



**kids
count**

2000 U.S. CENSUS BRIEF

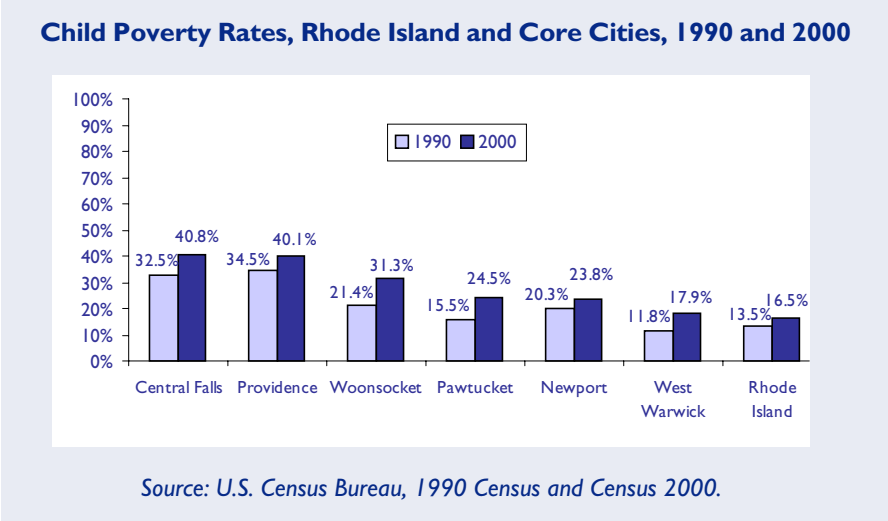
Rhode Island KIDS COUNT ♦ One Union Station ♦ Providence, RI 02903 June 2002, Number 6

MORE RHODE ISLAND CHILDREN AT RISK AS CHILD POVERTY RATES INCREASE

Children most at risk of not achieving their full potential are children in poverty. Children in poverty are more likely to have difficulty in school, to become teen parents, and to earn less as adults. Children in low-income communities are more likely to attend poorly-equipped schools, have less access to libraries and cultural activities, have limited access to high-quality child care programs, and to have fewer opportunities to participate in sports and recreational programs.

As of April 1, 2000, 40,117 children in Rhode Island lived in families with incomes below the poverty threshold. This is 16.5% of all children living in families in the state. In 1990, 30,022 (13.5%) Rhode Island children under age 18 lived in households with incomes below the poverty threshold. This represents a 33.6% increase, with 10,095 more children in poverty in 2000 than in 1990.

Rhode Island's child poverty rate is nearly the same as the national average of 16.1%. Ranked 32 in the country for child poverty (1 being the lowest), Rhode Island has the highest rate of child poverty among all New England states, followed by Maine (13.0%), Massachusetts (11.6%), Vermont (10.7%), Connecticut (10.0%) and New Hampshire (7.3%), which has the lowest child poverty rate in the country.



The census found that 14.2% of Rhode Island families with children under age 18 are poor and 18.6% of families with children under age 5 are poor. The current poverty threshold for a family of three with two children is \$14,269 and \$17,960 for a family of four with two children.

Nearly one in five (12,009) children under age 5 in the state are living in poverty. This is higher than the 16.1% poverty rate for young children in the state in 1990. In addition, the census found that there are 28,108 school-aged children in poverty (15.6%) in Rhode Island, a 46.3% increase in the number of poor school-aged children in 1990.

During the 1990s, West Warwick became the sixth city in the state with more than 15% children living below the poverty line. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT classifies core cities as any

city or town in Rhode Island in which 15% or more of the children live below the poverty line. Rhode Island's poor children are highly clustered in these six cities. Three-quarters of all poor children live in Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, West Warwick or Woonsocket. Central Falls has the highest child poverty rate at 40.8%, followed by Providence at 40.1%, Woonsocket at 31.3%, Pawtucket at 24.5%, Newport at 23.8% and West Warwick at 17.9%.

According to a recent report by the Children's Defense Fund, Providence is tied with New Orleans, Louisiana, for the third highest child poverty rate in the country among cities with more than 100,000 residents. Only Brownsville, Texas, and Hartford, Connecticut, have higher child poverty rates.

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 and the Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT Census Data Online Web site at www.aecf.org/kidscount/census. Also visit the Children's Defense Fund Web site at www.childrensdefense.org.

RHODE ISLAND CHILD POVERTY RATES BY CITY/TOWN: 1990 AND 2000

CITY/TOWN	1990		2000		CHANGE BETWEEN	
	< AGE 18 BELOW POVERTY		< AGE 18 BELOW POVERTY		1990 AND 2000	
	N	%	N	%	N	+/- %
Barrington	52	1.3%	116	2.5%	64	+1.2%
Bristol	253	5.9%	396	9.2%	143	+3.3%
Burrillville	276	6.1%	236	6.0%	-40	-0.1%
Central Falls	1,576	32.5%	2,189	40.8%	613	+8.3%
Charlestown	145	9.4%	78	4.7%	-67	-4.7%
Coventry	402	5.3%	455	5.6%	53	+0.3%
Cranston	1,378	9.5%	1,417	8.6%	39	-0.9%
Cumberland	302	4.7%	237	3.1%	-65	-1.6%
East Greenwich	153	5.3%	147	4.1%	-6	-1.2%
East Providence	904	8.7%	1,109	10.7%	205	+2.0%
Exeter	52	3.6%	112	7.5%	60	+3.9%
Foster	88	7.6%	32	2.9%	-56	-4.7%
Glocester	156	6.5%	171	6.4%	15	-0.1%
Hopkinton	75	4.1%	107	5.5%	32	+1.4%
Jamestown	92	8.1%	17	1.4%	-75	-6.7%
Johnston	452	8.4%	527	9.0%	75	+0.6%
Lincoln	272	7.0%	316	6.2%	44	-0.8%
Little Compton	20	2.7%	8	1.0%	-12	-1.7%
Middletown	275	6.0%	264	6.2%	-11	+0.2%
Narragansett	122	4.5%	230	8.4%	108	+3.9%
New Shoreham	17	10.1%	19	10.2%	2	+0.1%
Newport	1,143	20.3%	1,223	23.8%	80	+3.5%
North Kingstown	281	4.7%	657	9.6%	376	+4.9%
North Providence	298	5.4%	559	9.8%	261	+4.4%
North Smithfield	37	1.6%	67	2.8%	30	+1.2%
Pawtucket	2,525	15.5%	4,353	24.5%	1,828	+9.0%
Portsmouth	182	4.4%	118	2.8%	-64	-1.6%
Providence	12,946	34.5%	17,714	40.1%	4,768	+5.6%
Richmond	30	2.0%	82	4.2%	52	+2.2%
Scituate	91	3.7%	113	4.3%	22	+0.6%
Smithfield	155	4.1%	153	3.9%	-2	-0.2%
South Kingstown	350	7.5%	297	4.9%	-53	-2.6%
Tiverton	200	6.4%	90	2.7%	-110	-3.7%
Warren	199	8.5%	198	8.1%	-1	-0.4%
Warwick	1,084	5.9%	1,175	6.4%	91	+0.5%
West Greenwich	26	2.9%	40	2.7%	14	-0.2%
West Warwick	746	11.8%	1,170	17.9%	424	+6.1%
Westerly	432	8.7%	512	9.6%	80	+0.9%
Woonsocket	2,235	21.4%	3,413	31.3%	1,178	+9.9%
Core Cities*	20,425	27.3%	30,062	33.4%	9,637	+6.1%
Remainder of State	9,597	6.5%	10,055	6.6%	458	+0.1%
Rhode Island	30,022	13.5%	40,117	16.5%	10,095	+3.0%

* Data from Census 2000 showed that West Warwick is now the sixth core city in Rhode Island. Rhode Island KIDS COUNT identifies a core city as any city in the state with a child poverty rate above 15%. The other core cities are Providence, Pawtucket, Woonsocket, Newport, and Central Falls.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, 1990 Census and Census 2000.