

# Teens Not in School and Not Working

## DEFINITION

*Teens not in school and not working* is the percentage of teens ages 16 to 19 who are not enrolled in school, not in the Armed Forces, and not employed. This indicator includes recent high school graduates who are unemployed and teens who have dropped out of high school and are jobless.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Improving educational and employment opportunities is especially important for urban disadvantaged and minority youth.<sup>1</sup> Youth living in economically disadvantaged families are six times more likely to drop out of high school than their more affluent peers.<sup>2</sup> Many school and community programs do not adequately address the needs of students on the verge of dropping out of school and out-of-school youth.<sup>3</sup> Caring parent-child interactions, positive peer influences, and support from siblings, teachers and mentors can greatly influence a teen's choices and attitudes.<sup>4,5</sup> Mentoring can have a particularly beneficial impact on an adolescent's development. Mentored youth are likely to have fewer absences from school, better attitudes towards school, less drug and alcohol use, and improved relationships with their parents.<sup>6,7</sup>

Dropping out of school and not becoming part of the workforce places teens at a significant disadvantage as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.<sup>8</sup> These adolescents have a difficult time getting connected to the job market as young adults and have a less stable employment history than their peers who stayed in school or secured jobs.<sup>9,10</sup> They are also at an especially high risk for teen parenting, crime and negative behaviors.<sup>11</sup> In addition, they are at an increased risk of needing public assistance.<sup>12,13</sup>

In 2002, 4.8% of Rhode Island teens ages 16 to 19 were neither in school nor working, a decrease of one-third from 7.1% of youth in 2001.<sup>14</sup> This represents a decrease of nearly 1,000 young adults that were disconnected from school systems

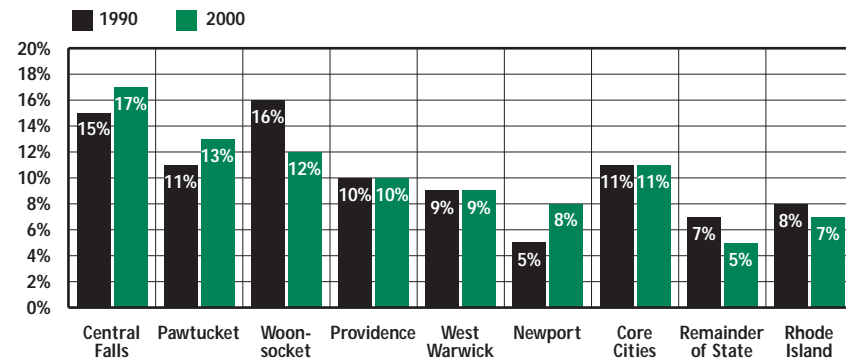
Teens Not in School and Not Working 1990 and 2000		
	1990	2000
RI	15%	7%
US	10%	8%
National Rank		* 27th
New England Rank **		6th

\*1st is best; 50th is worst

\*\*1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being*. (2004). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Teens Not in School and Not Working, Ages 16 to 19, Core Cities and Rhode Island, 1990 and 2000



Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of the Population and Census 2000, Summary Tape File 3 and Summary File 3.

◆ In 2000 in Rhode Island, 8,954 (7%) of teens ages 16 to 19 were not in school and not working.<sup>16</sup>

## America's Disconnected Youth

◆ There are currently 5 million youth (15% of the young adult population) between the ages of 16 and 24 who are not in school and not working. Three million of these young adults are teen parents, juvenile offenders, homeless youth, high school dropouts or youth exiting foster care.<sup>17</sup>

◆ Unemployed and undereducated youth are at greatest risk for earning low wages, being incarcerated, living in under-resourced neighborhoods, and continuing the cycle of poverty with their own children.<sup>18</sup>

◆ The Adult Education and Family Literacy Act of 1998 is a federal program that assists individuals 16 years of age and older not enrolled in secondary school in improving their literacy skills. The Act funds programs that address the educational needs of English Language Learners, young parents, and youth without GED credentials.<sup>19</sup>

# Teens Not in School and Not Working

Table 41. Teens Not in School and Not Working, Ages 16-19, Rhode Island, 2000

CITY/TOWN	TOTAL NUMBER OF TEENS AGES 16-19	JOBLESS HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	JOBLESS NON-HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATES	TOTAL NUMBER OF JOBLESS TEENS	% OF TEENS WHO ARE JOBLESS
Barrington	816	7	11	18	2.2%
Bristol	1,701	0	23	23	1.4%
Burrillville	980	3	14	17	1.7%
Central Falls	1,082	66	112	178	16.5%
Charlestown	320	0	0	0	0.0%
Coventry	1,632	9	50	59	3.6%
Cranston	4,233	304	329	633	15.0%
Cumberland	1,449	67	28	95	6.6%
East Greenwich	636	0	0	0	0.0%
East Providence	2,068	75	55	130	6.3%
Exeter	251	5	0	5	2.0%
Foster	232	0	0	0	0.0%
Glocester	551	5	10	15	2.7%
Hopkinton	402	4	16	20	5.0%
Jamestown	267	0	5	5	1.9%
Johnston	1,080	33	17	50	4.6%
Lincoln	974	0	26	26	2.7%
Little Compton	175	0	16	16	9.1%
Middletown	713	37	18	55	7.7%
Narragansett	739	9	12	21	2.8%
New Shoreham	26	0	0	0	0.0%
Newport	1,740	31	100	131	7.5%
North Kingstown	1,159	13	0	13	1.1%
North Providence	1,262	22	38	60	4.8%
North Smithfield	494	0	0	0	0.0%
Pawtucket	3,684	203	292	495	13.4%
Portsmouth	736	0	12	12	1.6%
Providence	15,673	420	1,138	1,558	9.9%
Richmond	326	16	0	16	4.9%
Scituate	604	44	17	61	10.1%
Smithfield	1,904	11	11	22	1.2%
South Kingstown	3,532	8	11	19	0.5%
Tiverton	769	23	22	45	5.9%
Warren	507	33	33	66	13.0%
Warwick	3,843	60	130	190	4.9%
West Greenwich	300	0	0	0	0.0%
West Warwick	1,341	47	73	120	8.9%
Westerly	1,029	24	23	47	4.6%
Woonsocket	2,179	75	181	256	11.7%
<i>Core Cities</i>	<i>25,699</i>	<i>842</i>	<i>1,896</i>	<i>2,738</i>	<i>10.7%</i>
<i>Remainder of State</i>	<i>35,710</i>	<i>812</i>	<i>927</i>	<i>1,739</i>	<i>4.9%</i>
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>61,409</i>	<i>1,654</i>	<i>2,823</i>	<i>4,477</i>	<i>7.3%</i>

## Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000, Summary File 3.

Core Cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick and Woonsocket.

The denominator is the number of teens ages 16 to 19 according to the Census 2000.

## References for Indicator

<sup>1,7,9</sup> Shore, R. (2003). *Reducing the number of disconnected youth*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

<sup>2</sup> *The state of America's children*. (2004). Washington, DC: Children's Defense Fund.

<sup>3</sup> Hughes, K. L., Bailey, T. R., & Mechur, M. J. (2001). *School-to-work: Making a difference in education*. New York, NY: Columbia University, Institute on Education and the Economy, Teachers College.

<sup>4</sup> Moore, K.A. & Zaff, J.F. (2002). *Building a better teenager: A summary of "what works" in adolescent development*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>5,6</sup> Jekielek, M.A., Moore, K.A., & Hair, E.C. (2002). *Mentoring: A promising strategy for youth development*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>8</sup> Jekielek, S., Cochran, S., & Hair, E. (2002). *Employment programs and youth development: A synthesis*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>10,11</sup> Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2004) *America's Children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2004*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

<sup>12</sup> Brown, B. (2001). *Teens, jobs, and welfare: Implications for social policy*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.

<sup>13</sup> Mroz, T. & Savage, T. (2001). *The long-term effects of youth unemployment*. Washington, DC: Employment Policies Institute.

<sup>14,15</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, *Current Population Survey, 2000-2002 and 2001-2003*.

<sup>16</sup> U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

<sup>18</sup> *KIDS COUNT data book: State profiles of child well-being, 2004*. (2004). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

<sup>17,19</sup> Greenberg, M & Levin-Epstein, J., eds. (2003). *Leave no youth behind: Opportunities for Congress to reach disconnected youth*. Washington, DC: Center for Law and Social Policy.