

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.¹ 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.² Caring parent-child interactions, positive peer influences, and support from siblings, teachers and mentors can greatly influence a teen's choices and attitudes.^{3,4} 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.^{5,6} Employment programs also show potential for exposing youth to supportive relationships and reducing criminal behavior.⁷

Dropping out of school and not becoming part of the workforce places teens at a significant disadvantage as they transition from adolescence to adulthood.⁸ 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.^{9,10} They are also at an especially high risk for teen parenting, crime and risk behaviors.¹¹ In addition, they are at an increased risk of needing public assistance.^{12,13}

In 2000, 7% of Rhode Island teens ages 16 to 19 (4,477) were neither enrolled in school nor working. In 2000, 17% of Hispanic youth, 16% of Black youth and 7% of Asian youth were not in school and not employed as compared to 5% of White youth.¹⁴

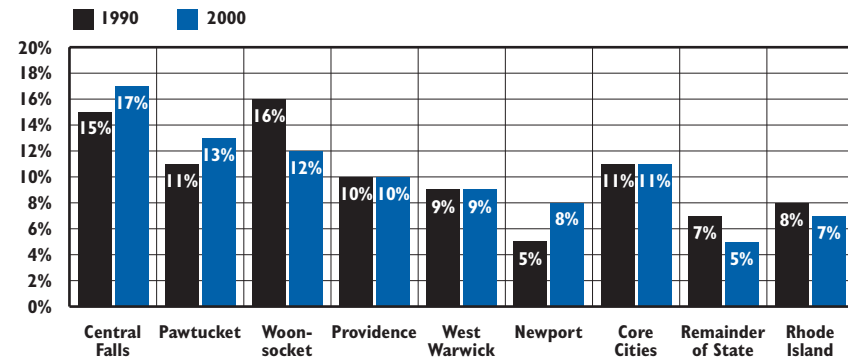
Teens Not in School and Not Working 1990 and 2000		
	1990	2000
RI	9%	8%
US	10%	8%
National Rank*		21st
New England Rank**		5th

*1st is best; 50th is worst

**1st is best; 6th is worst

Source: *KIDS COUNT Databook: State Profiles of Child Well-Being*. (2003). 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.

Disengagement from School Starts Early

- ◆ The process of engaging children in school and learning begins in early childhood. According to the Carnegie Task Force on Learning in the Primary Grades, the process of disengagement from school may begin as early as kindergarten.
- ◆ Children must have experiences that make them feel that school is fun and exciting, as well as a place to learn. Teachers and parents need to help children stay involved in the entire school day and after-school activities, address weak academic and social skills, and reward students' effort.
- ◆ Schools are more likely to engage students when they emphasize real-world experiences, problem-solving, and skill-building that includes the ability to listen and speak to people, negotiate a variety of new situations, manage time, money and materials, use computers, work as a member of a team, deal with cultural diversity, and develop a basic grasp of how organizations and system work.

Source: Shore, R. (2003). *Reducing the Number of Disconnected Youth*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.

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Table 36.

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%
Core Cities	25,699	842	1,896	2,738	10.7%
Remainder of State	35,710	812	927	1,739	4.9%
Rhode Island	61,409	1,654	2,823	4,477	7.3%

Sources of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Bureau of the Census, Census 2000.

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 Census 2000.

References for Indicator

- ^{1,6,9} Shore, R. (2003). *Reducing the Number of Disconnected Youth*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- ² Hughes, K. L., Bailey, T. R., and Mechur, M. J. (2001). *School-to-Work: Making a Difference in Education*. New York, NY: Institute on Education and the Economy, Teachers College, Columbia University.
- ³ Moore, K.A. and Zaff, J.F. (November 2002). *Building a Better Teenager: A Summary of "What Works" in Adolescent Development*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ^{4,5} Jekielek, M.A., et al. (February 2002). *Mentoring: A Promising Strategy for Youth Development*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ^{7,8} Jekielek, S., et al. (May 2002). *Employment Programs and Youth Development: A Synthesis*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ^{10,11} *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being 2003*. (2003). Washington, DC: Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics.
- ¹² Brown, B. (August 2001). *Teens, Jobs, and Welfare: Implications for Social Policy*. Washington, DC: Child Trends.
- ¹³ Mroz, Thomas A. and Timothy H. Savage. (October 2001). *The Long-Term Effects of Youth Unemployment*. Washington, DC: Employment Policies Institute.
- ¹⁴ U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1990 Census of the Population and Census 2000.