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Despite Rise in Median Family Income, Rhode Island Child Poverty Level Remains High

Rhode Island's median family income rose from \$61,605 in 2014 to \$70,108 in 2015

19.4% of Rhode Island's children lived in poverty in 2015

Providence, RI (September 15, 2016) – Rhode Island KIDS COUNT released new data from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2015 American Community Survey (ACS) today. The ACS provides national and state-level data on poverty and family income.

Poverty Data

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.

The poverty data are based on the federal poverty threshold, which was an annual income of \$19,096 for a family of three with two children and \$24,036 for a family of four with two children in 2015.

According to the ACS, in 2015:

- 19.4% – an estimated 40,566 – of Rhode Island's children lived in poverty. (In 2014, 19.8% of Rhode Island's children lived in poverty.)
 - 7.6% – an estimated 15,981 – of Rhode Island's children lived in extreme poverty
 - Extreme poverty is defined as families with incomes below 50% of the federal poverty level, or \$9,548 for a family of three with two children and \$12,018 for a family of four with two children in 2015.
- Rhode Island ranks 24th in the nation — and last in New England — for the percentage of children in poverty.
- Rhode Island's median family income rose from \$61,605 in 2014 to \$70,108 in 2015.

“Despite the considerable increase in median family income, Rhode Island’s percentage of children living in poverty has remained the same. Nearly one in five – more than 40,000 – Rhode Island children are poor,” said Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. “Because living in poverty negatively impacts children now and far into their future, Rhode Island needs to invest in two-generation strategies for entire families to succeed — such as high-quality early learning opportunities and an excellent preschool through college education system for children, and job training for their parents.”

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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.

All Children Under 18 Living Below Poverty: 2014-2015

Source: American Community Survey, 2014 and 2015

	2015 MOE*		2014	MOE*
United States	20.7	0.2	21.7	0.0
Alabama	26.6	1.0	27.7	1.1
Alaska	15.2	1.8	15.8	2.2
Arizona	24.7	1.0	25.6	0.8
Arkansas	27.2	1.4	26.4	1.1
California	21.2	0.3	22.7	0.4
Colorado	14.7	0.8	15.4	0.9
Connecticut	14.5	1.1	14.9	1.1
Delaware	19.4	2.7	17.7	2.2
District of Columbia	25.6	3.4	26.0	3.6
Florida	23.1	0.6	23.8	0.7
Georgia	24.5	0.8	26.3	0.8
Hawaii	14.2	1.6	14.7	1.5
Idaho	17.8	1.5	18.8	1.6
Illinois	19.1	0.7	20.2	0.6
Indiana	20.9	0.9	21.5	0.9
Iowa	14.8	0.9	15.3	1.0
Kansas	17.2	1.1	17.7	1.0
Kentucky	25.9	1.1	26.2	1.0
Louisiana	28.4	1.2	27.9	1.1
Maine	17.4	1.9	19.1	1.8
Maryland	13.2	0.8	13.0	0.8
Massachusetts	14.8	0.7	15.2	0.8
Michigan	22.4	0.7	22.6	0.6
Minnesota	13.1	0.7	14.9	0.8
Mississippi	31.3	1.5	29.4	1.4
Missouri	20.2	0.9	21.1	0.9
Montana	19.4	2.4	18.5	1.7
Nebraska	16.8	1.2	16.2	1.3
Nevada	20.9	1.5	22.0	1.6
New Hampshire	10.7	1.3	13.0	1.7
New Jersey	15.6	0.7	15.9	0.6
New Mexico	28.6	1.6	29.5	1.8
New York	22.0	0.6	22.6	0.6
North Carolina	23.5	0.7	24.3	0.8
North Dakota	12.1	1.6	14.8	1.9
Ohio	21.3	0.7	22.9	0.6
Oklahoma	22.2	1.0	22.4	0.8
Oregon	20.3	1.3	21.6	1.1
Pennsylvania	19.4	0.6	19.4	0.6
Rhode Island	19.4	2.3	19.8	2.2

South Carolina	24.0	1.0	27.1	1.2
South Dakota	18.1	1.7	18.0	1.5
Tennessee	24.2	1.0	26.2	1.0
Texas	23.0	0.5	24.6	0.4
Utah	12.9	0.9	13.3	1.1
Vermont	13.3	2.3	15.8	2.1
Virginia	14.8	0.6	15.8	0.7
Washington	15.5	0.8	17.5	0.8
West Virginia	25.2	1.8	24.7	1.5
Wisconsin	16.4	0.8	18.4	0.7
Wyoming	13.2	2.9	12.8	1.9

* MOE = Margin of Error

Compiled by Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, September 2016. U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2014 - 2015. Table R1704.