

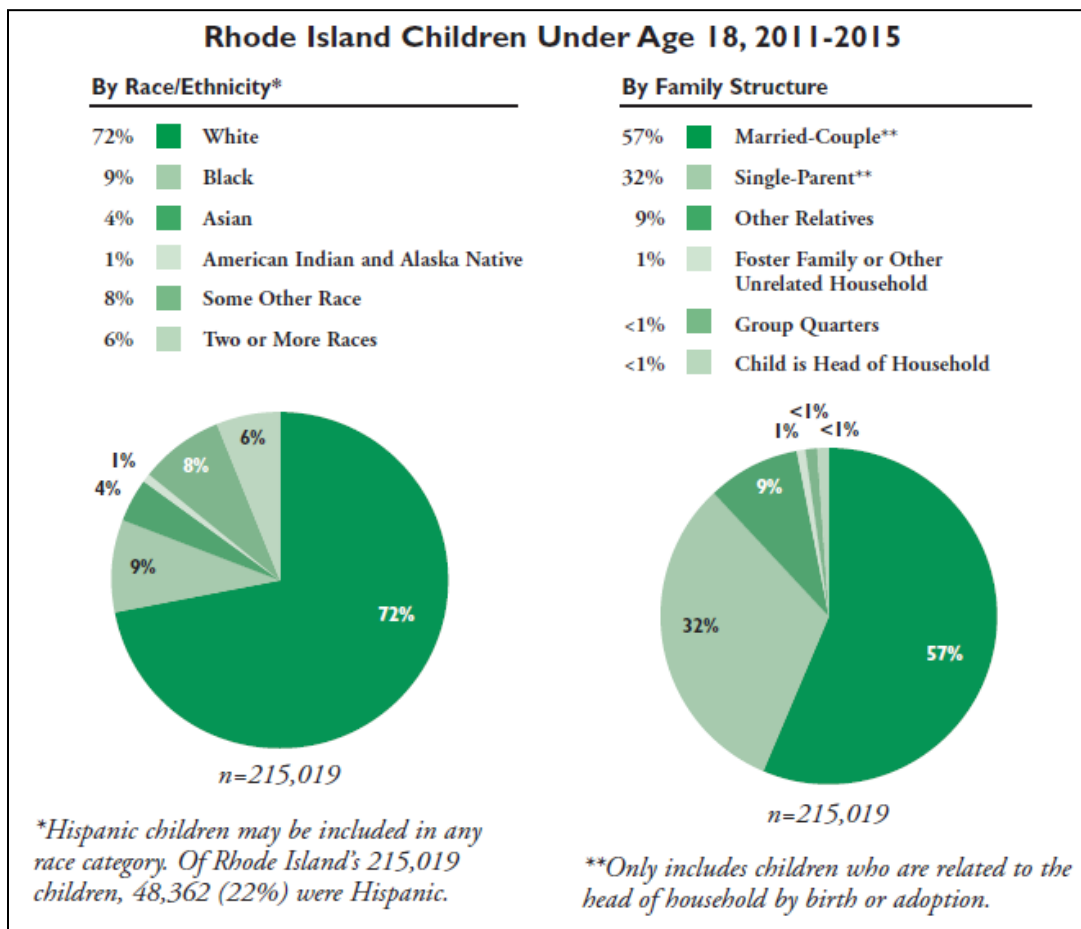
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY OF THE 2017 RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT FACTBOOK

DEMOGRAPHIC INFORMATION AND TRENDS

RI birth rates and child population continue to decline.

- Between 2000 and 2015, Rhode Island’s child population decreased by 15% from 247,822 to 211,875.
- The total number of babies born in Rhode Island to Rhode Island women declined 15% (from 12,010 to 10,212 births) between 2007 and 2016.
- Rhode Island had the fifth lowest birth rate in the U.S. in 2015.

A snapshot of children in Rhode Island, 2011-2015:



- Between 2011 and 2015, there were 119,896 households with children under age 18, representing 29% of all households in Rhode Island, the same as the previous five-year period.

ECONOMIC WELL-BEING

- **Improvements in median family income, employment**
 - In 2015, the median family income for Rhode Island families with their own children was \$70,108. This is 14% higher than the 2014 median family income of \$61,605.
 - While Rhode Island had one of the nation's highest unemployment rates in 2014 (7.7%), but in 2016 the state's unemployment rate had decreased to 5.4% (closer to the U.S. rate of 4.9%).
 - Between 2011 and 2015, 73% of Rhode Island children under age six had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 65%.

- **Despite improvements on some economic indicators, child poverty remains relatively unchanged. Poverty is related to every KIDS COUNT indicator, and has a negative impact on children both *immediately* and in the *long-term*.** 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 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.
 - Nearly one in five (19.4%) children *under age eighteen* in Rhode Island (a total of 40,566 children) lived in poverty in 2015, compared with 19.8% in 2014.
 - Between 2011 and 2015, 24.3% (16,045) of Rhode Island children *under age six* lived in poverty.
 - While there are children in poverty in every community in Rhode Island, almost two-thirds (62%) of Rhode Island's children living in poverty lived in the four core cities of Central Falls, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket between 2011-2015.
 - Between 2011 and 2015, 63% of Native American, 42% of Hispanic, and 33% of Black children in Rhode Island lived in poverty, compared to 16% of Asian children and 15% of White children.

- **Rhode Island children continue to experience homelessness.**
 - During the 2015-2016 school year, Rhode Island public school personnel identified 1,057 children as homeless, up from 1,031 the year before.
 - In 2016, 515 families with 966 children (compared with 482 families with 988 children in 2015) stayed in emergency homeless shelters, domestic violence shelters, and transitional housing in Rhode Island. Children made up 23% of the people who used these services, and 48% of these children were under age six, not yet school age.

- **More Rhode Island children are accessing nutritious summer meals.**
 - During the summer, many low-income children lose access to the free and reduced price meals they rely on during the school year. During July 2015, 193,940 lunches were served through Summer Nutrition Programs, an 18% increase over the previous year.

- **Disparities persist in educational attainment, which is strongly associated with economic well-being.**
 - Rhode Islanders who have achieved a Bachelor's degree or higher have nearly double the wages compared to those who have only completed high school. More than one in three Hispanic and more than one in four Black adults in Rhode Island lack a high school diploma, compared to one in ten White adults.

- Between 2011 and 2015 in Rhode Island, adults without a high school diploma were nearly twice as likely to be unemployed as those without a Bachelor's degree.
- By 2020, 71% of all jobs in Rhode Island will require postsecondary training beyond high school.
- **More Rhode Island families are using Rhode Island's TCI/Paid Family Leave program.**
 - Paid Family Leave reports on the number of approved claims to bond with a new child or to care for a seriously ill family member through Rhode Island's Temporary Caregiver Insurance Program (TCI). Paid family leave provides job security and consistent income so that working parents can care for a new child or any worker can care for a seriously ill family member.
 - There were 5,882 approved claims for TCI during 2016 (up from 4,941 in 2015 and 3,870 in 2014, when the TCI was launched).
- **EITCs are reaching working families in Rhode Island.**
 - Earned Income Tax Credits (EITCs) are federal and state tax reductions and wage supplements for low- and moderate-income working families. EITCs reduce child poverty and increase work incentives for families struggling to make ends meet.
 - In 2016, Rhode Island increased the state EITC from 12.5% to 15% of the federal EITC. In 2016, approximately 84,000 Rhode Island working families and individuals received a total of \$190 million in EITC tax credits for tax year 2015.

HEALTH

- **Health coverage among Rhode Island children continues to rise – 96.6% have coverage.**
 - Rhode Island ranks fifteenth best in the U.S. for health insurance coverage, with 96.6% of children having health insurance and 3.4% uninsured.
 - As of October 2016, 1,877 children were enrolled in commercial coverage in the individual market of HealthSource RI, a 14% increase from 2015 (1,651).
- **Maternal education levels impact birth outcomes – women with lower education levels have worse birth outcomes.**

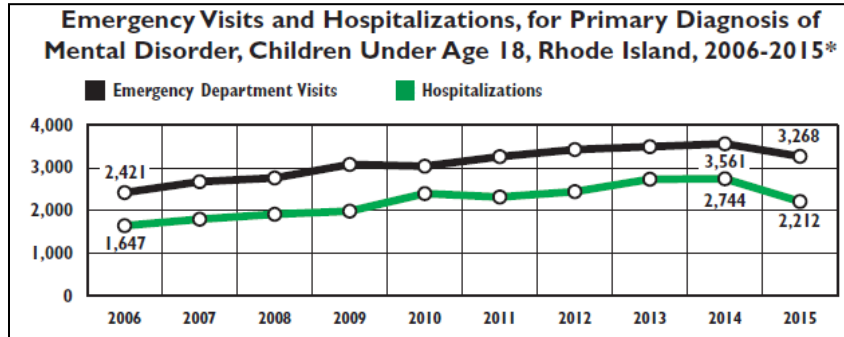
Between 2011 and 2015 in Rhode Island, women with a high school degree or less were more likely to:

 - Have delayed prenatal care (18.0%, compared to 10.0% of women with more education)
 - Have preterm births (9.4%, compared with 8.1% of those with higher education levels).
 - Have a low birthweight baby (8.3%, compared to 6.3% of babies born to women with higher education levels).
 - Have a baby that died within the first year of life (the infant mortality rate for babies born to mothers with a high school degree or less was 5.8 per 1,000 live births, compared to 4.8 for those with more education.)
- **Teen birth rates continue to decline in the U.S. and Rhode Island, but disparities still exist.**
 - In 2015, the birth rates for U.S. teens (22.3 births per 1,000 teen girls) and Rhode Island teens (14.3 births per 1,000 teen girls) were the lowest ever recorded.
 - Despite declines among all racial and ethnic groups, disparities still exist in teen birth rates. In Rhode Island between 2011 and 2015, the teen birth rates for Hispanic (42.6) and Black (30.2) teens were higher than the rates of their White (10.5) and Asian (9.6) peers.
- **The number of babies with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome continued to rise**
 - In Rhode Island in 2015, 114 babies were diagnosed with Neonatal Abstinence Syndrome (NAS), a rate of 103.8 per 10,000 births.
 - This is up from 97 babies (92.0 per 10,000 births) in 2014, and nearly triple the rate of 37.2 a decade ago, in 2006.
 - Eighty-seven percent of babies born with NAS between 2011 and 2015 in Rhode Island were born to White mothers, 84% had Medicaid coverage, and 36% lived in the four core cities.
- **Rhode Island has high rates of childhood and adolescent immunizations**
 - In 2015, Rhode Island's rate of children ages 19 months to 35 months that were fully immunized (77%) was above the national average (72%), and sixth best in U.S.
- **Breastfeeding rates among Rhode Island mothers has steadily increased**
 - The percentage of newborn infants exclusively breastfed in Rhode Island has increased from 61% between 2007 and 2011 to 69% between 2011 and 2015.
 - Rhode Island ranks #1 best in the U.S. in the percentage of babies born at Baby-Friendly hospitals, which recognizes breastfeeding support and promotion by birth facilities.
 - In 2014, Rhode Island also established state-level licensure for International Board Certified Lactation Consultants, which are state-certified and trained lactation consultants that

provide comprehensive lactation support and counseling for pregnant and postpartum women.

- Rhode Island also has enacted legislation that (1) prohibits job discrimination based on pregnancy, childbirth, and related medical conditions and requires employers to make reasonable accommodations for workers for conditions related to pregnancy and childbirth, including breastfeeding, (2) provides mothers with the explicit right to breastfeed in public places, and (3) establishes a state paid family leave program, which may support breastfeeding initiation and duration.

- **Mental health: Fewer hospitalizations, persistent need for more services**

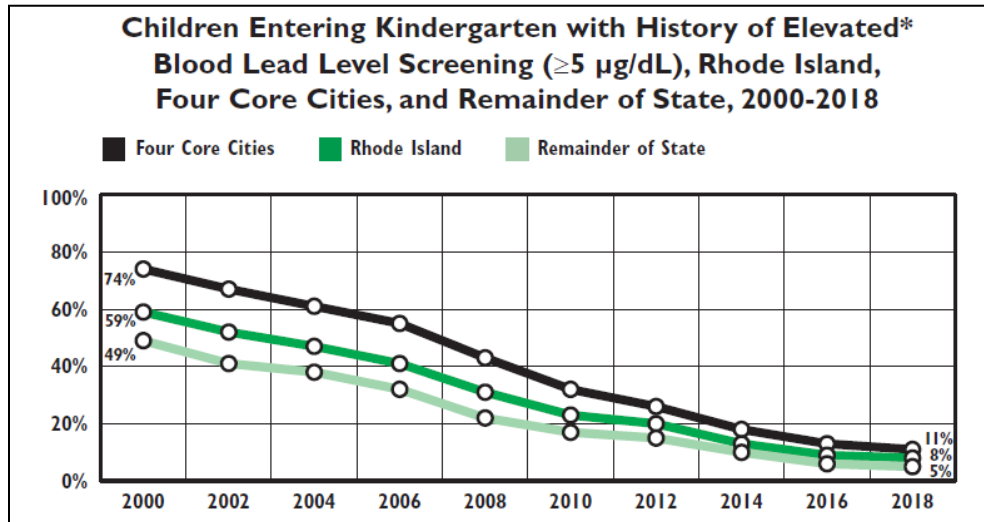


- In 2015, there were 3,268 *emergency department visits* and 2,212 *hospitalizations* of Rhode Island children under age 18 with a primary diagnosis of mental disorder at Bradley, Butler, Hasbro Children’s Hospital, Memorial, and Newport Hospitals. This is a decline from 3,561 emergency department visits and 2,744 hospitalizations in 2014. (Note-These data are for ED visits and hospitalizations, not children. Children may visit EDs and/or be hospitalized more than once.)
- In SFY 2016, 983 children under age 19 enrolled in Medicaid/RItE Care were hospitalized due a mental health related condition (up from 595 in 2015) and 1,690 children had a mental health related emergency department visit (up from 1,269 in 2015).
- Rhode Island has the eighth highest self-reported suicide attempt rate among high school students in 2015 among ranked states.

- **While access to preventive dental care is improving, costly emergency care is still an issue.**

- Fifty-one percent (61,843) of the children who were enrolled in RItE Care, RItE Share, or Medicaid fee-for-service on June 30, 2016 received a dental service during State Fiscal Year (SFY) 2016, up from 44% the year before.
- The number of children receiving dental services has increased by 43% since 2006, when RItE Smiles launched, from 41,541 to 61,843.
- The consequences of untreated dental disease can be costly.
 - Between 2011 and 2015, an average of 656 children and youth under age 21 were treated *every year* for a primary dental-related condition in Rhode Island *emergency departments*. (These data are for children with all insurance types, not just Medical Assistance.)
 - Between 2011 and 2015, an average of 71 children and youth under age 19 were *hospitalized each year* with a diagnosis that included an oral health condition. (These data are for children with all insurance types, not just Medical Assistance.)

- **Lead poisoning continues to decline in Rhode Island.**
 - Lead poisoning is a preventable childhood disease. Lead exposure, even at very low levels, can cause irreversible damage.
 - The number of children with elevated blood lead levels has been steadily declining in all areas of Rhode Island over the past two decades.
 - Compared to the remainder of the state, children living in the four core cities are at an increased risk for lead exposure.



- The number of children under age six who were *significantly lead poisoned* (has a single venous blood test result of $\geq 15 \mu\text{g/dL}$) has decreased by 78% over the past 12 years, from 349 in 2005 to 76 in 2016.
- **Cigarette use among Rhode Island youth has declined and is lowest in U.S. for middle school and high school students**
 - Cigarette use has reached record low levels among U.S. middle and high school students.
 - In 2015, 7% of Rhode Island middle school students reported *ever* trying cigarette smoking (down from 16% in 2007) and 1% reported smoking cigarettes in the past 30 days.
 - Rhode Island had the #1 lowest current cigarette use rate for both middle school (1%) and high school students (5%) in the nation among ranked states in 2015.
- **While cigarette use is down, students report using electronic vapor products.**
 - In Rhode Island in 2015, 16% of *middle* school students reported ever using an electronic vapor product and 8% reported current use in the past 30 days.
 - In 2015, 41% of Rhode Island *high* school students reported ever using an electronic vapor product and 19% reported use in the past 30 days.

SAFETY

While child maltreatment reports to DCYF increased in 2016, the number of completed investigations and indicated investigations declined.

- Between 2015 and 2016, while the total number of unduplicated child maltreatment reports *increased* by 4%, the number of completed investigations *decreased* by 8%, and the number of indicated investigations *decreased* by 7%.
- In 2016, the number (5,935) and percent (40%) of reports with completed investigations reached their lowest levels in a decade.
- Of the 14,942 maltreatment reports made to the child abuse hotline in 2016, 53% (7,948) were classified as “information/ referrals,” up from 47% in 2015. Information/referrals are reports made to the Child Protective Services Hotline that contain a concern about the well-being of a child but do not meet the criteria for an investigation.

Rhode Island’s overall child abuse and neglect rate declined in 2016.

- In Rhode Island in 2016, the child abuse and neglect rate was 12.3 per 1,000 children, down from a rate of 13.8 per 1,000 children in 2015.
- The three communities with the highest child and abuse rates in 2016 were Woonsocket (29.2), Central Falls (25.7), and Pawtucket (22.1).

Fewer children and youth were in out-of-home placements, more were in relative foster care homes, and fewer were in congregate care placements such as residential facilities or group homes.

- As of December 31, 2016, there were 1,922 children under age 21 in the care of DCYF who were in out-of-home placements; compared to 2,084 children in December 2015.
- The percentage of children in out-of-home placement who were in a relative foster care home increased from 34% on December 31, 2015 to 35% on December 31, 2016.
- On December 31, 2016, 355 children were living in a residential facility or group home, a decline of 11% from 400 children on December 31, 2015.

More children and youth in the care of DCYF were adopted.

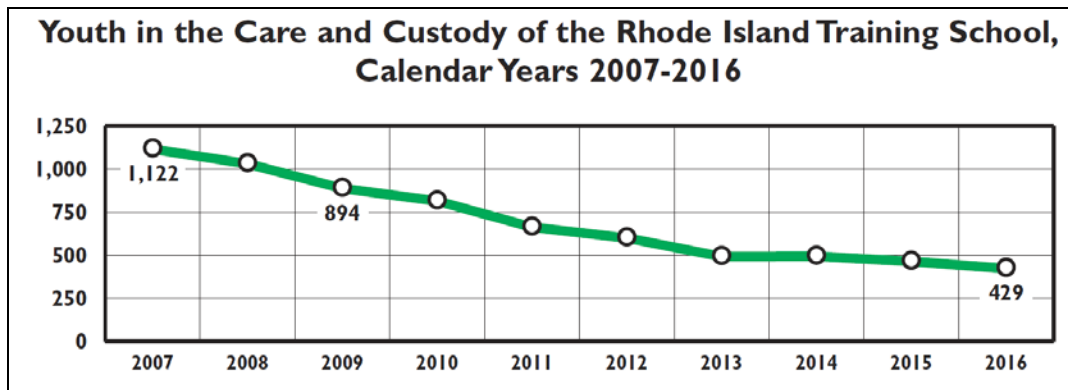
- During 2016, 265 children in the care of DCYF were adopted in Rhode Island, up from 231 in 2015.

More youth aged out of foster care, exiting without a permanent placement.

- The number of Rhode Island youth who exited foster care never having gained permanency through reunification, adoption, or guardianship increased from 94 during FFY 2015 to 142 during FFY 2016.

The number of youth in the care of custody of the Rhode Island Training School continues to decline.

- Between 2007 and 2016, the annual total number of youth in the care and custody of the Training School at any point during the year declined from 1,122 to 429.
- The population of youth at the Training School has declined by 52% since 2009, the year after the population was capped at 148 boys and 12 girls on any given day.



- **Racial and Ethnic Disparities Remain:** Youth of color are disproportionately more likely than White youth to be detained or sentenced to the Training School. During 2016, Black youth made up 28% of youth at the Training School, while making up 6% of the child population.
- **Statutory Minimum Age for Juvenile Incarceration:** Rhode Island is one of 12 states that has no statutory minimum age for holding children in secure confinement and no minimum age of delinquency jurisdiction. During 2016, there were 3 children ages 11-12 and 74 youth ages 13-14 held at the Training School.
- **Short lengths of stay:** Many youth are detained for short periods of time and released at their first court appearance (usually the following business day). Of the 552 discharges from the Training School during 2016, 27% resulted in stays of two days or less, 29% resulted in stays of three days to two weeks, and 44% resulted in stays of more than two weeks.

EARLY CHILDHOOD AND K-16 EDUCATION

Child Care in Rhode Island: Trends in quality, affordability, and subsidies

- In Rhode Island, the average cost of full-time child care for an infant in a child care center is more than the average tuition and fees at public colleges.
 - Using the federal affordability guideline that families should spend no more than 7% of their income on child care, a Rhode Island family would need to earn at least \$145,314 annually to afford the average yearly cost for a three-year-old at a licensed center.
- Subsidies through the RI Child Care Assistance Program help low-income families access higher-quality child care programs that support children's development and learning.
 - In September 2016, there were 9,122 child care subsidies in Rhode Island, down 6% from 9,684 in December 2015 and down 36% from the 2003 peak.
 - Rhode Island is one of only 12 states that do not have a tiered child care rate system with higher payments going to higher quality child care programs to incentivize and support quality.
- BrightStars is Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System for child care and early learning programs. Programs participating in BrightStars receive a star rating and develop a quality improvement plan across six quality domains.
 - Children who attend high-quality programs score higher on tests of language and cognitive skills and demonstrate stronger social and emotional development than children who attend low-quality programs.
 - As of July 2016, 11% of children participating in the Rhode Island Child Care Assistance Program ages birth through 12 were enrolled in a program with a high-quality BrightStars rating of four or five stars.

More low-income Rhode Island children are benefitting from public preschool through Head Start and the State Pre-K Program.

- In October 2016, Rhode Island Head Start programs served 2,063 children, 36% of the estimated 5,749 income-eligible three- and four-year old children and 9% of all children ages three and four. There were 339 eligible children on the waiting list at that time.
- Many states, including Rhode Island, have increased investments in Pre-K, recognizing that children who attend high-quality preschool make gains that can persist into later school years.
- As of the 2016-2017 school year, there were 56 State Pre-K classrooms in Rhode Island, with a total of 995 children enrolled.
- In the 2016-2017 school year, 676 (68%) of the children enrolled in State Pre-K were low-income. Including the 1,305 low-income four-year-olds enrolled in Head Start in Rhode Island, approximately 38% of the state's low-income four-year-olds were enrolled in a public preschool program (State Pre-K or Head Start).

All Rhode Island kindergarteners now attend full-day programs, which increase academic and social skills.

- As of 2016-2017, 100% of the kindergarteners in Rhode Island were in full-day classrooms.
- Children in full-day kindergarten make significant gains in early reading, math, and social skills, when compared with children in half-day kindergarten.

Rhode Island has seen gains in third-grade reading proficiency

- In 2016, 40% of Rhode Island third graders met expectations on the *Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC)* English language arts assessment, up from 37% of students in 2015.
- There were gains in reading among many student subgroups for third graders, including:

SUBGROUP	2015	2016	CHANGE
Male Students	33%	35%	+2%
Female Students	43%	45%	+2%
English Language Learners	8%	13%	+4%
Non-English Language Learners	40%	43%	+2%
Students With Disabilities	11%	10%	-1%
Students Without Disabilities	42%	44%	+2%
Low-Income Students	21%	25%	+4%
Higher-Income Students	53%	56%	+3%
White Students	48%	49%	+1%
Asian Students	48%	49%	+1%
Black Students	22%	26%	+4%
Hispanic Students	18%	24%	+6%
Native American Students	17%	15%	-2%
Central Falls	13%	16%	+3%
Pawtucket	22%	31%	+9%
Providence	14%	23%	+9%
Woonsocket	24%	23%	-1%
ALL STUDENTS	37%	40%	+2%

Change calculations may reflect rounding.

Rhode Island has seen gains in math skills across grade levels

- From 2015 to 2016, the percentage of students meeting expectations for math on the *PARCC* increased for *third, fourth, fifth, sixth, and seventh* grades.
- In 2016, 44% of Rhode Island *third* graders met expectations in math, up from 36% in 2015.
- There were gains in math among many student subgroups of third graders, including:

SUBGROUP	2015	2016	CHANGE
Male Students	36%	44%	+8%
Female Students	37%	44%	+7%
English Language Learners	11%	17%	+6%
Non-English Language Learners	39%	47%	+7%
Students With Disabilities	12%	15%	+3%
Students Without Disabilities	41%	48%	+7%
Low-Income Students	21%	29%	+9%
Higher-Income Students	52%	61%	+9%
White Students	46%	53%	+7%
Asian Students	52%	58%	+6%
Black Students	22%	29%	+7%
Hispanic Students	18%	28%	+10%
Native American Students	13%	17%	+4%
Central Falls	12%	21%	+9%
Pawtucket	25%	39%	+14%
Providence	14%	25%	+11%
Woonsocket	21%	25%	+4%
ALL STUDENTS	36%	44%	+7%

Change calculations may reflect rounding.

More children receive special education services once they reach K-12 school than do while they are preschool age.

- In June 2016, there were 3,050 children ages 3 to 5 receiving *preschool* special education services, 8% of all preschool-age children in Rhode Island.
- As of June 2016, there were 19,953 students ages six to 21 (14% of all *K-12 students*) receiving special education services through Rhode Island public schools.

There are many English Language Learners in Rhode Island, especially in the early grades.

- In Rhode Island, kindergarten through third grades have high levels of English Language Learner (ELL) students. In 2015-2016, 12% of all kindergartners in Rhode Island (1,085) were ELL students, compared to 7% of all K-12 students (9,990).
- In the 2015-2016 school year, ELL students in Rhode Island public schools spoke 94 different languages. The majority (79%) spoke Spanish, 6% spoke Creole, 3% spoke Portuguese, 2% spoke Arabic, 2% spoke Chinese, and 10% spoke other or multiple languages.

There were improvements in chronic absence across most grade levels.

- During the 2015-2016 school year in Rhode Island, the following percentages of students were chronically absent (i.e., absent 18 days or more):
 - 14% of kindergarten students, 11% of first graders, 10% of second graders, 10% of third graders, and 15% of middle school students.
 - This is an improvement from the 2014-2015 school year, when 18% of kindergarten students, 14% of first graders, 12% of second graders, 11% of third graders, and 16% of middle school students were chronically absent.
- The chronic absence rate (26%) remained unchanged for high school students between 2014-2015 and 2015-2016.

Suspensions are down.

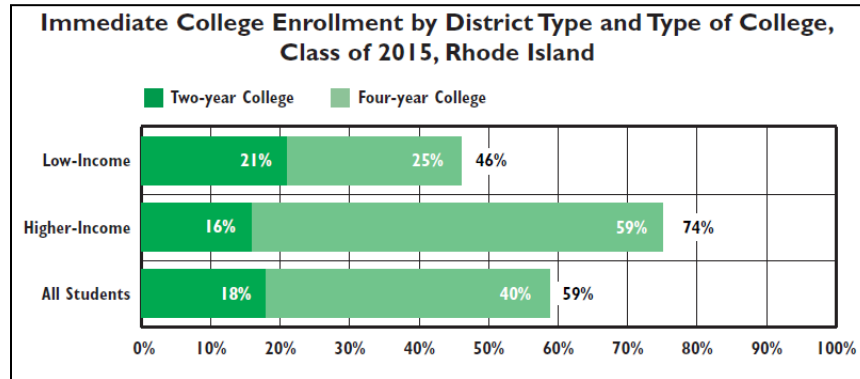
- Suspension usually does not deter students from misbehaving and may actually reinforce negative behavior patterns. Suspended students are more likely than their peers to experience academic failure and drop out of school. Children who are suspended early in their school years are more likely to be suspended again in future years.
- In the 2015-2016 school year, there were 24,480 disciplinary actions that resulted in in-school or out-of-school suspensions, a rate of 17 per 100 students. This is down from 26,677 disciplinary actions in the 2014-2015 school year, when the rate was 19 per 100 students.
- In 2016, the Rhode Island General Assembly passed a law that restricts the use of out-of-school suspensions to situations when a child's behavior poses a demonstrable threat that cannot be dealt with by other means and requires school districts to identify any racial, ethnic, or special education disparities and to develop a plan to reduce such disparities.
- Since the 2010-2011 school year, the number of out-of-school suspensions in Rhode Island has decreased by 52%. During the 2015-2016 school year, out-of-school suspensions accounted for just under half (48%) of disciplinary actions.
- In 2015-2016 in Rhode Island, there were 106 kindergartners who were suspended at least one day, 45% of whom had a developmental delay or disability.

High school graduation rates continue to increase.

- The Rhode Island four-year graduation rate for the Class of 2016 was 85%, up from 70% for the Class of 2007.

There are large gaps in college access between low- and higher-income students.

- 59% of all Rhode Island students who graduated from high school in 2015 enrolled in college.
- Among 2015 high school graduates, 25% of low-income students immediately enrolled in a four-year college, compared to 59% of higher-income students.

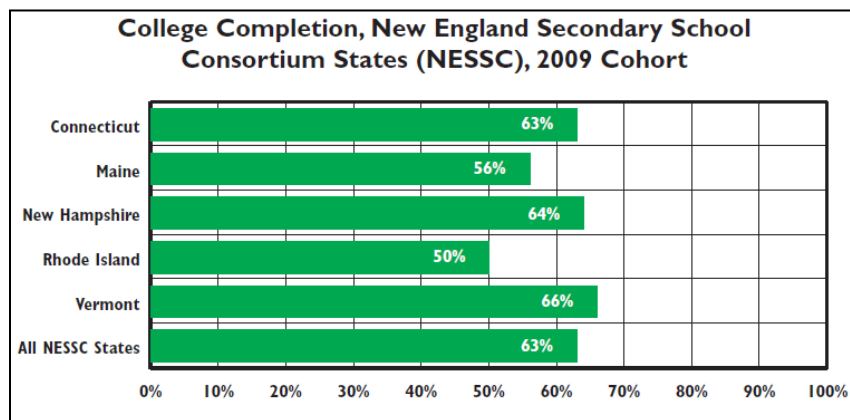


College affordability is an issue for Rhode Island students.

- While the highest income students must pay or finance an amount equal to 17% of their family income to attend a four-year college, the lowest income students must pay or finance an amount equal to 76% of their families’ annual income. Low-income students attend college at much lower rates, attend colleges of lower quality, and struggle to pay off the debt they accrue.

Rhode Island’s college completion rate is the lowest of all of the states in the New England Secondary School Consortium.

- In Rhode Island, there are large gaps in college completion between low-income and higher-income students, with 29% of low-income students completing college within six years, compared to 59% of higher-income students.



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.