



RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT
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#RIFactbook

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Releases 29th Annual *Factbook* Focusing on the Status of Rhode Island's Children

Annual Factbook charts improvements and declines in the well-being of Rhode Island's children and families. The Factbook allows us to assess how Rhode Island effectively supports children's development and where we need to focus increased attention.

Providence, RI (May 10, 2023) –Rhode Island KIDS COUNT will release its twenty-ninth annual report on the well-being of Rhode Island's children and families on **Monday, May 15, 2023** from 8:00 - 10:00 a.m. at the Crowne Plaza Hotel in Warwick, RI. This is the first time the event will be held in person since the pandemic, and it's also the first *Factbook* release with Paige Clausius-Parks as our Executive Director.

Gathering in-person for the *Factbook* release

Over 400 people are registered to attend the *Factbook* release event, including Senator Reed, Congressman Cicilline, Congressman Magaziner, Lt. Governor Matos, Secretary of State Amore, Treasurer Diossa, Speaker Shekarchi, Senate President Ruggerio, Providence Mayor Smiley, Pawtucket Mayor Grebien, EOHHS Acting Secretary Novais, Medicaid Director Sousa, DCYF Acting Director Aucoin and Incoming Director Deckert, Dept of Health Acting Director Bandy, DHS Acting Director Brito, General Assembly members, policymakers, and community leaders from education, health, and human services.

The **2023 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT *Factbook*** charts improvements and declines in the well-being of Rhode Island's 209,785 children. Data are presented for the state and for each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns. The *Factbook* indicators are grouped into five interrelated categories: family and community, economic well-being, health, safety, and education. There are a total of 70 indicators of child well-being in the **2023 *Factbook***.

"The data and policy analysis from the *Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook* provides the base of information we need to advocate for policies and investments that will improve child outcomes," said **Paige Clausius-Parks, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT**. "This year, we examine how children and families are faring during the continuing workforce crisis as some of the protections put in place during the pandemic are beginning to be pulled back. We need to make important, cost-effective investments in child care, RI Pre-K, Head Start and Early Head Start, First Connections, RI Works, healthy school meals, mental health professionals in schools, support for Multilingual Learners, out-of-school-time programs, continuous health coverage for low-income children, and supports and services for foster youth. Working together we can ensure that children and families reach their full potential and lead the way for Rhode Island's future success."

"The *Factbook* allows us to take stock of how Rhode Island effectively supports our children's development and where we need to focus increased attention and efforts. Unacceptable gaps continue to exist between Children of Color and white children in nearly every *Factbook* indicator. The **2023 *Factbook*** identifies the history of racist policies that created current racial disparities. We call on lawmakers to prioritize equitable solutions that will eliminate disparities and ensure that children and families can move forward with the health, educational, and economic

supports they need to thrive. Rhode Island will not prosper if we continue to leave our Children of Color, low-income children, children with disabilities, Multilingual Learners, and immigrants behind. Their needs and voices should be at the forefront of policymaking,” she said.

Clausius-Parks concluded, “We are thrilled that this year’s *Factbook* includes poetry from Rhode Island children, youth, parents, and caregivers reflecting Rhode Island KIDS COUNT’s commitment to elevating the voices and talents of those most impacted by policy decisions.”

KEYNOTE REMARKS

Dr. John B. Diamond will give keynote remarks. [Dr. Diamond](#) is Professor of Sociology and Education Policy in Brown’s Department of Sociology and Annenberg Institute for School Reform. A sociologist of race and education, he studies the relationship between social inequality and educational opportunity, examining how educational leadership, policies, and practices operate through school organizations to shape students’ educational opportunities and outcomes. *Despite the Best Intentions: How Inequality Thrives in Good Schools*, his award-winning book with Amanda Lewis, examines how racial inequality thrives in racially diverse suburban schools.

Marco Antonio Lima will provide youth keynote remarks. He is graduating from Times2 Academy this June and planning to attend Brown University this fall. Marco is Co-Chair of the Board of Directors of Young Voices and has been Project Leader for the Young Voices-RIDE Multilingual Learner project. His work primarily centers around achieving a more equitable society for BIPOC individuals. In doing so he strives to uplift the voices of youth who experience challenges created as a byproduct of racism. Marco plans on majoring in Political Science, in order to continue his advocacy work.

PRESENTATION OF THE RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT FACTBOOK

Every year at the release event, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT presents the *Factbook* to a community leader or organization who is working to make things better for children and families. This year, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT will recognize and present a *Factbook* to **Rebekah Rosen-Gomez** and **Yolanda Macías**, co-founders of **Conexión Latina Newport**, and thank them for their leadership. The mission of [Conexión Latina](#) is to educate, inform, mobilize and advocate for all Hispanics in Newport, as well as advise and partner with social services, education and government agencies, on how they can best meet the needs of the Newport Hispanic Community.

The *2023 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook* also will be presented to Senator Jack Reed, Congressman David Cicilline, Congressman Seth Magaziner, Lt. Governor Sabina Matos, Speaker K. Joseph Shekarchi, Senate President Dominic Ruggiero, Secretary of State Gregg Amore, General Treasurer James Diossa, Pawtucket Mayor Donald Grebien, and Providence Mayor Brett Smiley.

Students from Trinity Academy for the Performing Arts will sing at the event.

Additions and updates to the *Factbook*

- All of the poetry in the *Factbook* is written by Rhode Islanders, including four poems written by Rhode Island children and youth
 - *Somebody Loves You!!!* — Anonymous
 - *Mother’s* — Arianna Pena Acosta
 - *In Hopes of Living the Dream* — Pauline Perkins-Moye
 - *The way they see us, the way we choose to be seen.* — Dariana Pena Acosta
 - *In Flight* — Latoya A. Watts
 - *My school Alphabet* — Yerick Martinez

- New charts:
 - *Children participating in the School Breakfast Program* — page 50
 - *Family home visiting program participation* — page 64
 - *Preterm birth infants by race/ethnicity* — page 68
 - *Preterm births by mother's education level* — page 69
 - *Asthma emergency department visits rates by age* — page 78
 - *Early Head Start enrollment* — page 118
 - *Head Start and RI Pre-K enrollment* — page 129
 - *Enrollment in programs with a high-quality BrightStars rating by funding source* — page 130
 - *Multilingual/English Learners meeting expectations in math and English language arts* — page 140

Key themes observed in the 2023 Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Factbook:

- Rhode Island has an increasingly diverse child population.
- We continue to see persistent disparities among Rhode Island’s children and families. We have to understand the historical and systemic racism that has resulted in these disparities in order to develop policies to dismantle the impacts of racism and eliminate these disparities.
- The continuing workforce crisis is limiting access to key programs and services for Rhode Island children and families.

Please see the accompanying Executive Summary for more detailed information on trends observed in the *Factbook* indicators.

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Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is a statewide children’s policy organization that works to improve the health, economic well-being, safety, education, and development of Rhode Island children, with a core focus on equity.