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Rhode Island Maintains Commitment to Children's Health Insurance Coverage

96.6% of Rhode Island children had health insurance coverage in 2015, Rhode Island ranks 15th in the nation

Providence, RI (September 13, 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 health insurance coverage.

Health Insurance Data

Children who have health insurance coverage are healthier and have fewer preventable hospitalizations. They are more likely to receive preventive medical and dental care, be screened for the achievement of developmental milestones, obtain needed timely treatment, have access to prescription medications, and miss fewer days of school. Uninsured children are less likely to have a medical home and have fewer visits to doctors and dentists.

Today's ACS health insurance data are for 2015, the second year for which the federal *Affordable Care Act (ACA)* was fully implemented. Data includes private coverage and public coverage, including Medicaid/CHIP (known as RItE Care in Rhode Island).

According to the ACS, in 2015:

- 96.6% of Rhode Island's children had health insurance coverage, and 3.4% (an estimated 6,936) Rhode Island children lacked health insurance coverage.
- 4.8% of all U.S. children lacked health insurance coverage.
- Rhode Island ranks 15th in the nation and 5th in New England for children's health insurance coverage.
- Of the children in Rhode Island in 2015, 65.8% were enrolled in private coverage through their parents' employer-sponsored health plan or purchased directly and 36.9% were covered by Medicaid/RItE Care.
 - *These values/figures do not add up to 100%, because some children may have more than one type of insurance coverage.*

“These results show Rhode Island’s commitment to the health of our children,” said Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. “Rhode Island continues to have over 96% of children covered by health insurance, and we’re proud of this good news. Access to high-quality health insurance coverage results in better health outcomes for children. Rhode Island is fortunate to have the RIte Care program, which has received the top ranking in the nation for a high-quality children’s health insurance program.”

“While our rate of covered children hasn’t changed in the last year, our national ranking has slipped from 7th to 15th – due to the accelerated progress of other states. We’re now fifth in New England. As we see in other states, it’s possible to get even closer to crossing the finish line of universal children’s coverage. With Rhode Island’s new integrated eligibility system going live this week, we have new opportunities to close the coverage gap and connect all children and families to coverage.”

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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.