

# Racial and Ethnic Diversity

## DEFINITION

*Racial and ethnic diversity* is the number of children under age 18 by racial and ethnic categories as defined by the 2000 U.S. Census. For children living in households, racial and ethnic categories are chosen by the head of household or person completing the census form.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Racial and ethnic diversity increased in the United States over the last several decades and is projected to rise in the future.<sup>1</sup> Minority children (all those except White, non-Hispanic children) accounted for 98% of the growth in the U.S. child population during the 1990s.<sup>2</sup> In 2000, 61% of all U.S. children were White non-Hispanic. By 2020, slightly more than half (53%) of all children in the United States are projected to be White, non-Hispanic.<sup>3</sup>

In 2000, 73% of children in Rhode Island were White, non-Hispanic, down from 84% in 1990. The number of minority children nearly doubled from 36,867 in 1990 to 67,747 in 2000. The number of White non-Hispanic children dropped by 8,748 during the same time period.<sup>4,5</sup>

In 2006 in Rhode Island, 74% of children under 18 were White, 7% were Black or African American, 3% were Asian, 11% of children identified as Some Other Race, and 4% as Two or More Races. Race was unknown for less

than 1% of children in Rhode Island. In 2006, 18% of children living in Rhode Island were Hispanic.<sup>6</sup>

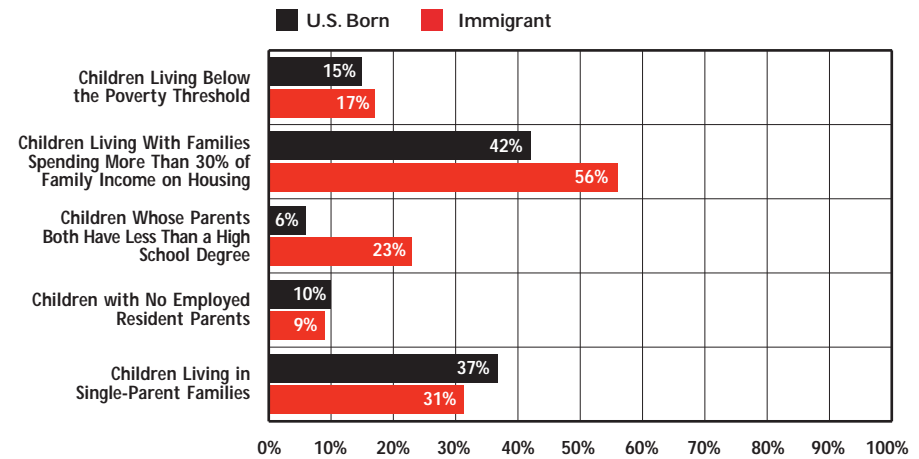
Minority children are highly concentrated in the six core cities in Rhode Island. Core cities are defined as cities with 15% or more of children living in poverty. More than half (58%) of children living in the core cities are minority children. More than three-quarters (78%) of all minority children in Rhode Island live in these six communities.<sup>7</sup>

In 2006, there were 9,848 foreign-born children under age 18 living in Rhode Island, 21% of whom were naturalized U.S. citizens.<sup>8</sup> Of Rhode Island's immigrant children, 9% were born in Asia, 17% were born in Africa, 14% were born in Europe, 25% were born in the Caribbean, 31% were born in Central or South America, and 5% were born in Canada, Bermuda or Mexico.<sup>9</sup>

In 2006, 22% of children between the ages of 5 and 17 living in Rhode Island spoke a language other than English at home. Of these children, 93% spoke English well or very well.<sup>10</sup>

Diversity presents both opportunities and challenges to schools, child care centers, health care providers, social service agencies and other community service providers. Programs will need to adapt their current practices to meet the needs of a changing population.<sup>11</sup>

Characteristics of Children Living in U.S.-born and Immigrant Families, Rhode Island, 2006



Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the 2006 American Community Survey.

- ◆ **Twenty-three percent of children in Rhode Island live in immigrant families (either they are foreign-born or they have at least one parent who is foreign-born).<sup>12</sup> Most immigrant families in Rhode Island are not new arrivals to the United States; 2% of parents in Rhode Island immigrant families arrived in this county less than 5 years ago.<sup>13</sup> Eighty-eight percent of children in immigrant families in Rhode Island were born in the United States.<sup>14</sup>**
- ◆ **Fifteen percent of children in Rhode Island with U.S.-born parents are poor, compared with 17% of children with immigrant parents. Almost three-quarters (72%) of Rhode Island's poor children live in families with U.S.-born parents.<sup>15</sup>**
- ◆ **In the U.S., higher rates of poverty among immigrant families are mainly due to lower labor force participation among immigrant women than native-born women and to the low wages received by many immigrants. Many immigrant parents earn low wages because of low levels of educational attainment and limited English proficiency.<sup>16</sup> Twenty-three percent of children in immigrant families live in linguistically isolated households.<sup>17</sup>**

Table 6.

Child Population, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2000

CITY/TOWN	UNDER AGE 18 BY RACE AND ETHNICITY								2000 POPULATION UNDER AGE 18
	HISPANIC OR LATINO	WHITE	BLACK	AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	SOME OTHER RACE	TWO OR MORE RACES	
Barrington	59	4,479	29	8	106	0	4	60	4,745
Bristol	88	4,183	30	3	21	4	3	67	4,399
Burrillville	59	3,915	11	8	6	0	11	33	4,043
Central Falls	3,122	1,574	292	29	22	0	225	267	5,531
Charlestown	38	1,597	7	26	12	0	1	31	1,712
Coventry	151	7,975	47	8	46	2	10	150	8,389
Cranston	1,213	14,041	513	59	796	5	71	400	17,098
Cumberland	231	7,185	65	5	70	3	38	93	7,690
East Greenwich	59	3,308	30	1	106	0	11	49	3,564
East Providence	360	8,366	681	48	114	4	323	650	10,546
Exeter	36	1,484	9	9	8	0	0	43	1,589
Foster	17	1,054	2	1	11	2	3	15	1,105
Glocester	31	2,573	15	2	10	0	1	32	2,664
Hopkinton	35	1,889	11	27	10	0	3	36	2,011
Jamestown	19	1,183	14	4	4	0	0	14	1,238
Johnston	203	5,425	63	9	93	1	21	91	5,906
Lincoln	151	4,694	73	2	116	1	21	99	5,157
Little Compton	12	756	1	0	2	0	0	9	780
Middletown	201	3,549	246	23	104	1	15	189	4,328
Narragansett	69	2,566	27	52	25	0	5	89	2,833
New Shoreham	3	175	3	0	3	0	0	1	185
Newport	602	3,485	555	86	55	7	51	358	5,199
North Kingstown	210	6,286	70	37	76	0	11	158	6,848
North Providence	377	5,033	208	12	122	3	48	133	5,936
North Smithfield	17	2,305	13	8	15	0	1	20	2,379
Pawtucket	3,820	10,090	1,776	53	131	7	1,251	1,023	18,151
Portsmouth	114	4,016	55	5	58	0	8	73	4,329
Providence	20,350	10,858	7,606	621	3,043	19	575	2,205	45,277
Richmond	32	1,916	7	19	8	0	0	32	2,014
Scituate	30	2,535	10	1	24	1	5	29	2,635
Smithfield	50	3,880	18	2	29	0	2	38	4,019
South Kingstown	128	5,561	87	126	169	0	19	194	6,284
Tiverton	46	3,234	15	4	18	0	8	42	3,367
Warren	36	2,294	38	4	11	1	6	64	2,454
Warwick	516	17,220	217	50	322	1	35	419	18,780
West Greenwich	13	1,396	4	3	7	0	5	16	1,444
West Warwick	384	5,792	86	29	102	3	26	210	6,632
Westerly	96	4,931	45	45	143	0	11	135	5,406
Woonsocket	2,024	7,272	606	29	591	5	46	582	11,155
<b>Core Cities</b>	<b>30,302</b>	<b>39,071</b>	<b>10,921</b>	<b>847</b>	<b>3,944</b>	<b>41</b>	<b>2,174</b>	<b>4,645</b>	<b>91,945</b>
<b>Remainder of State</b>	<b>4,700</b>	<b>141,004</b>	<b>2,664</b>	<b>611</b>	<b>2,665</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>700</b>	<b>3,504</b>	<b>155,877</b>
<b>Rhode Island</b>	<b>35,002</b>	<b>180,075</b>	<b>13,585</b>	<b>1,458</b>	<b>6,609</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>2,874</b>	<b>8,149</b>	<b>247,822</b>

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting File. All categories are mutually exclusive. If Hispanic was selected as ethnicity, individuals are not included in other racial categories. Likewise, if more than one race was selected, individuals are included in two or more races and not in their individual race categories.

The core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

References

- <sup>13</sup> Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2007). *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being 2007*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- <sup>2</sup> O'Hare, W. (June 2001). *The child population: First data from the 2000 Census*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation and The Population Reference Bureau.
- <sup>4</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.
- <sup>5</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT Census Data Online.
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Tables B01001, B01001A, B01001B, B01001D, B01001F, B01001G & B01001I.
- <sup>7</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.
- <sup>8</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Table B05003.
- <sup>9</sup> Population Reference Bureau analysis of the 2005 & 2006 American Community Survey, December 2007.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Table B16004.
- <sup>11</sup> *Speaking for America's children: Child advocates identify children's issues and the 2002 state priorities* (January 2002). Washington, DC: National Association of Child Advocates.
- <sup>14</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Table B05009.
- <sup>15,18</sup> Population Reference Bureau analysis of data from the 2006 American Community Survey.
- <sup>16</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, American Community Survey, 2006. Table B05010.
- <sup>17</sup> Capps, R., Fix, M., Ost, J., Reardon-Anderson, J. & Passel, J. (2004). *The health and well-being of young children of immigrants*. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute.