

Child Deaths

DEFINITION

Child deaths are the number of deaths from all causes to children ages 1 to 14, per 100,000 children. The data are reported by place of residence, not place of death.

SIGNIFICANCE

The child death rate is a reflection of the physical, mental and emotional health of children, the dangers to which children are exposed in the community, access to and use of safety devices and practices (such as bicycle helmets and smoke alarms), and the level of adult supervision children receive.¹ Children living in poverty are at the greatest risk for injury and death. Research indicates that poor children are more likely to die at every age and are five times more likely to die from infectious diseases and parasites.²

In Rhode Island, between 1998 and 2002 there were 151 child deaths of children ages 1 to 14. Of these deaths, 98 (65%) were due to disease, 42 (28%) were due to unintentional injuries and 7% were due to intentional injuries (9 homicides and 2 suicides).³ Between 1998 and 2002, Rhode Island had a child death rate of 15.5 per 100,000 children ages 1 to 14.⁴

Unintentional injuries are the leading cause of death for children ages 1 to 14 in Rhode Island, exceeding deaths from

any single disease.⁵ These injuries and deaths disproportionately affect poor children, young children, males, children in families with low levels of education and employment, children with developmental disabilities and minority children.⁶ In the United States, the child death rate has steadily declined due to constant medical advances and a drop in motor vehicle accidents, the leading cause of injury among children. The death rates for Black and Native American children are higher than the rates for other children.⁷

Many of the injuries that do not result in death are extremely costly both financially and in terms of loss of quality of life. Injuries may leave children temporarily or permanently disabled, result in time lost from school, decrease the child's ability to participate in everyday activities, and affect future ability to work and be self-sufficient.⁸

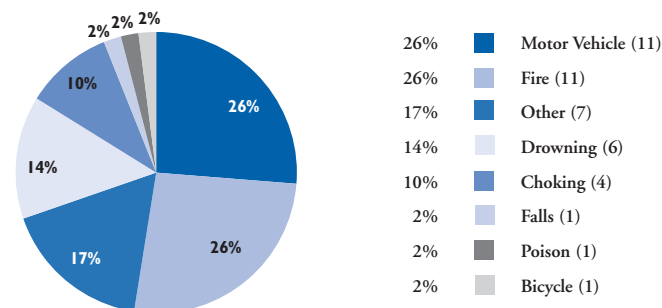
Child Death Rate (per 100,000 Children Ages 1-14)		
	1990	2000
RI	24	17
US	31	22
National Rank*		7th
New England Rank**		5th

*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT Data Book: State Profiles in Child Well-Being 2003*. (2003). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

Child Deaths by Cause of Unintentional Injury, Rhode Island, 1998-2002



n=42

* may not total 100% due to rounding

Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002.

◆ In Rhode Island, as well as nationally, motor vehicle accidents are the most common unintentional cause of injury deaths to children ages 1 to 14. Between 1998 and 2002 motor vehicle accidents caused 26% of the unintentional injuries that resulted in child deaths in Rhode Island.⁹

◆ Effective safety products or changing the child's environment can greatly reduce child deaths. Child restraints in cars, functional smoke alarms, reducing speed in residential areas, wearing safety helmets, locking windows and doors, using child proof tops on bottles and containers and blocking stairs with gates are a few examples of preventive measures.^{10,11}

References for Indicators

¹ *Childhood Injury Fact Sheet*. (July 1999). Washington, D.C.: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

^{2,7} *KIDS COUNT Data Book 2003: State Profiles of Child Well-Being*. (2003). Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

^{3,4,5,9} Rhode Island Department of Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002.

⁶ *Childhood Injury Fact Sheet*. (2000). Washington, DC: National Safe Kids Campaign

⁸ Miller, T.R., E.O. Romano, R.S. Spicer. (Spring/Summer 2000). The Cost of Childhood Injuries and the Value of Prevention. *The Future of Children*, Vol.10, No. 1. Los Altos, CA: Center for the Future of Children, The David and Lucile Packard Foundation.

¹⁰ *Child Passengers at Risk in America: A National Study of Restraint Use*. (February 2002). Washington, DC: National Safe Kids Campaign.

¹⁰ *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2003*. (2003). Washington, DC: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics.

¹¹ Child Accident Prevention Trust. (2002). *Children and Accidents Factsheet*. January 15, 2004, from www.capt.org.uk