

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook: What's New in 2008

Changes to Existing Indicators:

Juveniles at the Training School → This year the *Juveniles at the Training School* indicator is four pages long and contains more demographics, information about alternatives to incarceration, highest level current charges of incarcerated youth, prevention of recidivism, probation, and age of jurisdiction of the family court than in previous years.

Special Education → This year the data used in the *Special Education* indicator has been changed based on the recommendation of RIDE. The new measure only includes kindergarten through 12th grade students receiving special education services in Rhode Island public schools and those students in kindergarten through 12th grade who are placed in private educational settings by their district of residence. Pre-kindergarten students and parentally-placed private school students are no longer included in the data. The rate is calculated by dividing the number of included special education students by the resident average daily membership of each district (resident membership is used in order to best reflect the district that is paying for the educational services). The main impetus for this change was to make the numerator and denominator of the rate more comparable and to have the rate better reflect the k-12 system's special education responsibilities.

Suspensions → Some districts changed the way they define Alternate Program Placements (APPs) as disciplinary actions. APPs can consist of short-term or long-term academic placements in the student's home school or in an alternate setting. APPs provide students with explicit academic supports, unlike traditional in-school suspensions. The definition and use of APPs differs by district. Due to changes in how some districts categorize APPs, some of the data included in the in-school suspension and APP columns of the city/town table may not be comparable to previous years (although it is okay to compare the total number of disciplinary actions for each district with previous years).

Notes on Trends and Data Highlights:

Family and Community:

- ❖ In 2006, 33% of Rhode Island children were living in a **single-parent family**, up from 29% in 2005. Despite this increase, there were improvements in the percentage of children in single-parent families who live in poverty, from 48% in 2005 to 35% in 2006.
- ❖ In 2006, there were 12,423 **children living with their grandparents** in Rhode Island, an increase from 9,977 in 2005.
- ❖ In 2007, there were 648 **infants born at highest risk**, up from 542 in 2006.
- ❖ **Mother's with less than a high school diploma** has stayed constant at 15% since 2005.

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Economic Well-being:

- ❖ According to the *2006 American Community Survey* conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, 15.1% (35,456) of Rhode Island's 234,711 children under age 18 lived below the federal **poverty** threshold. This is a significant decrease from 2004 when 21.0% (50,390) of Rhode Island children were living in families with incomes below the poverty threshold (\$16,705 for a family of three and \$21,027 for a family of four). This means that almost 15,000 fewer children were living in poverty in Rhode Island in 2006 compared with 2004.
- ❖ The Rhode Island **median family income** in 2006 was \$64,733, almost the same as in 2005 (\$64,657).
- ❖ Between 1996 and 2007 there was a 46% decline in the **FIP** caseload, from 18,428 cases to 9,993 cases with a reduction in state funding for cash assistance from \$58 million in 1996 to \$16 million in 2007.

Health:

- ❖ Rhode Island continues to rank in the top ten states for children's **health insurance** coverage. In 2006, 6.4% of Rhode Island's children under age 18 were uninsured, compared to 11.1% of children in the U.S.
- ❖ For the first time ever, at least half (50%) of the children who were enrolled in Rite Care, Rite Share or Medicaid fee-for-service on September 30, 2007 received a **dental service** during the previous Federal Fiscal Year. Nearly 8,000 more children enrolled in Medical Assistance received a dental service in 2007 than did in 2003, a 22% increase, which shows improved access to oral health care for children in Rhode Island.
- ❖ In 2006, Rhode Island's rate of fully **immunized children** ages 19 months to 35 months (81%) was higher than the national average (77%). In 2006, Rhode Island had the highest vaccination rates in the nation for 2 of the 6 vaccines in the 4:3:1:3:3:1 Series. Rhode Island ranks 7th in the nation for the completion of the full Series, up from 10th in 2005.
- ❖ More children are receiving **mental health** treatment in Rhode Island. In 2005 (the most recent year for which data are available), there were 1,755 acute care hospitalizations of children under age 18 with a primary diagnosis of a mental disorder, up from 1,698 in 2004. In 2007, there were 1,552 young people admitted for inpatient psychiatric treatment at either Bradley Hospital or Butler Hospital (the two hospitals in Rhode Island that specialize in providing psychiatric care to pediatric populations), up from 1,366 in 2006. During 2007, 7,729 children under age 18 received mental health treatment at one of the seven Community Mental Health Centers (CMHCs) in Rhode Island, compared with 7,214 in 2006. More than 4,000 (4,138) children were receiving mental health treatment services at a CMHC as of December 31, 2007, up from 3,369 on December 31, 2006.
- ❖ In 2006, the **preterm birth rate** in Rhode Island was 12.5% an increase from 11.6% in 2003. Rhode Island preterm births rates are comparable to the U.S. rate of 12.8%.
- ❖ The overall **infant mortality rate** in Rhode Island for 2002-2006 was 6.2 deaths per 1,000 births, down from 6.4 deaths per 1,000 for 2001-2005. Between 2002-2006, the infant mortality rate was 65% higher in the core cities than the remainder of the state.

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- ❖ Continuing a trend seen over the past decade, the percentage of children eligible to enter kindergarten in the Fall of 2009 who were confirmed as **lead poisoned** declined from 4.6% to 3.6%.
- ❖ The percentage of children entering kindergarten during the 2006-2007 school year who were **obese** was 18.8%, down from a peak of 20.3% in 2004-2005.
- ❖ **Teen births** continue to decline and so do repeat teen births (mirroring a national trend). The rate of births to teens age 15 to 19 was 30.4 per 1,000 births in 2002-2006 and it was 39.2 per 1,000 births in 1991-1995. In 2002-2006, 18% of teen births (ages 12-19) were repeat births, compared to 19% in 2001-2005 and 20% in 2000-2004.

Safety:

- ❖ In 2007, 5,275 youth were referred to **family court** for 8,301 wayward and delinquent offenses, 26% of whom were from Providence. In 2006, 5,579 youth were referred to family court for 9,254 wayward and delinquent offenses, 29% of whom were from Providence.
- ❖ During 2007, 1,062 youth passed through the Rhode Island **Training School**, almost the same number as in 2006 (1,056) and 2005 (1,029).
- ❖ On December 31, 2007 in Rhode Island, 3,042 children under age 21 in the care of the Department of Children, Youth and Families (DCYF) were in **out-of-home placement**, a decrease of 8% from last year when there were 3,311 children and youth in out-of-home placements.
- ❖ On December 31, 2007, there were more than 1,000 **infants and toddlers (birth through age 3) in the care of DCYF**, comprising 31% of the caseload. Children under age one comprise the fastest growing segment of the child welfare population. Children under age 3 are also the most likely to experience recurrence of abuse and neglect.
- ❖ In Rhode Island in FFY 2007, 18.2% of **children who entered out-of-home placement were re-entering care within 12 months** of a prior episode, down from 20.3% in FFY 2003. Despite this decrease, Rhode Island children re-enter care at more than twice the rate of the national standard (8.6%). Achieving timely and successful permanency for children and youth requires providing access to substance abuse and mental health treatment, in-home services, parenting skills training and assistance with meeting basic needs (e.g., food, child care, housing, income, and health insurance).

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Education:

- ❖ **Child care subsidy** enrollment fell to 9,008 children in December 2007 from 12,267 in December 2006. The high was 14,333 in 2003.
- ❖ Availability of **full-day kindergarten** in Rhode Island continues to rise, yet Rhode Island continues to lag behind national rates. In the current school year, 52% of children in public kindergarten are in full day programs, compared to 18% of children in 1999-2000. In 2005, 69% of U.S. public school kindergartners were in full-day kindergarten.
- ❖ **Head Start** enrollment is down slightly to 2,718 children ages 3-5 in October 2007 from 2,780 children in the October 2004. Head Start enrollment is down across the country due to insufficient federal funding.
- ❖ In the 2006-2007 school year, there were 7,290 **English Language Learner** students (74% of whom spoke Spanish), compared with 7,904 ELLs in the 2005-2006 school year.
- ❖ **Reading scores** (from the NECAP) have been increasing slowly over the three years the test has been administered. Fourth-grade reading proficiency increased from 60% in 2005 to 64% in 2007 and eighth-grade reading proficiency increased from 56% in 2005 to 62% in 2007. Both 4th and 8th grade **math scores** stayed virtually the same between 2006 and 2007.
- ❖ The statewide **high school attendance** rate has remained constant since the 2004-2005 school year at 90%.
- ❖ The 2007 **high school graduation rate** was 89%, higher than the past two years when it was 85%.