

Child Population

DEFINITION

Child population is the total number of children under age 18 and the percentage change between 2010 and 2020 in the total number of children under age 18.

SIGNIFICANCE

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, there were 1,097,379 Rhode Island residents in 2020. Children under age 18 make up 19% of the population. Rhode Island's child population decreased from 247,822 in 2000 to 223,956 in 2010 and then further to 209,785 in 2020 (15% decrease from 2000 to 2020).^{1,2,3} Between 2017 and 2021, there were 118,465 households with children under age 18 in Rhode Island, representing 28% of all households.⁴ Between 2017 and 2021, 26% of Rhode Island children were under age five, 27% were ages five to nine, 29% were ages 10 to 14, and 18% were ages 15 to 17.⁵

In Rhode Island, between 2017 and 2021, 124,467 (59%) children under age 18 lived in married-couple households, 66,397 (31%) children lived in single-parent households, and 17,257 (8%) children lived with relatives, including grandparents. A total of 3,928 (2%) children lived with foster families or other non-relative heads of household. There were 568 (<1%) children and youth under age 18

who lived in group quarters and 46 (<1%) youth who were householders or spouses.^{6,7,8}

Rhode Island's children are diverse in race, ethnicity, language, and country of origin. Mirroring the national trend, the Hispanic child population in Rhode Island has grown since 2000, both in numbers and as a percentage of the child population. Hispanics make up 25% of children under age 18 in the United States and 27% of children under age 18 in Rhode Island.^{9,10,11}

Between 2017 and 2021, there were 10,336 foreign-born children under the age of 18 living in Rhode Island, representing approximately 5% of the child population.¹² Of Rhode Island children ages five to 17, 77% speak only English at home, 17% speak Spanish, 4% speak other Indo-European languages, 2% speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, and 1% speak other languages at home.¹³

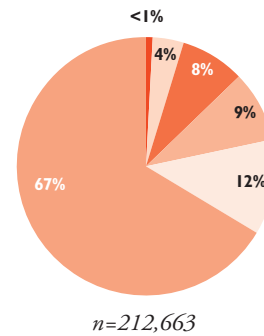
Sexual orientation and gender identity are other important facets of diversity among youth. According to the *2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 16% of high school students in Rhode Island described themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. This does not include students who responded "not sure" (5%). Among high school students, 3% described themselves as transgender, and 3% said they were "not sure."¹⁴



Rhode Island Children Under Age 18, 2017-2021

By Race/Ethnicity*

<1%	American Indian and Alaska Native
4%	Asian
8%	Black
9%	Some Other Race
12%	Two or More Races
67%	White

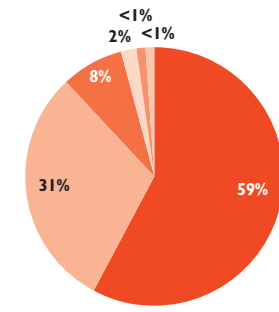


*Hispanic children may be included in any race category. Of Rhode Island's 212,663 children, 56,996 (27%) were Hispanic.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Tables B01001A, B01001B, B01001C, B01001D, B01001E, B01001F, B01001G, and B01001I.

By Family Structure

59%	Married-Couple**
31%	Single-Parent**
8%	Other Relatives
2%	Foster Family or Other Unrelated Household
<1%	Group Quarters
<1%	Child is Head of Household



**Only includes children who are related to the head of household by birth or adoption.

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Tables B09001, B09002, and B09018.



Decennial Census 2020

◆ In 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its most recent decennial Census. Although the overall population of Rhode Island (1,097,379) grew by 4.3% from 2010 to 2020, the child population (209,785) declined by 6.3% over this same period.^{15,16}

◆ Certain populations have been historically hard to count in the decennial Census, including young children under age five, immigrants, low-income populations, People of Color, people experiencing homelessness, and people in non-traditional households.¹⁷ The 2020 Census reveals that People of Color and young children continue to be undercounted, and Children of Color were undercounted at an even higher rate than in 2010.^{18,19}

Table 1.

Child Population, Rhode Island, 2010 and 2020

CITY/TOWN	2010 TOTAL POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	2020 TOTAL POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	CHANGE IN POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	% CHANGE IN POPULATION UNDER AGE 18
Barrington	4,597	4,489	-108	-2.3%
Bristol	3,623	2,887	-736	-20.3%
Burrville	3,576	3,229	-347	-9.7%
Central Falls	5,644	6,411	767	13.6%
Charlestown	1,506	1,161	-345	-22.9%
Coventry	7,770	6,655	-1,115	-14.4%
Cranston	16,414	15,744	-670	-4.1%
Cumberland	7,535	7,550	15	0.2%
East Greenwich	3,436	3,465	29	0.8%
East Providence	9,177	7,886	-1,291	-14.1%
Exeter	1,334	1,175	-159	-11.9%
Foster	986	790	-196	-19.9%
Glocester	2,098	1,896	-202	-9.6%
Hopkinton	1,845	1,613	-232	-12.6%
Jamestown	1,043	871	-172	-16.5%
Johnston	5,480	5,119	-361	-6.6%
Lincoln	4,751	4,640	-111	-2.3%
Little Compton	654	568	-86	-13.1%
Middletown	3,652	3,487	-165	-4.5%
Narragansett	2,269	1,651	-618	-27.2%
New Shoreham	163	189	26	16.0%
Newport	4,083	3,660	-423	-10.4%
North Kingstown	6,322	5,496	-826	-13.1%
North Providence	5,514	5,802	288	5.2%
North Smithfield	2,456	2,274	-182	-7.4%
Pawtucket	16,575	16,455	-120	-0.7%
Portsmouth	3,996	3,444	-552	-13.8%
Providence	41,634	41,021	-613	-1.5%
Richmond	1,849	1,627	-222	-12.0%
Scituate	2,272	1,866	-406	-17.9%
Smithfield	3,625	3,411	-214	-5.9%
South Kingstown	5,416	4,339	-1,077	-19.9%
Tiverton	2,998	2,723	-275	-9.2%
Warren	1,940	1,826	-114	-5.9%
Warwick	15,825	14,034	-1,791	-11.3%
West Greenwich	1,477	1,251	-226	-15.3%
West Warwick	5,746	5,787	41	0.7%
Westerly	4,787	3,826	-961	-20.1%
Woonsocket	9,888	9,467	-421	-4.3%
Four Core Cities	73,741	73,354	-387	-0.5%
Remainder of State	150,215	136,431	-13,784	-9.2%
Rhode Island	223,956	209,785	-14,171	-6.3%

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010, Summary File 1 and Census 2020, Table P2 and Table P4.

Core cities are Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

References

- ¹ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020. Table P2 and Table P4.
- ² U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Summary File 1. Table DP-1.
- ³ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Summary File 1. Table DP-1.
- ⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table DP02.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B01001.
- ⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B09002.
- ⁷ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B09018.
- ⁸ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B09001.
- ⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Summary File. Table QT-PL.
- ¹⁰ O'Hare, W. (2011). *The changing child population of the United States: Analysis of data from the 2010 Census*. Baltimore, MD: The Annie E. Casey Foundation.
- ¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B01001I.
- ¹² U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B05003.
- ¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2017-2021. Table B16007.
- ¹⁴ *2021 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, Rhode Island Department of Health.
- ¹⁷ *2020 Census: Counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place*. (2018). Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau.

(continued on page 174)