

Economic Well-Being Indicators

Children in Poverty

- In 2016, the federal poverty threshold was \$19,337 for a family of three with two children and \$24,339 for a family of four with two children.
- In 2016, nearly one in five (19.4%) children in Rhode Island (a total of 40,566 children) lived in poverty.
- Between 2011 and 2015, almost two-thirds (62%) of Rhode Island’s children living in poverty lived in just four cities - Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

Child Poverty Concentrated in Four Core Cities, Rhode Island, 2011-2015

CITY/TOWN	NUMBER IN POVERTY	PERCENTAGE IN POVERTY	NUMBER IN EXTREME POVERTY	PERCENTAGE IN EXTREME POVERTY
Central Falls	2,324	41.9%	929	16.8%
Pawtucket	5,299	32.7%	2,493	15.4%
Providence	15,609	39.0%	7,303	18.2%
Woonsocket	3,649	40.8%	1,775	19.8%
<i>Rhode Island</i>	<i>43,282</i>	<i>20.4%</i>	<i>19,432</i>	<i>9.2%</i>

Source: Population Reference Bureau analysis of 2011-2015 American Community Survey data.

- The four core cities also have substantial numbers of children living in extreme poverty, defined as families with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty level, or \$9,669 for a family of three with two children and \$12,170 for a family of four with two children in 2016.
- Between 2011 and 2015, 24.3% (16,045) of Rhode Island children under age six lived in poverty. Children under age six are at higher risk of living in poverty than any other age group. Exposure to risk factors associated with poverty, including inadequate nutrition, environmental toxins, crowded and unstable housing, maternal depression, trauma and abuse, lower quality child care, and parental substance abuse interferes with young children’s emotional, physical, and intellectual development.

Cost of Housing

- In 2016, the average cost of rent for a two-bedroom apartment in Rhode Island was \$1,288. The percentage of renters in Rhode Island who spent 30% or more of their household income on rent increased slightly from 47% in 2007 to 48% in 2015.
- In 2016, a worker would have to earn \$24.77 an hour and work 40 hours a week year-round to be able to afford the average rent in Rhode Island without a cost burden. This hourly wage is more than two and a half times the 2016 minimum wage of \$9.60 per hour.

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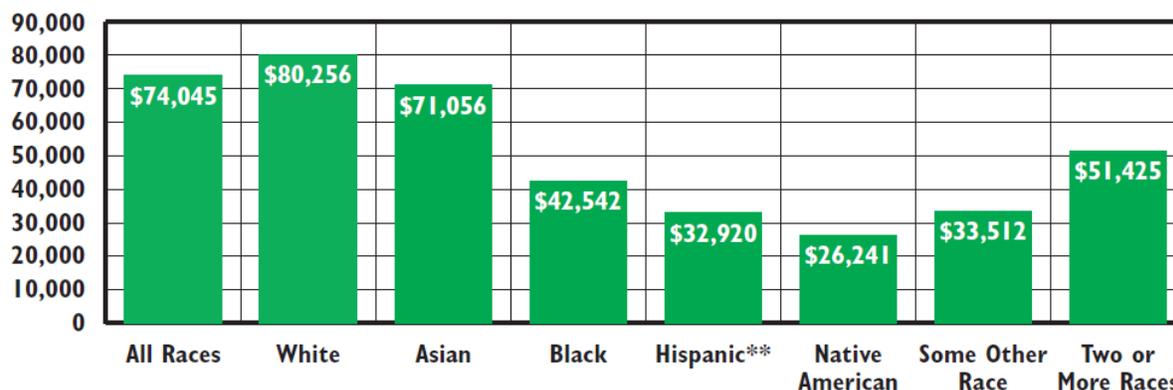
Homeless Children

- In 2016, 515 families with 966 children stayed at an emergency homeless shelter, domestic violence shelter, or transitional housing facility in Rhode Island. Children made up 23% of the people who used emergency homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing in 2016. Half (48%) of these children were under age six, not yet school age.
- During the 2015-2016 school year, Rhode Island public school personnel identified 1,057 children as homeless, up from 1,031 the year prior. Of these children, 64% lived with other families (“doubled up”), 25% lived in shelters, 10% lived in hotels or motels, and 1% were unsheltered.

Median Family Income

- In 2016, the median family income for Rhode Island families with their own children was \$70,108. Rhode Island had the 13th highest median family income nationally and the 4th highest in New England.
- The median income for White families in Rhode Island is higher than that of Asian families, and much higher than that of Black, Hispanic, and Native American families.

Median Family Income by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island, 2011-2015*



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Tables B19113, B19113A, B19113B, B19113C, B19113D, B19113F, B19113G, and B19113I. *Median Family Income by race and ethnicity includes all families because data for families with “own children” are not available by race and ethnicity. **Hispanics may be in any race category.

Paid Family Leave

- Rhode Island’s Temporary Caregiver Insurance (TCI) program, launched in 2014, provides up to four weeks of wage replacement benefits to eligible workers who need to take time off from work to bond with a newborn, adopted or foster child, or to care for a seriously ill family

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member. There were 5,882 approved claims for TCI during 2016 (up from 4,941 in 2015); 80% were to bond with a new child and 20% were to care for a seriously ill family member.

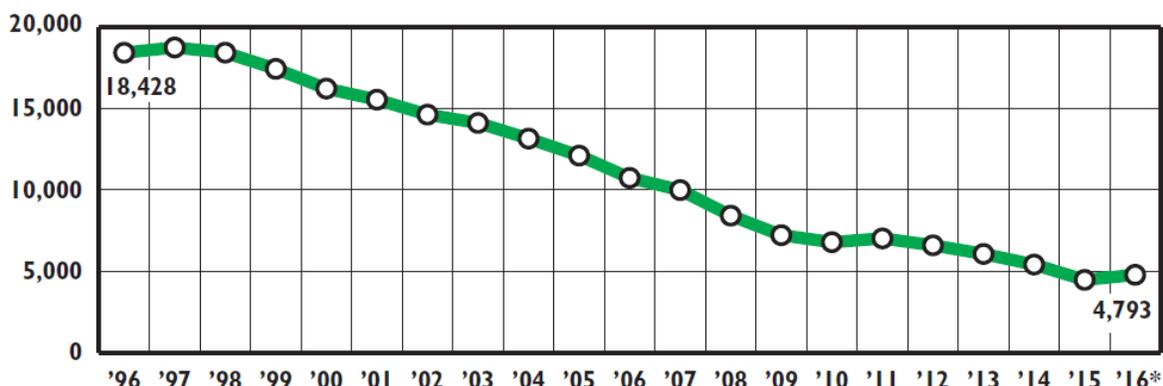
Children Receiving Child Support

- As of December 1, 2016, there were 73,797 children in Rhode Island’s Office of Child Support Services system. Among these children, 5,713 were enrolled in Rhode Island Works (RI Works). In Rhode Island, the first \$50 of child support paid on time and in full each month on behalf of a child receiving RI Works cash assistance goes to the custodial parent. The remainder is retained by the federal and state government as reimbursement for assistance received through RI Works.
- Non-custodial parents who pay regular child support are more involved with their children, providing them with emotional and financial support, and receipt of regular child support can have a positive effect on children’s academic achievement.

Children in Families Receiving Cash Assistance

- Since 1996, when the program began, the Rhode Island cash assistance caseload has been steadily declining. However, between 2015 and 2016, the caseload increased by 7%, from 4,479 to 4,793 families. The 2016 caseload increase may be due to efforts to address systems issues related to the difficult transition to the RI Bridges computer system and/or to the fact that the data represents a full month of enrollment rather than a single day.

Cash Assistance Caseload, Rhode Island, 1996–2016*



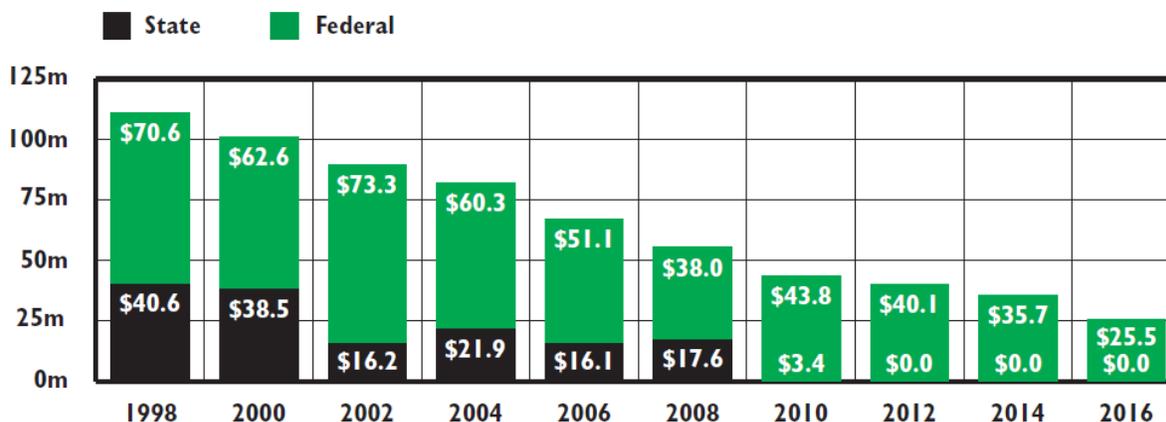
Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, InRhodes Database, December 1, 1996–2015 and RI Bridges Database, December 2016. Cases can be child-only or whole families and multiple people can be included in one case. *For 2016, the Rhode Island Department of Human Services provided enrollment for the month of December rather than December 1. Comparisons to earlier years should be made with caution.

- In 2016, 15,981 children in Rhode Island lived in extreme poverty, yet only 8,960 received cash assistance in December 2016.

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- In State Fiscal Year 2016, for the seventh year in a row, no state general revenue was allocated for cash assistance. The cash assistance program is now entirely supported by federal Temporary Assistance for Needy Families (TANF) block grant funds.

Rhode Island Cash Assistance Expenditures, State Fiscal Years 1998-2016

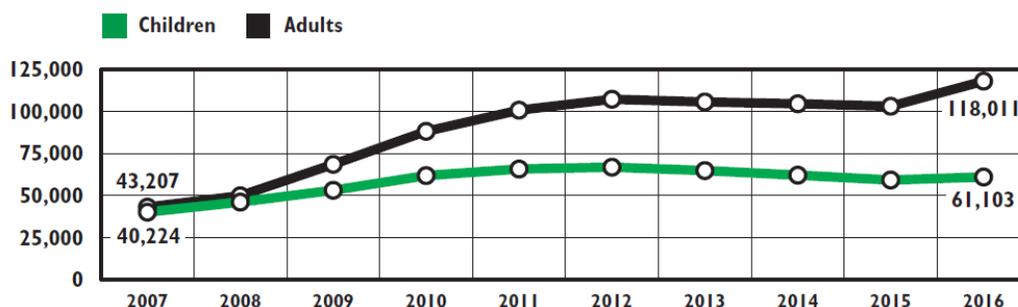


Sources: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, *Family Independence Program 2007 annual report*. (FY 1998-2000); House Fiscal Advisory Staff. (2004-2016). Budget as enacted: Fiscal Years 2005-2017. (FY 2002-2016). Fiscal years 1996-2014 are funds spent and FY 2016 is final budget.

Children Receiving SNAP Benefits

- From 2008 to 2012, the number of Rhode Islanders receiving SNAP benefits increased steadily. The number slowly declined since 2012 until increasing again in 2016. It is possible that the recent increase is due to efforts to avoid denying eligible SNAP recipients during the difficult transition to the RI Bridges computer system.

Participation in the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program, Children and Adults, Rhode Island, 2007-2016



Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, InRhodes Database, 2007-2016. Data represent children under age 18 and adults who participated in SNAP during the month of October.

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- In the U.S., more than 80% of SNAP recipients have gross incomes at or below the federal poverty level (\$20,160 for a family of three in 2016).
- In 2016, the average monthly SNAP benefit for a family of three in Rhode Island was \$373.

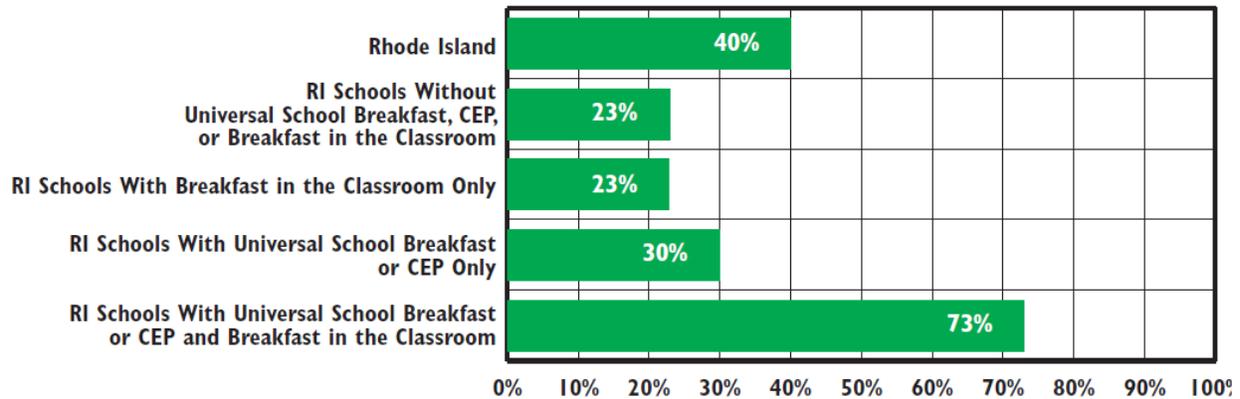
Women and Children Participating in WIC

- In September 2016, 23,244 women, infants, and children in Rhode Island were enrolled in the Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants and Children (WIC). The program served 54% of eligible women, infants, and children.
- WIC participation has been shown to reduce infant mortality, improve birth outcomes, enhance maternal and child dietary intake, reduce child abuse and neglect, improve child growth rates, boost cognitive development, and increase the likelihood of having a regular source of medical care.

Children Participating in School Breakfast

- During the 2015-2016 school year in Rhode Island, 51 low-income students participated in the School Breakfast Program for every 100 low-income students that participated in the School Lunch Program.

Low-Income Children Participating in the School Breakfast Program, Rhode Island, October 2016



Source: Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of School Food Services, Office of Statewide Efficiencies, October 2016.

- Universal School Breakfast Programs, which provide free breakfast to all children regardless of income, increase school breakfast participation by removing the stigma often associated with school breakfast and can reduce administrative costs.

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- The federal Community Eligibility Provision (CEP) allows schools and districts with 40% or more students identified as low-income or at-risk (i.e., homeless or in foster care) to provide free meals to all students and offers higher reimbursements.
- Making breakfast part of the school day is another proven strategy for increasing breakfast participation, reducing stigma, and increasing convenience.

Racial and Ethnic Disparities in Economic Well-Being

- In Rhode Island, a number of measures show that the economic well-being of children and families differs substantially by race and ethnicity.

Economic Well-Being Outcomes, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island

	WHITE	HISPANIC	BLACK	ASIAN	NATIVE AMERICAN	ALL RACES
Children in Poverty	15%	42%	33%	16%	63%	20%
Births to Mothers with <12 Years Education	8%	26%	16%	8%	25%	12%
Unemployment Rate	5%	9%	7%	NA	NA	5%
Median Family Income	\$80,256	\$32,920	\$42,542	\$71,056	\$26,241	\$74,045
Homeownership	65%	28%	31%	50%	23%	60%

Sources: *Children in Poverty* data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2015. Tables B17001, B17020A, B17020B, B17020C, B17020D & B17020I. *Maternal Education* data are from the Rhode Island Department of Health, Center for Health Data and Analysis, Maternal and Child Health Database, 2011-2015. *Unemployment Rate* data are from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, Local Area Unemployment Statistics, 2016. *Median Family Income* data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2015, Tables B19113, B19113A, B19113B, B19113C, B19113D & B19113I. *Homeownership* data are from the U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2011-2015, Tables B25003, B25003A, B25003B, B25003C, B25003D & B25003I. Hispanics also may be included in any of the race categories. All Census data refer only to those individuals who selected one race. NA indicates that the rate was not calculated because the number was too small to calculate a reliable rate.