

## Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook: What's New in 2007

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**Preterm Births** → defined as the percentage of births occurring before the 37<sup>th</sup> week of pregnancy. The data are reported by place of mother's residence, not place of infant's birth.

- ★ Preterm birth is a major determinant of infant mortality and morbidity and is the leading cause of death among newborns during the first month of life in the U.S.
- ★ Infants born before 37 weeks gestation are at higher risk than infants born full-term for neurodevelopmental, respiratory, gastrointestinal, immune system, central nervous system, hearing and vision problems.
- ★ Multiple birth infants are more likely to be born preterm than singletons. In Rhode Island between 2001 and 2005, 57% of multiple births were preterm, compared with 10% of single births.
- ★ The percentage of infants born preterm in Rhode Island has increased from 11.6% in 2003 to 12.8% in 2005.

**Eight Grade Reading Skills** → defined as the percentage of eight-grade students who scored at or above the proficiency level for reading on the *New England Common Assessment Program* (NECAP) test in October 2006. The NECAP measures reading, writing and math skills.

- ★ Achieving competence in reading is a developmental, multidimensional and interactive process. Challenges in reading increase for older student because literacy as well as content demands intensify dramatically.
- ★ Low reading ability in eighth grade has long-term implications for students. Reading disabilities persist over time and even some successful early readers develop substantial difficulties with reading at older ages.
- ★ In October 2006, 58% of Rhode Island eighth graders scored at or above proficiency in reading. Students in the core cities scored below the state average at 36% compared with 70% in the remainder of the state.
- ★ 40% of low-income students were proficient in reading compared to 67% of higher-income students.
- ★ In Rhode Island in 2006, only 19% of eighth-grade students with disabilities were proficient in reading compared to 67% of students without disabilities.

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**Mental Health Data** → This year the mental health indicator has a new definition. It is now defined as, the number of acute care hospitalizations of children under age 18 with a primary diagnosis of a mental disorder. Hospitalization is the most intensive type of treatment for mental disorders and represent only one type of treatment category on a broad continuum, available to children with mental health problems in Rhode Island. In 2004, 1,698 children were hospitalized with a primary diagnosis of mental disorder. Of these, 17% are insured through RIte care, 23% are insured through Fee-for-Service Medicaid, and 60% are privately insured.

**4<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading and 8<sup>th</sup> Grade Math** → This year, the fourth and eighth grade reading and math proficiency scores are derived from the *New England Common Assessment Program* (NECAP) test, a new statewide assessment administered beginning in October 2005. According to the NECAP in 2006, 63% of Rhode Island 4<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above proficiency for reading, an increase from 60% in 2005. In 2006, 54% of Rhode Island 4<sup>th</sup> graders and 47% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders scored at or above proficiency in math.