



**RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT**  
ONE UNION STATION  
PROVIDENCE, RHODE ISLAND 02903  
401/351-9400 • 401/351-1758 (FAX)

**Contact:**

Contact: Katherine Chu, Communications Coordinator  
401.351.9400, Ext. 11 / [kchu@rikidscount.org](mailto:kchu@rikidscount.org)

## **Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Makes Data Local at 'Providence Data in Your Backyard' Event**

*Decreases in teen birth rate and infants born at risk,  
evidence-based family home visiting programs can help*

*Providence Children and Youth Cabinet working to address  
chronic absence and school climate*

**Providence, RI (July 23, 2015)** - Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Policy Analyst Stephanie Geller presented data from the *2015 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook* to an audience of community leaders and policy makers. The *Providence Data in Your Backyard* presentation included highlights of improvements and declines in the well-being of children and youth in Providence. The data presentation was brought to the community in partnership with the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet and was held on **Thursday, July 23, 2015 from 9:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m. at Everett Company Stage School, 9 Duncan Avenue, Providence.**

Geller welcomed participants, saying, "We are excited to partner with the Providence Children and Youth Cabinet to bring local data to Providence City, District, and community leaders. The *Providence Data in Your Backyard* event is a great way to examine trends in child and family outcomes, identify successes and challenges, and discuss how the community can work together to improve outcomes for all Providence children and families."

### **Providence has high rates of poverty among children**

Although childhood poverty exists in every Rhode Island community, it is particularly concentrated in the core cities of Providence, Central Falls, Pawtucket, and Woonsocket. Children in poverty, especially those who experience poverty in early childhood and for extended periods, are more likely to have physical and behavioral health problems, experience difficulty in school, become teen parents, and earn less or be unemployed as adults. In 2014, the federal poverty threshold was \$19,073 for a family of three with two children and \$24,008 for a family of four with two children. More than one-third (39.7% or 16,049) of children in Providence live in poverty.

### **Improvements in infant outcomes**

The teen birth rate is on the decline across the nation, in Rhode Island, and in Providence. The teen birth rate is measured as the number of births per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19. While the teen birth rate is higher in Providence than the state as a whole, it is moving in the right direction. The most recent teen birth rate in Providence was 31.1 per 1,000 girls from 2009-2013, compared to 48.0 per 1,000 girls from 2005-2008.

Babies born to unmarried teen mothers without a high school diploma are called *infants born at highest risk*, due to the multiple challenges they face. These babies

are more likely to grow up in poverty, are more likely to experience child abuse and neglect, are less likely to perform well in school, and are less likely to complete high school than their peers. In 2014, 3% of Providence babies were born at highest risk, down from 9% in 2009.

Evidence-based family home visiting programs are designed to reach at-risk young children and their families at home and provide parenting education to foster healthy, safe, and stimulating environments for young children. Children in at-risk families who participate in high-quality home visiting programs have improved language, cognitive, and social-emotional development and are less likely to experience child abuse and neglect. As of October 2014, there were 500 families enrolled in Maternal, Infant, and Early Childhood Home Visiting programs in Rhode Island and 214 of these families lived in Providence.

### **Need for safe and affordable housing**

In 2014, the average rent for a two-bedroom apartment, including utilities, in Providence was \$1,126. Families are considered to have a cost burden if they spend more than 30% of their monthly income on housing costs. Yet, in Providence, a family of three living at the poverty level would have to spend more than twice that amount (68% of their income) on rent. Lack of adequate and affordable housing puts safe, healthy, well-maintained homes out of reach for many families.

According to Geller, “The high cost of housing in Providence relative to the incomes of many families may be one of the reasons that Providence children experience negative health outcomes often associated with unhealthy housing. Providence has the highest asthma hospitalization rate in the state and the second highest rate of lead exposure in the state.”

### **Working to improve attendance and school climate**

Children need to be in school to learn, and to remain engaged in school in order to succeed. Students are chronically absent if they miss 18 or more days of school per school year. Students who are chronically absent have lower levels of achievement and are more likely to drop out of school. Providence’s chronic absence rates in grades K-3 (23%), middle school (26%) and high school (41%) are all among the highest in the state and well above the state average.

Similar to students who are chronically absent, students who are suspended from school are more likely to experience disengagement and drop out of school. Although suspensions are decreasing in Providence, the majority of suspensions in the 2013-14 school year were out-of-school (6,296 out-of-school and 2,022 in-school).

Rebecca Boxx, Director of the Children and Youth Cabinet, said, “We are always pleased to partner with Rhode Island KIDS COUNT to present Providence Data in Your Backyard. This year, we are especially excited to link this important data to citywide, resident priorities established through the *Our Children, Our City* initiative. The Mount Hope Neighborhood played a critical role in *Our Children, Our City* and we are happy to return to the Everett Company Stage School to reflect on what we have accomplished. In the past year, the Children and Youth Cabinet has focused on reducing chronic absenteeism, improving school climate, and providing social and emotional supports for children and their families. This data will inform and guide our coalition's efforts in the upcoming year to improve outcomes for all of Providence's children and youth.”

# Rhode Island Kids Count 2015 Factbook

## Indicators of Child Well-Being

### Snapshot of Providence, Rhode Island



Census-Based Indicators		1990	2000	2010		
Child population	Providence	37,972	45,277	41,634		
	Rhode Island	225,690	247,822	223,956		
Children in single-parent families	Providence	NA	NA	46%		
	Rhode Island	NA	28%	31%		
		2009-2013				
Median family income	Providence	\$32,119	\$33,154			
	Rhode Island	\$66,156	\$67,904			
Children living in families below the federal poverty threshold	Providence	40.5%	39.7%			
	Rhode Island	16.9%	19.5%			
Economic Well-Being		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Cost of rent	Providence	\$1,086	\$1,048	\$1,120	\$1,136	\$1,126
	Rhode Island	\$1,165	\$1,150	\$1,176	\$1,154	\$1,172
Children in families receiving cash assistance	Providence	9%	13%	12%	10%	10%
	Rhode Island	4%	5%	5%	4%	4%
Children receiving SNAP benefits	Providence	22,933	23,803	24,034	23,238	22,226
	Rhode Island	59,652	63,783	64,866	63,971	60,982
WIC participation (% income-eligible children participating)	Providence	78%	76%	74%	76%	75%
	Rhode Island	72%	68%	69%	66%	65%
School Breakfast Program participation (% income-eligible children participating)	Providence	34%	51%	56%	63%	60%
	Rhode Island	28%	36%	35%	39%	39%
Health		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Children under age 19 receiving Medical Assistance	Providence	31,458	31,756	31,957	31,787	33,156
	Rhode Island	92,701	93,691	95,248	96,215	104,532
Infants born at highest risk	Providence	7%	7%	5%	5%	3%
	Rhode Island	4%	4%	3%	3%	2%
		2005-2009	2006-2010	2007-2011	2008-2012	2009-2013
Births to mothers with less than a high school diploma	Providence	30%	30%	29%	27%	25%
	Rhode Island	16%	16%	16%	15%	14%
Women with delayed prenatal care	Providence	22.1%	22.9%	20.9%	19.2%	17.2%
	Rhode Island	14.9%	15.6%	15.0%	13.7%	12.8%
Preterm births	Providence	13.7%	13.7%	13.0%	12.8%	12.7%
	Rhode Island	11.8%	11.6%	11.1%	10.9%	10.7%
Infants born with low birthweight	Providence	9.3%	9.3%	9.1%	9.1%	8.8%
	Rhode Island	8.0%	8.0%	7.9%	7.8%	7.6%
Newborn infants exclusively breastfed	Providence	49%	51%	52%	53%	55%
	Rhode Island	58%	59%	61%	62%	64%
Asthma hospitalization rate (per 1,000 children under age 18)	Providence	2.3	4.0	3.9	3.7	3.3
	Rhode Island	1.9	2.2	2.2	2.1	1.9
Teen birth rate (per 1,000 girls ages 15 to 19)	Providence	46.6	40.6	38.3	34.6	31.1
	Rhode Island	30.1	27.0	25.5	23.3	21.0
Safety - Child Welfare		2010	2011	2012	2013	2014
Child abuse and neglect indicated victims rate (per 1,000 children)	Providence	19.1	18.4	20.1	18.0	16.9
	Rhode Island	13.3	14.0	13.9	14.0	14.5
Children with incarcerated parents rate (per 1,000 children)	Providence	21.7	23.0	22.1	22.2	25.7
	Rhode Island	10.4	10.9	11.0	11.2	11.8
Domestic violence incidents with children present	Providence	33%	33%	36%	52%	NA
	Rhode Island	28%	29%	31%	40%	NA

\*Estimate has a high margin of error due to small sample size.

For more information, please contact Rhode Island KIDS COUNT - (401) 351-9400 - [www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org)

<b>Safety - Juvenile Justice</b>		<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Youth Violence (# of juvenile arrests for assault and weapons offenses)	Providence	297	252	208	233	NA
	Rhode Island	885	797	739	660	NA
Youth at the Training School	Providence	332	259	222	183	160
	Rhode Island	790	641	578	482	482
<b>Education</b>		<b>2010</b>	<b>2011</b>	<b>2012</b>	<b>2013</b>	<b>2014</b>
Children enrolled in Early Head Start	Providence	123	154	163	149	156
	Rhode Island	508	519	522	503	527
Children enrolled in Head Start	Providence	790	777	768	641	720
	Rhode Island	2,471	2,432	2,432	2,040	2,295
Licensed early learning centers	Providence	49	47	47	46	47
	Rhode Island	330	309	314	309	311
Licensed family child care homes	Providence	415	376	338	335	323
	Rhode Island	688	639	585	581	552
Licensed early learning centers participating in BrightStars	Providence	22%	26%	32%	83%	83%
	Rhode Island	7%	12%	15%	78%	78%
Licensed family child care homes participating in BrightStars	Providence	10%	14%	25%	91%	86%
	Rhode Island	8%	12%	21%	82%	77%
Children receiving child care subsidies (subsidy use by child residence)	Providence	2,809	2,976	2,941	2,845	3,278
	Rhode Island	7,622	7,749	7,868	7,696	9,060
Children enrolled in State Pre-K	Providence	NA	NA	54	72	90
	Rhode Island	NA	NA	144	234	306
Children receiving preschool special education services	Providence	NA	NA	486	441	461
	Rhode Island	NA	NA	2,927	2,565	2,786
Public school enrollment (total enrollment)	Providence	23,539	23,518	23,872	23,827	23,907
	Rhode Island	143,928	142,854	142,481	142,008	141,959
Public school enrollment (% low-income)	Providence	83%	81%	83%	80%	80%
	Rhode Island	43%	44%	46%	47%	47%
Children enrolled in full-day kindergarten	Providence	100%	100%	100%	100%	100%
	Rhode Island	60%	64%	68%	70%	81%
Students who are English Language Learners	Providence	16%	17%	19%	21%	23%
	Rhode Island	5%	6%	6%	7%	7%
Student mobility rate	Providence	25%	25%	24%	21%	21%
	Rhode Island	14%	14%	14%	13%	13%
4 <sup>th</sup> graders at or above reading proficiency level	Providence	47%	46%	45%	52%	NA
	Rhode Island	69%	71%	69%	71%	NA
4 <sup>th</sup> graders at or above math proficiency level	Providence	42%	42%	43%	39%	NA
	Rhode Island	63%	65%	64%	63%	NA
8 <sup>th</sup> graders at or above reading proficiency level	Providence	44%	52%	56%	49%	NA
	Rhode Island	74%	77%	77%	74%	NA
8 <sup>th</sup> graders at or above math proficiency level	Providence	25%	31%	34%	34%	NA
	Rhode Island	54%	58%	58%	57%	NA
11 <sup>th</sup> graders at or above math proficiency level	Providence	12%	11%	15%	14%	NA
	Rhode Island	33%	30%	34%	36%	NA
Schools identified for intervention	Providence	NA	NA	57%	54%	59%
	Rhode Island	NA	NA	10%	10%	12%
Chronic early absence in grades K-3	Providence	22%	22%	20%	19%	23%
	Rhode Island	13%	12%	11%	12%	12%
Chronic absence in high school	Providence	45%	46%	41%	37%	41%
	Rhode Island	25%	25%	25%	24%	24%
Suspension rate (per 100 students)	Providence	53	48	49	35	35
	Rhode Island	30	31	30	23	22
High school graduation rate	Providence	68%	66%	65%	71%	71%
	Rhode Island	76%	77%	77%	80%	81%