rhode Island, but they also have a very high rating in Massachusetts.

"It's fantastic news for Rhode Island that we are third best in the nation for children's health insurance coverage. This demonstrates Rhode Island's long-term commitment to children's health. This is particularly good news given data released earlier this year that shows that nationally, the number of children with health insurance has gone down from 2016 to 2019," 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."

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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.