

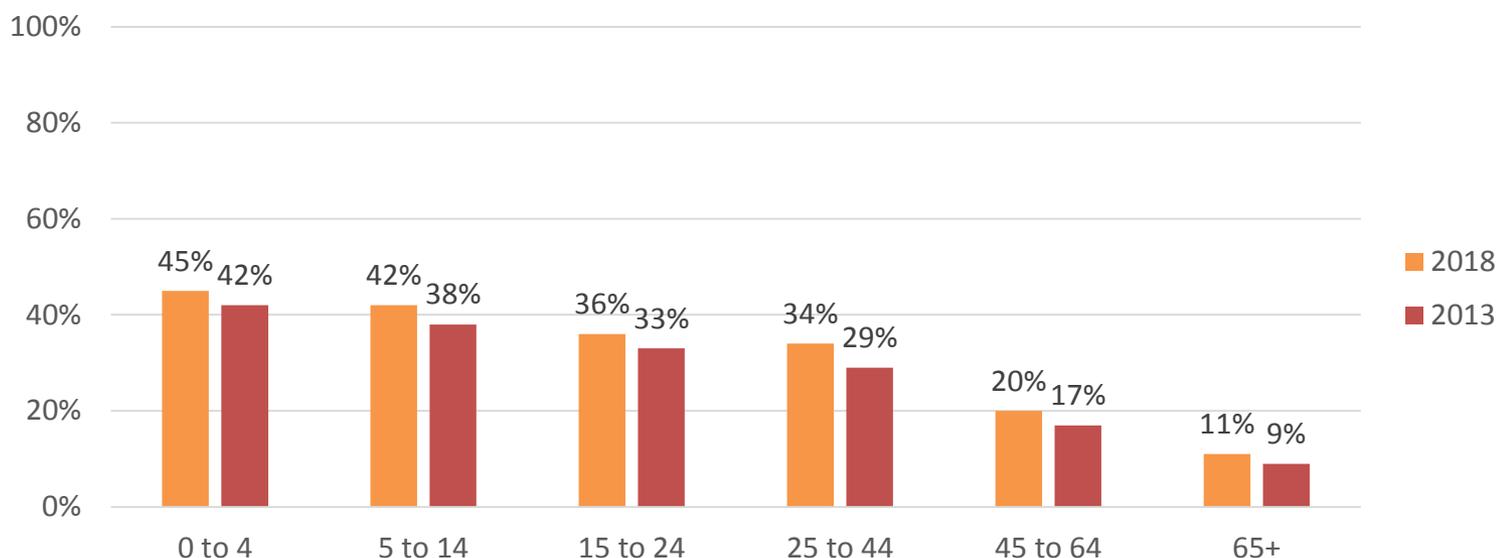
Celebrating Young Children



Progress & Potential for Children Birth through Age 8
January 2020

Young Children Are More Diverse

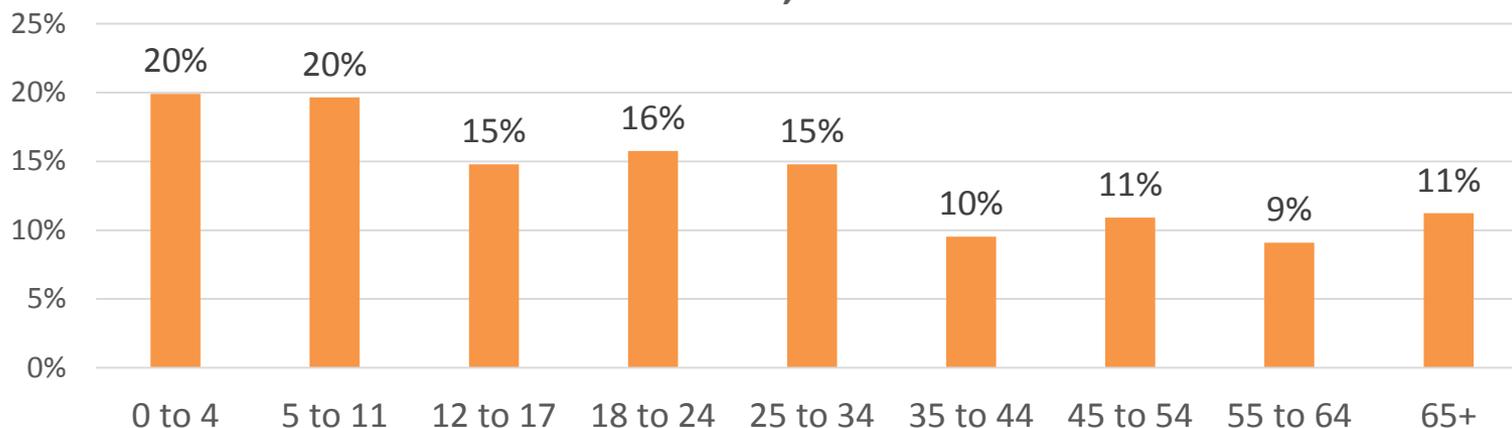
Percent of Population Who Are People of Color By Age,
Rhode Island, 2018



- The younger you are the more likely you are to be a person of color.
- The proportion of the population who are people of color continues to grow in Rhode Island and the U.S.
- As of 2018, more than half of the U.S. children under 15 were people of color.

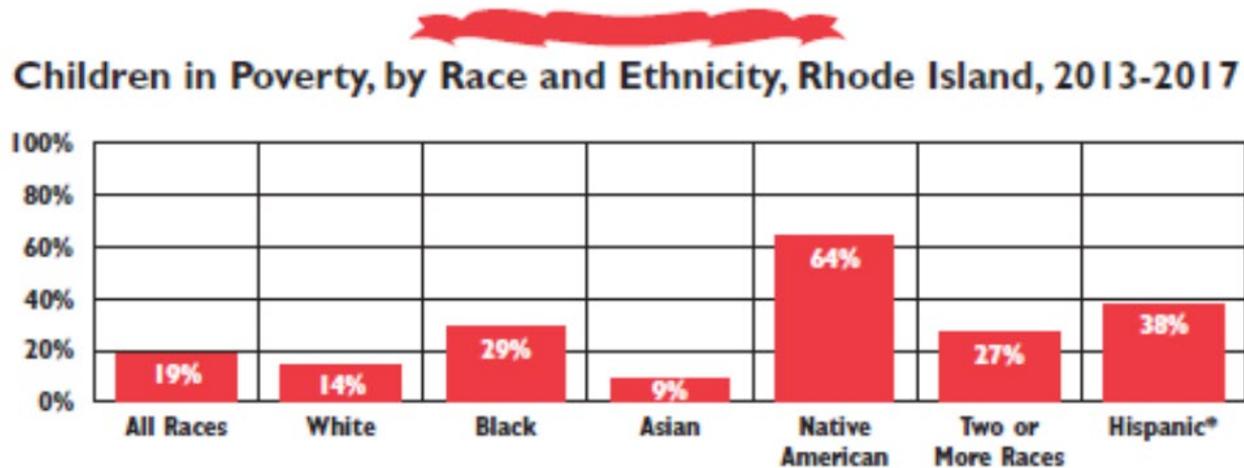
Young Children Are More Likely to Live in or Near Poverty

Percent of Population Living in Poverty By Age,
Rhode Island, 2018



- Young children are twice as likely to live in poverty as people who are 35 or older.
- 41% of infants and toddlers (under age 3) live in households with incomes less than twice the poverty level.
- More than 60% of mothers of infants and toddlers are working.
- Living in poverty in infancy and the early childhood years is harmful to brain development and can compromise lifetime health, achievement, employment, and earnings.

Children of Color Are More Likely to be Living in Poverty



Source: U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2013-2017. Tables S1701, B17020A, B17020B, B17020C, B17020D, B17020G and B17020I. *Hispanic children may be included in any race category.

- There are large disparities in child poverty by race and ethnicity.
- While 14% of Rhode Island's White children are poor, 29% of Black children, 38% of Latino children, and 64% of Native American children are living in poverty.
- In 2018, the federal poverty threshold was \$20,231 for a family of three with two children.

90%

of a child's brain
development
happens
before age 5

Source: Harvard Center for the Developing Child



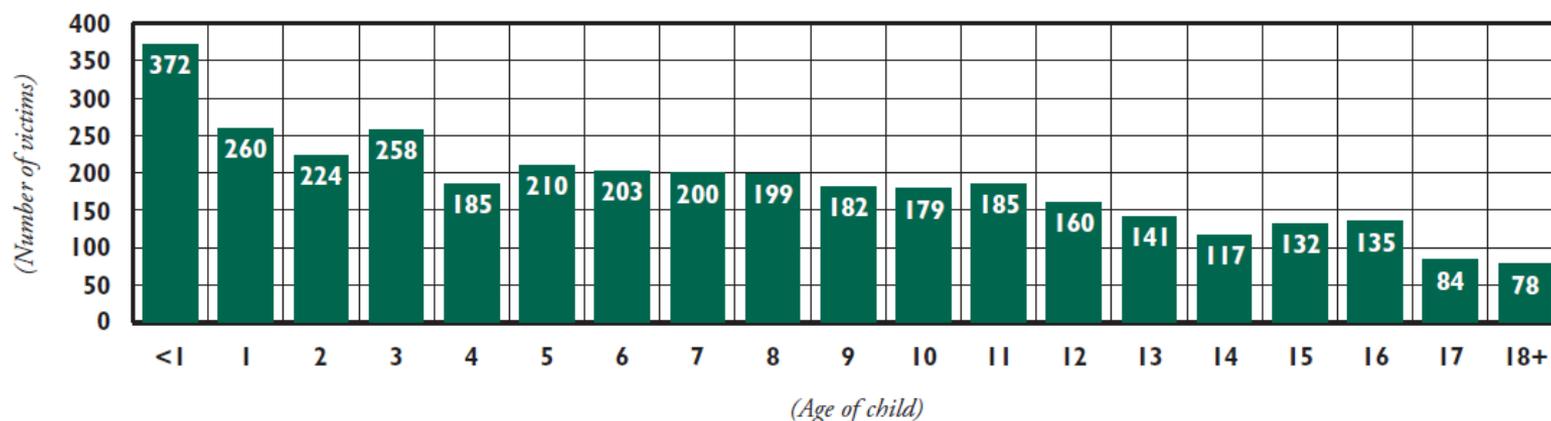
- 90% Brain development before age 5
- 10% Brain development after age 5

Early Experiences & Relationships Have a Profound Impact on Brain Development



Young Children Are More Likely to Experience Abuse/Neglect

Child Abuse and Neglect by Age of Victim, Rhode Island, 2018

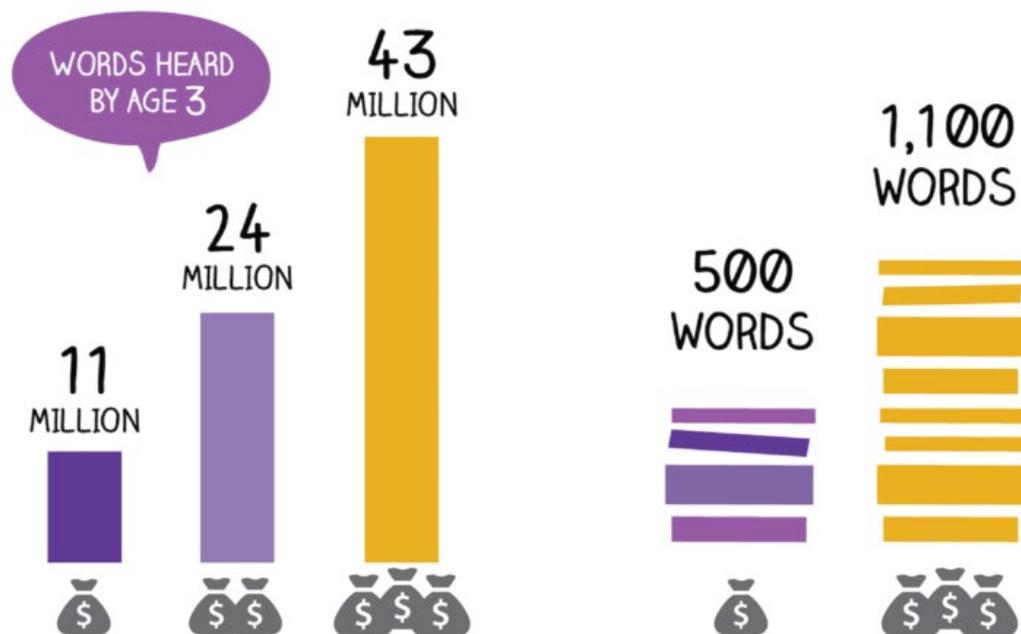


Source: Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST), 2018

- Very young children are more likely to experience abuse and neglect than older children.
- Child abuse and neglect in the first 3 years of life often disrupts the development of trusting, secure relationships. Infants and toddlers who have experienced abuse or neglect require special attention to get on track for positive development.

Achievement Gaps Start Early

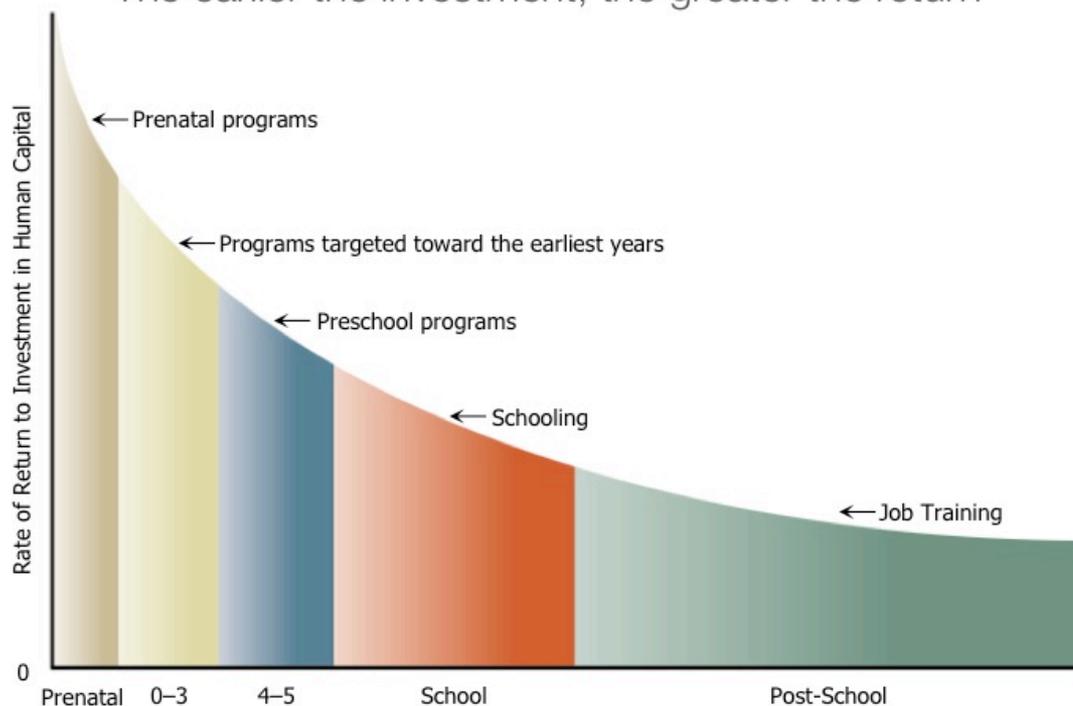
Are Linked to Economic Security & Healthy Relationships



BY THE AGE OF 3, HIGH-INCOME CHILDREN HAVE
DOUBLE THE VOCABULARY OF LOW-INCOME CHILDREN

EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IS A SMART INVESTMENT

The earlier the investment, the greater the return



Source: James Heckman, Nobel Laureate in Economics

Building Blocks

- Healthy Births & Healthy Mothers
- Paid Family Leave
- High-Quality, Affordable Child Care & Pre-K
- Family Home Visiting
- Improved Compensation to Retain Effective, Diverse Early Educators
- High-Quality Education in Grades K through 3

A New Early Childhood Campaign



Right from the
Start

Healthy Births & Healthy Mothers

Health Outcomes, by Race and Ethnicity, Rhode Island

	WHITE	HISPANIC	BLACK	ASIAN	NATIVE AMERICAN	ALL RACES
Children Without Health Insurance	2.0%	3.9%	2.0%	4.4%	NA	2.1%
Women With Delayed or No Prenatal Care	12.2%	17.1%	21.8%	15.5%	15.3%	14.7%
Preterm Births	8.0%	9.3%	11.3%	7.7%	13.2%	8.7%
Low Birthweight Infants	6.4%	8.0%	11.2%	7.3%	12.3	7.4%
Infant Mortality (per 1,000 live births)	3.5	5.5	12.2	4.9 [^]	*	5.5
Births to Teens Ages 15-19 (per 1,000 teens)	7.9	35.2	16.4	4.0	27.1	14.4

- Nationally, Black women are three times more likely to die from pregnancy-related causes than White women. In Rhode Island, Black women are 42% more likely to experience a severe complication at delivery than White women.
- In Rhode Island, infants of color are more likely to die in the first year of life than White infants, with Black infants dying at a rate three times as high.
- Approximately 18% of Rhode Island mothers experience depression during pregnancy and/or the first 12 months post partum and there are unacceptable disparities by race and income.

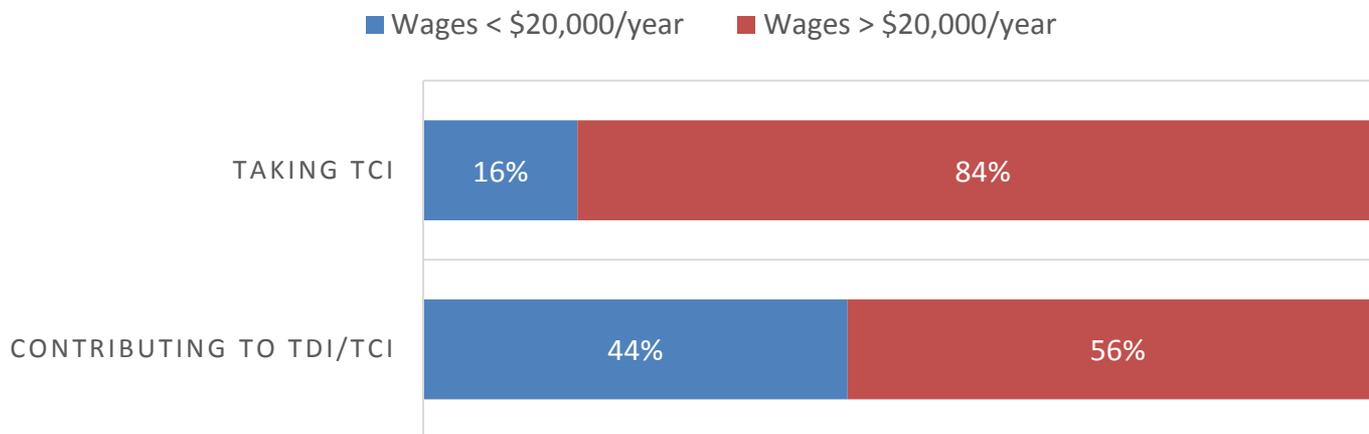
Healthy Births & Healthy Mothers

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- Cover **community-based doula services** through Medicaid and commercial insurance and build/support for the doula workforce in Rhode Island. These services and investments should be targeted toward communities most impacted by these disparities.
- Extend RIte Care **health insurance coverage through 12 months postpartum**, instead of 60 days.
- Use RIte Care to support and incentivize expansion of strategies to screen, diagnose and treat **maternal, infant, and early childhood mental health needs**.

Paid Family Leave

INDIVIDUALS CONTRIBUTING TO VS. RECEIVING TCI BY WAGE CATEGORY, RHODE ISLAND, 2018



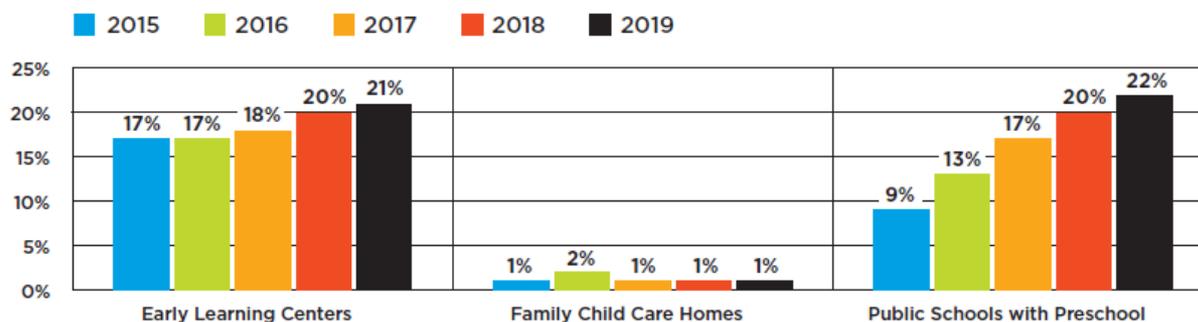
- In 2013, Rhode Island joined two pioneer states by creating the Temporary Caregivers Insurance program to provide paid family leave for workers to care for a new child or seriously ill family member.
- Now eight states and the District of Columbia have paid family leave programs. **Rhode Island's wage replacement rate and number of weeks is the lowest among these states.**
- Low wage replacement rates limit access to paid family leave.

POLICY PRIORITY:

- **Improve wage replacement rates** so low-wage workers can afford to take the time off they need and **extend the number of weeks** available for caregiving to 12 weeks.

High-Quality Child Care & Early Learning Programs

PROGRAMS WITH HIGH-QUALITY BRIGHTSTARS RATINGS (4 OR 5 STARS), RHODE ISLAND, 2015-2019

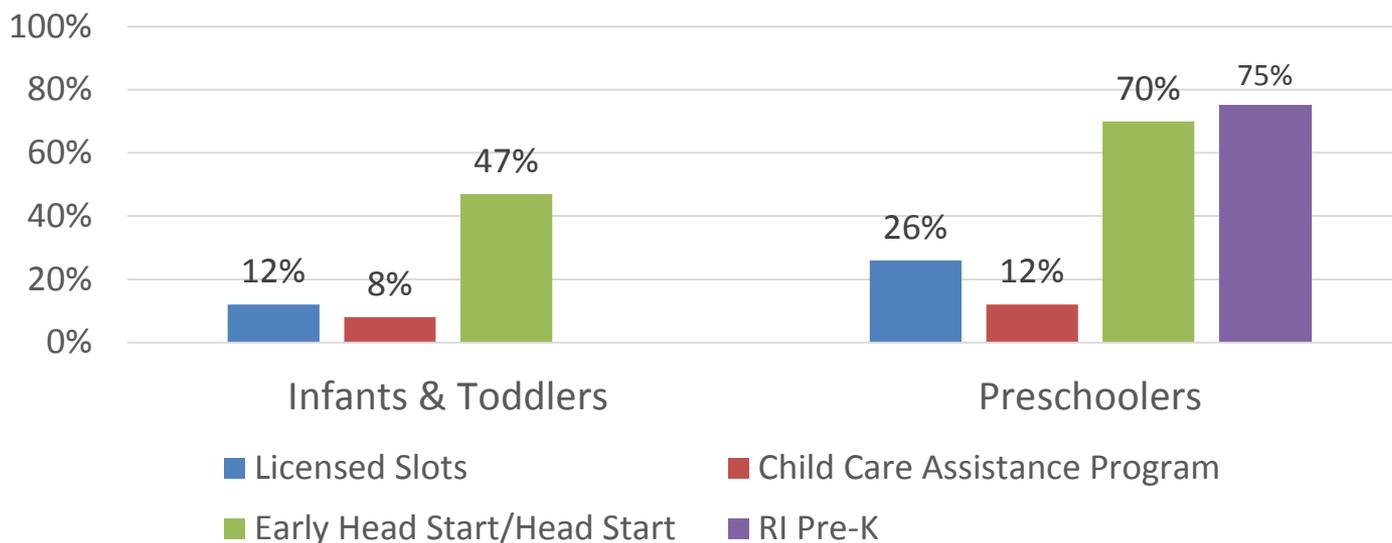


Source: RI Association for the Education of Young Children and RI Early Care and Education Data System (ECEDS), January 2015-January 2019.

- BrightStars is a valid and reliable measure of program quality with several measures linked to improved child outcomes.
- BrightStars helps improve quality across a program (all ages of children) and helps prepare a program to deliver RI Pre-K for four-year-olds.
- Program quality is improving, but there are significant challenges that limit progress.

High-Quality Child Care & Early Learning Programs

Percentage of Children in High-Quality Programs (4 or 5 Stars) By Funding Source, Rhode Island, 2018



- Hourly rates for Early Head Start are 36% higher than for infants and toddlers in 5-star centers.
- Hourly rates for Head Start and RI Pre-K are almost twice as high as the rates for preschoolers in 5-star centers.

Access to High-Quality Child Care

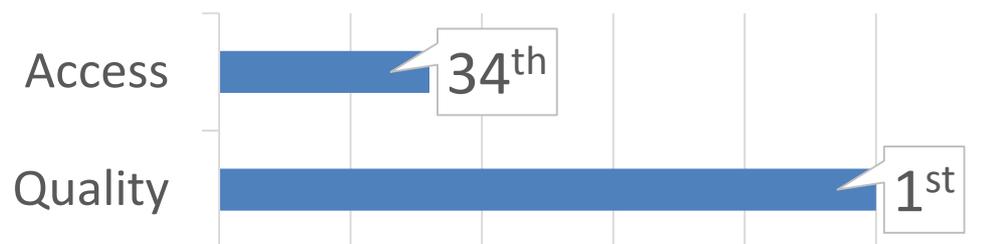
- In 2018, Rhode Island passed legislation increasing and establishing tiered quality rates for the Child Care Assistance Program – joining 41 other states with tiered quality rates to promote access to high-quality care.
- Currently, the rates for the Child Care Assistance Program do not meet the minimum federal standards for equal access – limiting options for families and starving programs of resources needed to provide quality early learning opportunities.
- Low state rates impact the quality of care available to all families.

POLICY PRIORITY:

- Invest \$7.5 million in state and federal funding to **increase rates to meet minimum federal standards for equal access** and ensure more families can access high-quality child care that provides a strong foundation for children to thrive.

RI Pre-K

National Pre-K Rankings, Quality &
Access for Four-Year-Olds, Rhode Island,
2018



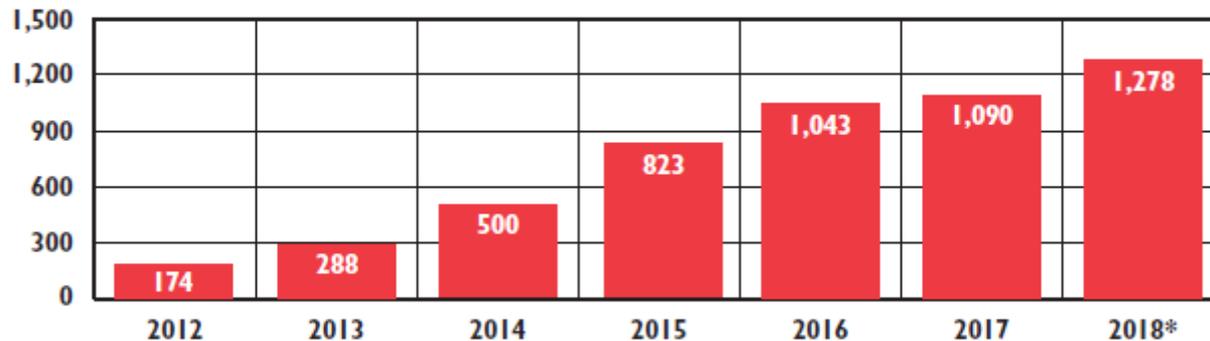
- RI Pre-K is offered through a mixed delivery system, with about one-third of children in Head Start agencies, one-third in child care centers, and one-third in public schools (28%).

POLICY PRIORITY:

- An investment of \$7.5 million in state and federal funding will **allow more children to attend RI Pre-K across the state** and when combined with increased investments in programs for children from birth to age 3, will ensure more children start kindergarten ready to succeed.

Evidence-Based Family Home Visiting

Families Enrolled in Evidence-Based Family Home Visiting Coordinated by the Rhode Island Department of Health, Rhode Island, 2012-2018



Source: Rhode Island Department of Health, Family Home Visiting, Family Visiting Database, October 2012-2018. *Beginning in 2018, enrolled families includes all families participating in Parents as Teachers programs, including those without MIECHV funding.

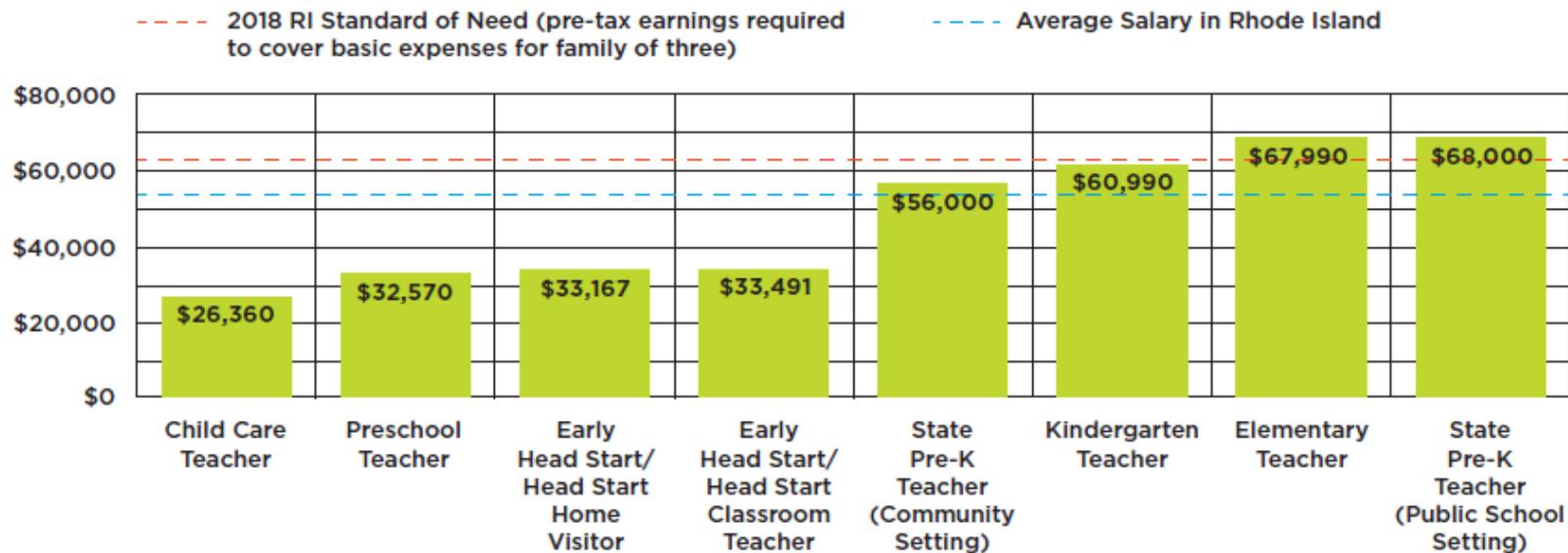
- Rhode Island has a strong network of voluntary, evidence-based home visiting prevention programs that help guide parents during these critical early years when a child's brain is rapidly developing and laying the foundation for future learning, health, and behavior.
- As federal funding declines, state investments are needed to sustain these programs that are proven to improve child and family success.

POLICY PRIORITY:

- Invest **\$1.3 million in state and federal funding to sustain these programs** that are proven to help build more strong, healthy families today and save costs over time.

Wages of Early Educators

EDUCATORS' AVERAGE ANNUAL SALARIES, RHODE ISLAND, 2017



- Salaries for Early Interventionists range from \$28,000 to \$46,000 per year.
- Salaries for family home visiting professionals range from \$30,500 to \$46,000 per year.
- Early educators – including those who work with infants and toddlers and their families -- require specialized knowledge, training, and support.
- Many early educators, particularly those who work with infants and toddlers make very low wages, and turnover is high.

Improving the Compensation and Retention of Effective Infant/Toddler Educators in Rhode Island

Recommendations of the
Moving the Needle on
Compensation Task Force

December 2019





Wages of Early Educators

Compensation Goals

Infant/Toddler Educator Target Wage Scale, Rhode Island, 2019

LEVEL	EDUCATION	TARGET HOURLY WAGE FLOOR	12-MONTH TARGET ANNUAL SALARY FLOOR
1	CDA credential or 3 ECE credits	\$16	\$33,280
2	12 ECE credits	\$17	\$35,360
3	Associate's degree	\$19	\$39,520
4	Associate's degree & 24 ECE credits	\$20	\$41,600
5	Bachelor's degree	\$22	\$45,760
6	Bachelor's degree & 24 ECE credits	\$24.15	\$50,240

* Assumes that these amounts will need to be adjusted over time to account for inflation/cost of living. Note: level 1 is \$1 more than the target for the minimum wage of \$15/hour and level 6 is equivalent to the starting kindergarten teacher salary in Rhode Island in 2017-2018 (\$41,869) adjusted to a 12-month schedule.

POLICY PRIORITY:

- **Establish state compensation goals** and find solutions that will attract and retain skilled, qualified, diverse educators in essential programs to ensure children get a strong start in school and life and maintain Rhode Island's healthy economy today and tomorrow.

Housing & Early Learning Facilities

- Housing and child care are the two biggest costs for families with young children.
- Affordable housing options are very limited across the state and concentrated in only a few communities.
- Child care and early learning facilities are aging, have inadequate resources to make improvements, and have very limited resources to expand.
- More than half of the buildings that house early learning programs in Rhode Island are in poor condition.

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- Pass an **affordable housing bond proposal that includes \$15 million to renovate and expand early learning facilities** to help address two essential needs of young families.
- Establish a **dedicated funding stream** for affordable housing.

Rhode Island Works Cash Assistance

- The Rhode Island Works cash assistance benefit for families has remained stagnant for nearly 30 years.
- Children and families receiving cash assistance live in extreme poverty, receiving just \$6/person/day (currently \$554/month for a family of three).

POLICY PRIORITY:

- **Increase the monthly benefit** for families receiving cash assistance.

Sustain the Gains in Kindergarten and Beyond



Research shows that high-quality K-3 schools and strong K-3 teaching practices are essential to sustain the gains made in high-quality Pre-K programs.

“Pre-K is not an inoculation against subsequent poor instruction or other environmental factors later on. There is a growing body of evidence about the importance of sustaining high-quality learning environments for Pre-K graduates, as well as all students.”

Early Elementary Grades

POLICY PRIORITIES:

- Implement a **statewide Kindergarten Entry Profile** system so that kindergarten teachers have information about each individual child's strengths and challenges and policymakers can track trends in early learning and development.
- Support implementation of **high-quality, developmentally-appropriate curricula and assessment** in Kindergarten through Grade 3.
- Increase the number of **early childhood certified teachers of color in grades K-3**.
- Increase resources to improve educational outcomes for **Multilingual/English learners** and promote multilingualism.
- Adopt strategies to **promote social-emotional health** and increase the number of mental health counselors.
- **Reduce chronic absence** in the early grades by ensuring schools are a welcoming place for families, children, and community members and implementing school-based attendance teams to support families that are having difficulty getting children to school.
- Increase access to **high-quality after school and summer learning** programs.



RHODE ISLAND

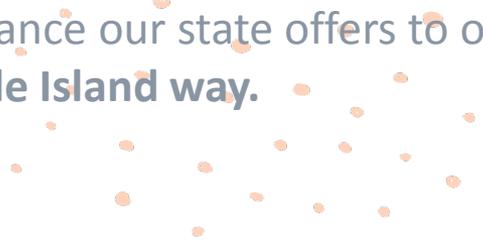
Children's Cabinet



PRENATAL TO PRE-K

This is how RI kids stay strong.

When you know the steps to take, you set your child up for a healthy future and a strong start to school. Check out all the support and guidance our state offers to our youngest citizens. **It's the Rhode Island way.**



<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=FK1aNLPtU7k> [youtube.com]

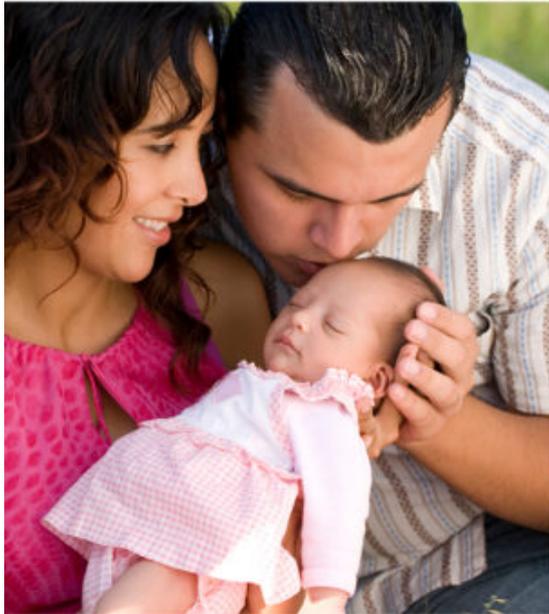
Rhode Island House of Representatives



Rhode Island Senate



Children's Friend



Woonsocket Education Department



Joyful Hearts Childcare Center



Happykids Home Childcare



Rhode Island KIDS COUNT would like to thank
ZERO TO THREE for supporting
Think Babies and the
Celebrating Young Children Luncheon



Funding partners for *Think Babies* include the Perigee Fund
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