

Is Your Home Healthy?



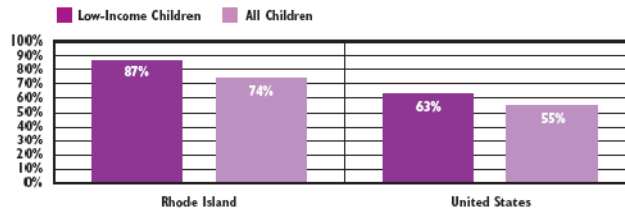
*Presented by Stephanie Geller
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT
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Housing and Health Indicator

- Healthy child development requires a home that is well-built and free of health and safety hazards.
- Housing quality affects a child's ability to:
 - Grow
 - Think
 - Learn
 - Relax
 - Form critical early bonds.

Housing and Health

Children Living in Older Housing*, 2005-2007 Average, Rhode Island and the United States



Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of the 2005-2007 American Community Survey (ACS) Public Use Microsample (PUMS) data. *Older housing is defined here as built before 1980. The ACS reports data on the year a housing structure was built by decade, so this is the best available approximation for housing built before 1978 (when lead paint was banned from interior use in the United States).

- ❖ In both Rhode Island and the nation as a whole, children in low-income families are more likely to live in older housing than children in general.
- ❖ Between 2005 and 2007, 87% of low-income children in Rhode Island lived in older housing, the highest percentage in any state.

Health Problems Associated with Housing

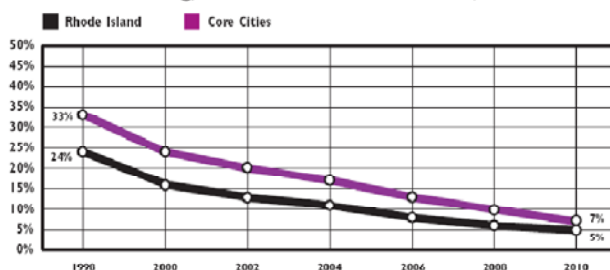
- Lead poisoning
- Asthma
- Unintentional injuries

Lead Poisoning

- Children living in homes built before 1978, when lead poisoning was banned for residential use in the U.S. are at risk for lead poisoning.
- Lead poisoning in early childhood can cause irreversible damage, including:
 - Impaired cognitive abilities
 - Impaired motor abilities
 - Impaired physical abilities
 - Behavioral problems

Children with Lead Poisoning

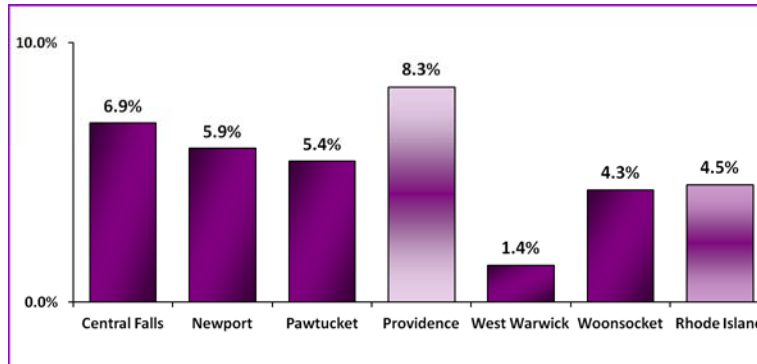
Children Entering Kindergarten with History of Elevated Blood Lead Level Screening, Rhode Island and Core Cities, 1998–2010



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Childhood Lead Poisoning Prevention Program, Children entering kindergarten between 1998-2010.

- ❖ In Rhode Island 1 in 20 children due to enter kindergarten in 2010 had an elevated blood lead level, down from 1 in 4 in 1998 .

Lead Poisoning Rates by Community



Rhode Island Department of Health, Childhood Lead Action Prevention Program.

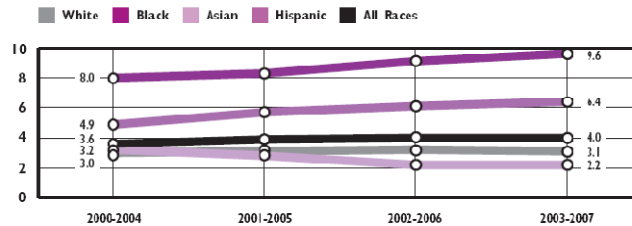
- ❖ Despite declines in lead poisoning rates, kindergarteners living in core cities are almost 3 times as likely to have screened positive for elevated blood lead levels as kindergarteners in the remainder of the state.
- ❖ In Providence, 1 in 12 children screened positive for an elevated blood level before entering kindergarten.

Asthma

- Dust mites, cockroaches, mold, and pet dander can all trigger or exacerbate respiratory problems, including asthma.
- Asthma is the 3rd leading cause of **hospitalization** for children under age 15 and a leading cause of **school absences**.

Children with Asthma

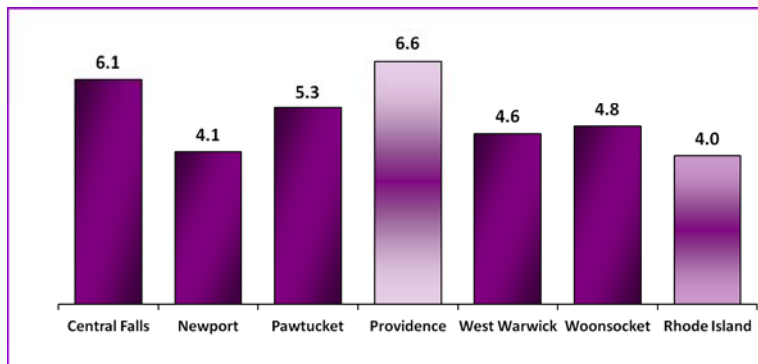
Asthma Hospitalizations by Race/Ethnicity per 1,000 Children under Age 18, Rhode Island, 2000-2007



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Hospital Discharge Database, 2000-2007; U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000. Due to a change in methodology, race and ethnicity data are not comparable with Facebooks prior to 2008.

- ❖ Between 2001 and 2005, more than 1 in 10 (11%) Rhode Island children under age 18 reported having asthma.
- ❖ Between 2000 and 2007, the asthma hospitalization rate for Black children was more than 3 times the rate for White children, and the rate for Hispanic children was more than twice the rate for White children.

Childhood Asthma Hospitalization Rates by Community (Rate per 1,000 children)



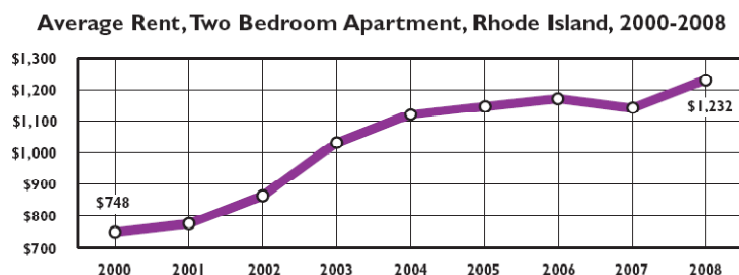
Rhode Island Department of Health, Childhood Lead Action Prevention Program.

- ❖ Between 2003-2007, children in the core cities were hospitalized for asthma at twice the rate of children living in the remainder of the state.

Unintentional Injuries

- Falls are the leading cause of unintentional injuries among children in the U.S.
- More than 80% of fall-related injuries among children under age 5 occur in the home.
- In 2007, housing-related falls resulted in 4,837 emergency room visits by children, with over half of these visits for children under age 6.

Cost of Rent



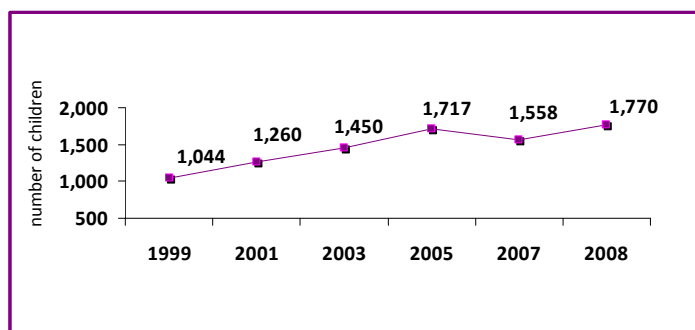
Source: Rhode Island Housing, Annual Rent Surveys, 2000-2008. The 2003-2008 rents include adjustments for the cost of heat, cooking fuel, electricity and hot water. All prior years' rents include adjustments for the cost of heat and hot water only. Adjustments for utilities for each year vary according to HUD annual utility allowances.

- ❖ In 2008, a worker would have to earn \$23.69 an hour and work 40 hours a week year-round to be able to afford the average rent in Rhode Island without a cost burden.
- ❖ With a household income of \$50,000, a family cannot afford to buy a median-priced, single family home in any community in the state.
- ❖ In 2008, 6,583 properties in Rhode Island were filed for foreclosure, up from 1,838 in 2007.

Affordability and Crowding

- The lack of affordable housing puts safe, healthy, well-maintained housing out of reach for many families, forcing families to raise their children in overcrowded and unsafe environments that can interfere with their growth and development.
- Overcrowded housing is associated with feelings of helplessness, delayed cognitive development, and behavioral problems among children.

Increases in Child Homelessness



Source: Rhode Island Emergency Shelter Information Project, Annual Reports 1999-2007.
Data for 2006 are not available due to data system issues.

❖ Between July 1, 2007 and June 30, 2007, 1,770 children entered the emergency shelter system accompanied by an adult, an increase of 14% from the previous year.

❖ During this same year, 953 families sought emergency shelter, a 21% increase from the previous year.

Most Common Reasons for Shelter Use Among Rhode Islanders

- ❖ Lack of income
- ❖ Housing costs that outpace income
- ❖ Domestic violence
- ❖ Eviction and landlord/tenant disputes
- ❖ Family separation
- ❖ Relocation from outside of Rhode Island

Consequences of Homelessness for Children

- ❖ Go **hungry** at twice the rate of other children.
- ❖ More likely to become **ill**.
- ❖ More likely to develop **mental health issues**.
- ❖ More likely to experience **developmental delays**.
- ❖ Are twice as likely to **repeat a grade**.
- ❖ Three-quarters of homeless youth **do not finish high school**.

Key Principles of Healthy Housing

- Dry
- Clean
- Pest-free
- Safe
- Contaminant-free
- Ventilated
- Maintained
- Affordable
- Not overcrowded

Promising Strategies

- Federal level
 - Healthy Housing Council Act
 - Safe and Healthy Housing Act
- State level
- Community level
- Individual level



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