

Racial and Ethnic Diversity

DEFINITION

Racial and ethnic diversity is the percentage of children under age 18 by racial and ethnic categories as defined by the U.S. Census. Racial and ethnic categories are chosen by the head of household or person completing the Census form.

SIGNIFICANCE

Racial and ethnic diversity has increased in the United States over the last several decades and is projected to rise in the future. Since 2000, all of the growth in the child population in the U.S. has been among Children of Color.^{1,2} In 2019, 50% of all U.S. children were Children of Color.³ In Rhode Island between 2000 and 2010, the Hispanic child population grew by 31% while the non-Hispanic white child population declined by 21%.⁴

In 2010, 36% of children in Rhode Island were Children of Color, up from 27% in 2000. The number of Children of Color in Rhode Island grew by about 13,000 between 2000 and 2010, and the number of non-Hispanic white children decreased by over 37,000 during the same period.^{5,6}

Including Hispanics in each race category, in 2010 in Rhode Island, less than 1% of children under age 18 were American Indian or Alaska Native, 3% of were Asian, 8% were Black or

African American, 9% identified as Some other race, 7% were Two or more races, and 72% were white. In 2010, 21% of children living in Rhode Island were Hispanic.⁷

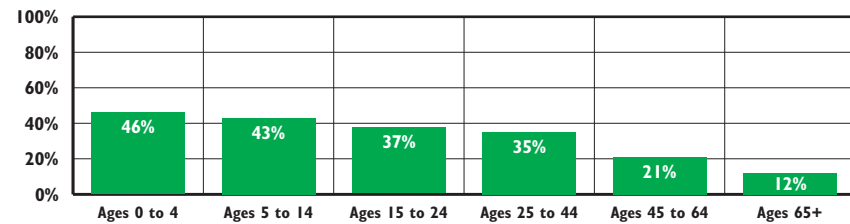
In 2010, two-thirds (67%) of all Children of Color in Rhode Island lived in the four core cities of Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket. Almost three-quarters (74%) of children living in the four core cities were Children of Color.⁸

Between 2015 and 2019, there were 8,189 foreign-born children living in Rhode Island, 30% of whom were naturalized U.S. citizens.⁹ Of Rhode Island's immigrant children, 31% were born in the Caribbean, 24% were born in Asia, 22% were born in Central or South America, 13% were born in Africa, 6% were born in Europe, and 3% were born in North America (Canada, Bermuda, or Mexico).¹⁰

Between 2015 and 2019, 23% of children between the ages of five and 17 living in Rhode Island spoke a language other than English at home, 95% of whom spoke English well or very well.¹¹

Many schools, child care providers, health care providers, social service agencies, and other community organizations are working to adapt their practices to be more culturally competent and better serve this increasingly diverse child population.¹²


Percentage of Population Identified as People of Color by Age, Rhode Island, 2019



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, 2019.

- ◆ **Young children in Rhode Island are more likely to be identified as People of Color than any other age group.** In 2019 in Rhode Island, 46% of children under age five were People of Color, compared with 35% of adults ages 25 to 44 and 12% of people age 65 or over.¹³
- ◆ **In 2019, 95% of children in Rhode Island were born in the U.S.** Twenty-seven percent of children in Rhode Island in 2019 lived in immigrant families (either they are foreign-born, or they have at least one parent who is foreign-born), which is almost the same as the U.S. rate of 25%. Nearly all (97%) Rhode Island children in immigrant families had parents who have been in the United States for more than five years.¹⁴
- ◆ **In Rhode Island in 2019, the median family income for children in immigrant families was \$71,500, compared to \$83,500 for children in non-immigrant families.**¹⁵ Between 2015 and 2019, 67% of Rhode Island's children living in poverty lived in families with U.S.-born parents.¹⁶
- ◆ **Limited English proficiency can be a barrier to employment opportunities, higher earnings, access to health care, and parental engagement with education.**¹⁷ In 2019, 12% of Rhode Island children in immigrant families lived in linguistically-isolated households, meaning no one age 14 or older speaks only English and no one age 14 or older who speaks a language other than English speaks English "very well."¹⁸

Table 5.

Child Population, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2010

CITY/TOWN	UNDER AGE 18 BY RACE AND ETHNICITY								2010 POPULATION UNDER AGE 18
	AMERICAN INDIAN AND ALASKA NATIVE	ASIAN	BLACK	HISPANIC OR LATINO	NATIVE HAWAIIAN AND OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER	SOME OTHER RACE	TWO OR MORE RACES	WHITE	
Barrington	8	163	22	154	0	13	141	4,096	4,597
Bristol	4	40	43	130	0	3	105	3,298	3,623
Burrillville	2	12	32	115	0	4	101	3,310	3,576
Central Falls	17	20	492	3,950	2	179	237	747	5,644
Charlestown	50	16	8	46	0	1	54	1,331	1,506
Coventry	19	77	64	312	0	14	219	7,065	7,770
Cranston	48	1,075	693	2,966	15	73	725	10,819	16,414
Cumberland	7	204	154	542	3	31	246	6,348	7,535
East Greenwich	5	174	26	106	0	6	105	3,014	3,436
East Providence	42	142	619	799	1	281	674	6,619	9,177
Exeter	7	10	7	66	0	3	25	1,216	1,334
Foster	1	16	14	24	0	0	18	913	986
Glocester	2	24	13	63	0	7	47	1,942	2,098
Hopkinton	15	16	7	48	0	3	66	1,690	1,845
Jamestown	1	8	4	36	0	2	45	947	1,043
Johnston	1	135	148	640	0	22	170	4,364	5,480
Lincoln	7	164	114	353	0	25	203	3,885	4,751
Little Compton	1	6	8	18	3	2	10	606	654
Middletown	10	124	159	295	3	20	262	2,779	3,652
Narragansett	32	16	30	91	0	9	93	1,998	2,269
New Shoreham	0	0	1	10	0	0	3	149	163
Newport	37	39	337	703	1	33	528	2,405	4,083
North Kingstown	31	85	75	289	2	6	236	5,598	6,322
North Providence	15	158	397	796	0	74	241	3,833	5,514
North Smithfield	2	33	15	114	0	4	47	2,241	2,456
Pawtucket	83	256	2,727	4,785	7	1,004	1,200	6,513	16,575
Portsmouth	11	58	53	157	1	13	166	3,537	3,996
Providence	375	2,095	6,682	23,166	15	494	2,070	6,737	41,634
Richmond	7	15	12	44	0	0	42	1,729	1,849
Scituate	4	29	8	54	0	3	29	2,145	2,272
Smithfield	6	41	46	117	0	9	69	3,337	3,625
South Kingstown	81	115	80	192	1	18	242	4,687	5,416
Tiverton	3	34	31	84	2	9	94	2,741	2,998
Warren	10	11	38	75	0	4	66	1,736	1,940
Warwick	38	457	275	1,048	2	39	601	13,365	15,825
West Greenwich	5	16	15	60	0	1	27	1,353	1,477
West Warwick	11	128	142	590	3	20	298	4,554	5,746
Westerly	52	127	68	252	2	10	208	4,068	4,787
Woonsocket	37	592	676	2,650	2	35	749	5,147	9,888
Four Core Cities	512	2,963	10,577	34,551	26	1,712	4,256	19,144	73,741
Remainder of State	575	3,768	3,758	11,389	39	762	6,206	123,718	150,215
Rhode Island	1,087	6,731	14,335	45,940	65	2,474	10,462	142,862	223,956

Source of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Redistricting File. 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.

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

References

- ¹ Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2019). *America's children: Key national indicators of well-being, 2019*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.
- ² 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.
- ^{3,14,15,18} The Annie E. Casey Foundation KIDS COUNT Data Center, datacenter.kidscount.org
- ⁴ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 and Census 2010.
- ⁵ U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2000 Redistricting Data Summary File. Table QT-PL.
- ^{6,7,8} U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010 Redistricting Data Summary File. Table QT-PL.
- ⁹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019. Table B05003.
- ¹⁰ Population Reference Bureau analysis of 2015-2019 American Community Survey PUMS data.
- ¹¹ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019. Table B16004.
- ¹² López, M., Hofer, K., Bumgarner, E., & Taylor, D. (2017). *Developing culturally responsive approaches to serving diverse populations: A resource guide for community-based organizations*. Retrieved February 11, 2021, from www.hispanicresearchcenter.org
- ¹³ U.S. Census Bureau, Population Estimates, 2019.
- ¹⁶ U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey 5-Year Estimates, 2015-2019. Table B05010.
- ¹⁷ Skinner, C., Wight, V. R., Aratani, Y., Cooper, J. L., & Thampi, K. (2010). *English language proficiency, family economic security, and child development*. New York, NY: National Center for Children in Poverty.