



Poverty in Rhode Island

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Interfaith Conference

May 13, 2015

Poverty In Rhode Island

2015 Poverty Guidelines



Single Adult: \$11,770

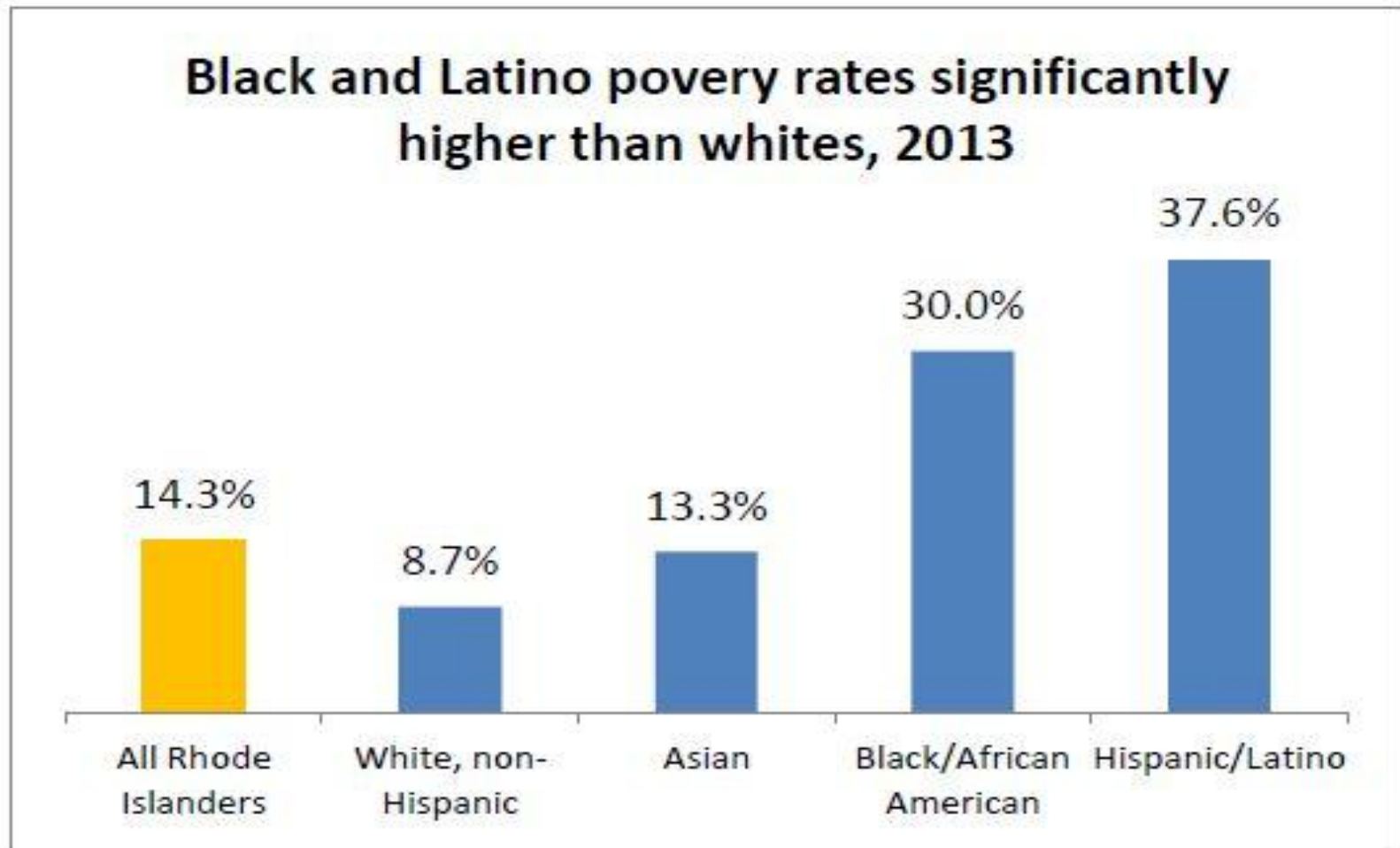


Family of 3: \$20,090

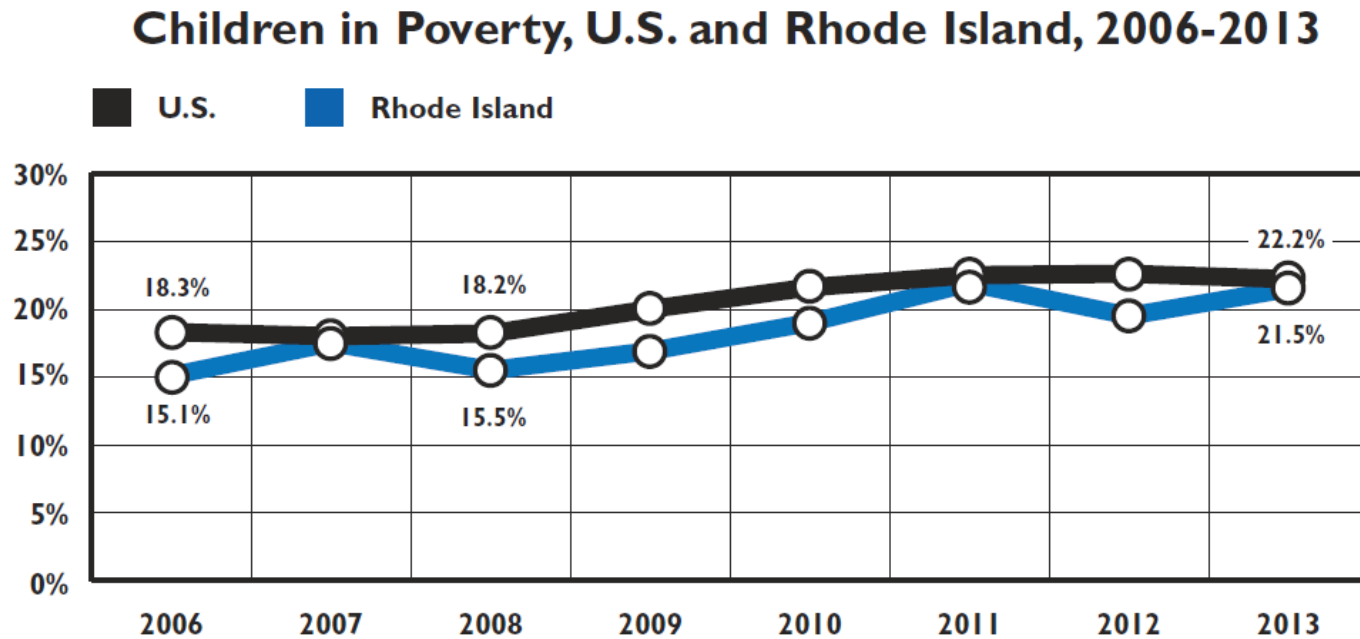


Family of 4: \$24,250

Poverty In Rhode Island



Children in Poverty

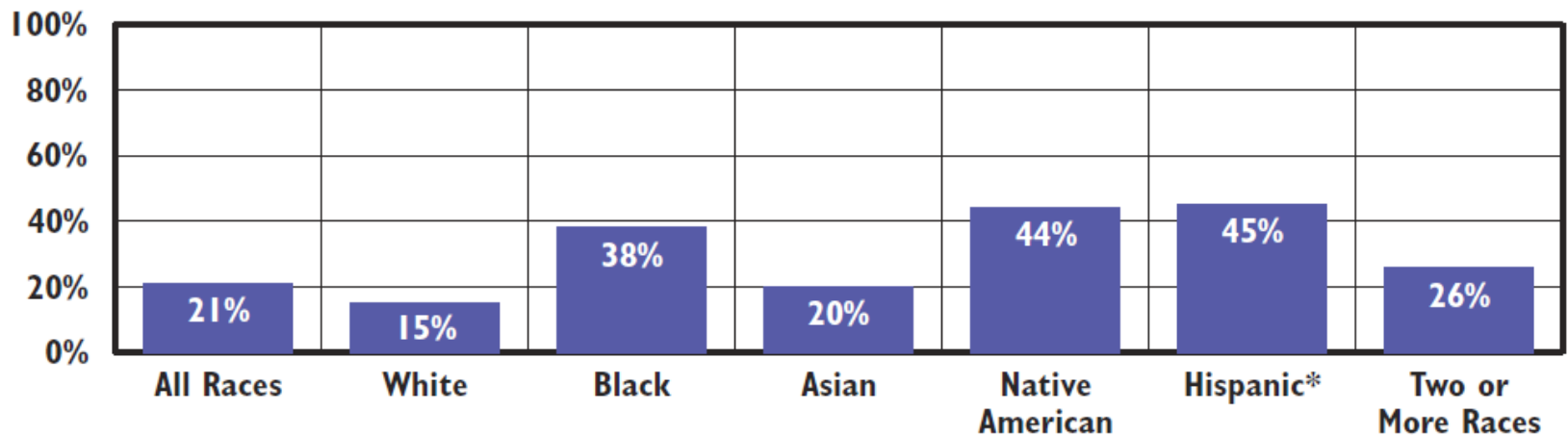


Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2006-2013. Table R1704.

- 1 in 5 Rhode Island children (almost 45,000 children) was living in poverty in 2013.
- Although there are signs that it is beginning to decline, Rhode Island's child poverty rate remains significantly higher than it was prior to the recession.

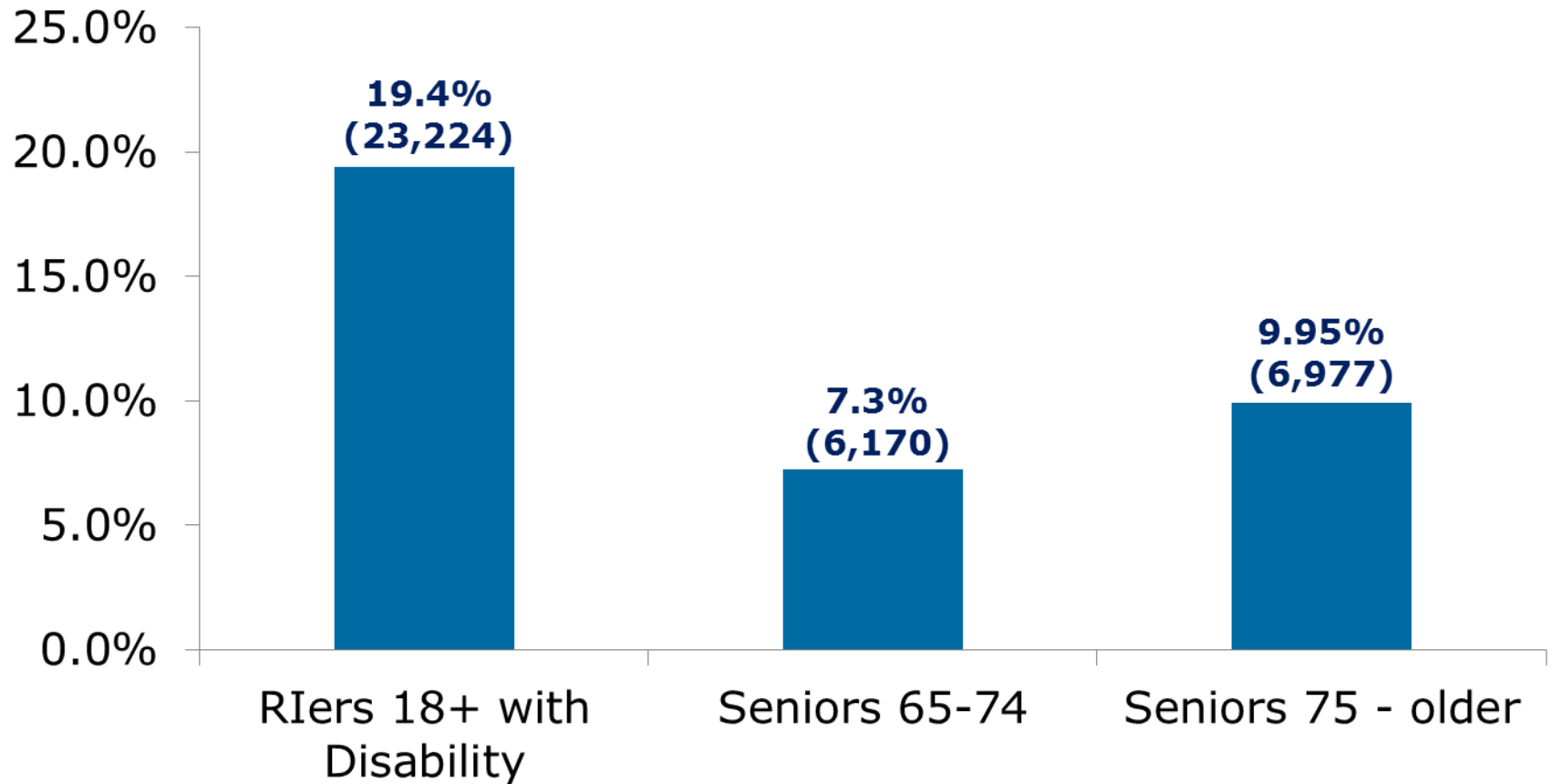
Childhood Poverty

Children in Poverty, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2011-2013



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2013. Tables S1701, B17020A, B17020B, B17020C, B17020D, B17020G, and B17020I. *Hispanic children may be included in any race category.

Poverty: Seniors and People with Disabilities



Who Lives in Poverty? People receiving “welfare”



Families receiving RI Works cash assistance
(67% below poverty)

Adults with disabilities and seniors who
receive Supplemental Security Income
(SSI) benefits (22% below poverty)



Who Lives in Poverty? Working Poor

Close to 1 in 4 of Rhode Island workers earn poverty level wages (23.8%)

- Minimum wage: \$18,720/yr
- Cashiers: \$19,260
- Retail Sales: \$22,500
- Janitors: \$26,333
- Dishwasher: \$19,240



Homelessness (2014)



Photo courtesy of RI Coalition for the Homeless

- 4,067 people stayed at our state's shelters
- 986 were children
 - 49% of children were under age 6
- 102 were seniors (65+)

Hunger (2014)



Photo courtesy of RI Community Food Bank

- In October 2014: 104,568 adults and 62,191 children receiving SNAP
- In 2014, food pantries and soup kitchens provided emergency food assistance to an average of 63,000 Rhode Islanders.

Health Coverage



In 2013

- 120,000 Rhode Islanders (11.6%) were uninsured
- Of those who had insurance –
 - 49% had insurance at their job
 - 12% had insurance through Medicaid
 - 5% had insurance through Medicare

Health Coverage - Children



- 2013: Rhode island ranked 16th best in country for children with health insurance
- 95% of RI children had health insurance
- Rlte Care enrollment has grown from 130,639 at the end of 2014 to 136,972 in April 2015.

Health Coverage – Affordable Care Act Year 2



- 57,000 adults with yearly income below \$16,243 are receiving Medicaid
- 30,000 Rhode Islanders purchased coverage through HealthSource RI
 - 88 % qualified for help paying for coverage

Interfaith Coalition 2015 Advocacy Platform



- All Rlers deserve a warm place to live, food on the table and adequate health care



- If you work you should not be poor



- Education is the way out of poverty

A Warm Place to live...



Zero: 2016

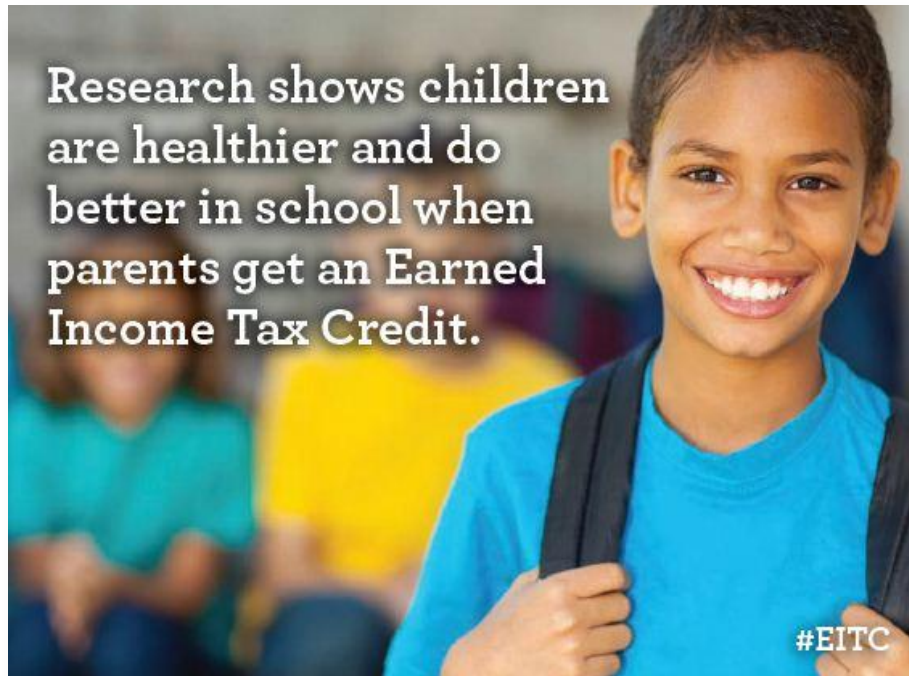


Contact:
www.rihomeless.org

- S-306 and H-5514 :
 - ✓ Provide \$2.17 m. for the Housing Resource Commission
 - ✓ Target available funds to housing rental subsidies
 - ✓ Provide \$12.5 m. for capital financing for affordable housing development

If you work you should not be poor

- Increase the state's Earned Income Tax Credit



Contact:
The Economic Progress
Institute
456-2752

Education is the way out of poverty...



Contact:
RI Kids Count

- Provide child care assistance for low-income parents who want to go to job training.
 - S-99; H-5348
- Increase access to high quality early childhood education including high quality child care, Pre-K, Head Start and Full-Day Kindergarten
 - Additional state and federal funds included in Governor's budget

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ECONOMIC PROGRESS REPORT May 2013



IMPROVING ECONOMIC SECURITY AND OPPORTUNITY FOR SINGLE-MOTHER HOUSEHOLDS IN RHODE ISLAND

Mother's Day is a time to show our appreciation to the women who raised us. In a growing number of households, mothers are doing this important job alone. State and federal policies can help to ensure that single mothers, many of whom are low-income, are able to rise out of poverty and experience upward mobility.

In Rhode Island, a handful of policy changes could improve the economic circumstances of female-headed households including:

- Improve the State's cash assistance program "Rhode Island Works" so that it is better able to prepare low-skilled workers for the workforce;
- Make modest expansions to the State's child care assistance program to mitigate the "cliff effect" and allow access to parents who want to improve their skills;
- Increasing the State's minimum wage to \$8.25;
- Enhance the State's earned income tax credit by increasing the amount of the refund that is available to working families;
- Repeal the Rite Care premium so that to cover both parents and children, families aren't required to pay two premiums – one for Rite Care for their children and one for health insurance for parents through the new Exchange.

In Rhode Island 46,900 families with children (36 percent) are now led by single parents.¹ More than three quarters of these families, 78 percent, are headed by women.² The majority of single mothers are working (82 percent).

More than two out of five (15,290 or 42 percent) single-mother families lived in poverty in Rhode Island in 2011), (the federal poverty level for a family of three was \$18,530 in 2011).³ The situation is even worse for Black and Hispanic single-mother households, who face alarming levels of poverty (50 percent and 58 percent respectively).⁴ See Chart 1.

Some of these poor single-mothers are receiving cash assistance, the benefits of which leave a family with income that is 66 percent below the federal poverty level. Others are working part-time, collecting unemployment benefits or earning minimum wage or poverty level wages.

State investments in work support programs like the Child Care Assistance and Rite Care Health Insurance go a long way to improve the economic security of single-mother households, while the Rhode Island Works program should serve



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