



2000 U.S. CENSUS BRIEF

LED BY AN INCREASE IN HISPANIC CHILDREN, RHODE ISLAND GROWS MORE DIVERSE

The children counted in the 2000 census were significantly more diverse than those children in the state in 1990. In 1990, of the 225,690 Rhode Island children under age 18, 16% were children of color (defined as all racial and ethnic groups except White, non-Hispanic). In the 2000 census, this number increased to 27% of the children in the state.

Nationally, children of color accounted for 98% of the growth in the child population during the 1990s. In Rhode Island, the number of children of color nearly doubled from about 37,000 in 1990 to nearly 68,000 in 2000 while the number of White children dropped by nearly 9,000. Sixty-one percent of the 85,313 children living in the core cities are children of color.

For the first time, the 2000 census gave individuals the option of selecting more than one racial category. Three percent (3%) of the non-Hispanic children in Rhode Island fall in two or more racial categories. Changing the way we collect data on race in the census is not new. Almost every census for the past 200 years has collected racial data differently than the one before it. Because of these changes, there is no way to make the racial categories exactly comparable to those used in 1990. In addition, the way the census measures Hispanic origin has changed over time. Therefore, interpreting racial and ethnic

Table 1. Rhode Island Children under Age 18 by Race and Ethnicity*

RACE OR ETHNICITY	1990 CHILD POPULATION	PERCENT OF TOTAL	2000 CHILD POPULATION	PERCENT OF TOTAL
Hispanic or Latino	16,107	7%	35,002	14%
Not Hispanic or Latino				
White	188,823	84%	180,075	73%
Black or African American	11,387	5%	13,585	5%
American Indian and Alaska Native	1,169	<1%	1,458	1%
Asian	6,031	3%	6,609	3%
Native Hawaiian Other Pacific Islander	na	na	70	<1%
Some other race	2,173	1%	2,874	1%
Two or more races	na	na	8,149	3%
Total	225,690	100%	247,822	100%

* Please see note at bottom of table on page 2.
Note: Native Hawaiian Other Pacific Islander included in Asian category in 1990.
Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000, and Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT Census Data Online.

trends should be done cautiously. Although the addition of the “two or more races” category makes comparison difficult, we can analyze changes in the racial and ethnic makeup of Rhode Island’s child population if we keep in mind that biracial children who would have had to choose only one racial category in 1990 are included in the “two or more races” category in 2000. This type of analysis will likely underestimate small populations where children are most likely to be biracial.

Surpassing census projections, the largest demographic increase since 1990 in the state’s child population was in the number of Hispanic or Latino children. In 1990, 7% (16,107) children were of Hispanic or Latino origin. The 2000 census reported that 14% (35,002) of Rhode Island’s children are in this ethnic category.

The largest demographic increase

since 1990 in the non-Hispanic population was in number of children classified under “some other race,” increasing 32% from 2,173 to 2,874. Holding at 5% of the overall child population, non-Hispanic, Black or African American children increased 19%, from 11,387 to 13,585. American Indian and Alaska Native, non-Hispanic children increased 25%, from 1,169 in 1990 to 1,458 in 2000. Asian children went from 6,031 to 6,609, increasing by 10%. This is likely to slightly underestimate the increase in the Asian child population as the 1990 figure included Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islander children. Conversely, the only racial or ethnic category to see a decline was the White, non-Hispanic population, decreasing 5% from 188,823 (84% of the total child population) in 1990 to 180,075 (73% of the total child population) in 2000.

The U.S. Census Bureau conducts a census of the population every ten years. The most recent was completed in April 2000. This series of reports highlights information most relevant for community leaders, policy makers, advocates, and others concerned with the status of children and families in Rhode Island. Additional information on child well-being and Census 2000 can be found on the Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Web site at www.rikidscount.org.

RHODE ISLAND POPULATION UNDER AGE 18 BY RACE AND ETHNICITY: CENSUS 2000

CITY/TOWN	RACE AND ETHNICITY								TOTAL POPULATION UNDER AGE 18
	HISPANIC OR LATINO	WHITE	BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN	AMERICAN INDIAN & ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	NATIVE HAWAIIAN OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	SOME OTHER RACE	TWO OR MORE RACES	
Barrington	59	4,479	29	8	106	0	4	60	4,745
Bristol	88	4,183	30	3	21	4	3	67	4,399
Burrillville	59	3,915	11	8	6	0	11	33	4,043
Central Falls	3,122	1,574	292	29	22	0	225	267	5,531
Charlestown	38	1,597	7	26	12	0	1	31	1,712
Coventry	151	7,975	47	8	46	2	10	150	8,389
Cranston	1,213	14,041	513	59	796	5	71	400	17,098
Cumberland	231	7,185	65	5	70	3	38	93	7,690
East Greenwich	59	3,308	30	1	106	0	11	49	3,564
East Providence	360	8,366	681	48	114	4	323	650	10,546
Exeter	36	1,484	9	9	8	0	0	43	1,589
Foster	17	1,054	2	1	11	2	3	15	1,105
Glocester	31	2,573	15	2	10	0	1	32	2,664
Hopkinton	35	1,889	11	27	10	0	3	36	2,011
Jamestown	19	1,183	14	4	4	0	0	14	1,238
Johnston	203	5,425	63	9	93	1	21	91	5,906
Lincoln	151	4,694	73	2	116	1	21	99	5,157
Little Compton	12	756	1	0	2	0	0	9	780
Middletown	201	3,549	246	23	104	1	15	189	4,328
Narragansett	69	2,566	27	52	25	0	5	89	2,833
New Shoreham	3	175	3	0	3	0	0	1	185
Newport	602	3,485	555	86	55	7	51	358	5,199
North Kingstown	210	6,286	70	37	76	0	11	158	6,848
North Providence	377	5,033	208	12	122	3	48	133	5,936
North Smithfield	17	2,305	13	8	15	0	1	20	2,379
Pawtucket	3,820	10,090	1,776	53	131	7	1,251	1,023	18,151
Portsmouth	114	4,016	55	5	58	0	8	73	4,329
Providence	20,350	10,858	7,606	621	3,043	19	575	2,205	45,277
Richmond	32	1,916	7	19	8	0	0	32	2,014
Scituate	30	2,535	10	1	24	1	5	29	2,635
Smithfield	50	3,880	18	2	29	0	2	38	4,019
South Kingstown	128	5,561	87	126	169	0	19	194	6,284
Tiverton	46	3,234	15	4	18	0	8	42	3,367
Warren	36	2,294	38	4	11	1	6	64	2,454
Warwick	516	17,220	217	50	322	1	35	419	18,780
West Greenwich	13	1,396	4	3	7	0	5	16	1,444
West Warwick	384	5,792	86	29	102	3	26	210	6,632
Westerly	96	4,931	45	45	143	0	11	135	5,406
Woonsocket	2,024	7,272	606	29	591	5	46	582	11,155
Core Cities	29,918	33,279	10,835	818	3,842	38	2,148	4,435	85,313
Remainder of State	5,084	146,796	2,750	640	2,767	32	726	3,714	162,509
Rhode Island	35,002	180,075	13,585	1,458	6,609	70	2,874	8,149	247,822

**Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Newport, and Central Falls*

Note: All categories are mutually exclusive. If Hispanic was selected as ethnicity, individuals are not included in other racial categories. Likewise, if more than one race was selected, individuals are included in two or more races and not in their individual race categories.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000.