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**U.S. Census Bureau Releases New Data on
Childhood Poverty in Rhode Island**

**More than one in five (21.9%) Rhode Island children
lived in poverty in 2011**

**Child poverty in Rhode Island continues to
increase since recession**

Providence, RI (September 20, 2012) – Rhode Island KIDS COUNT released new data from the U.S. Census Bureau’s American Community Survey (ACS) detailing the extent of poverty among children in Rhode Island, New England and each of the 50 states.

According to the new Census data, more than one in five (21.9%) of Rhode Island’s children was living in poverty in 2011. Rhode Island’s childhood poverty rate has been steadily increasing since the recession, increasing from 15.5% in 2008 to 21.9% in 2011. The number of Rhode Island children in poverty increased from 34,816 in 2008 to 47,127 in 2011. The child poverty rate for the United States was 22.5% in 2011, up from 18.2% in 2008.

“Children most at risk of not achieving their full potential are children in poverty,” stated Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. “They are more likely to have health and behavioral problems, lack access to high-quality educational opportunities, become teen parents, and earn less or be unemployed as adults.”

The new data show that in 2011, Rhode Island ranked 6th of the six New England states and 27th in the country for child poverty (where 1st is best). In 2010, Rhode Island’s child poverty rate of 19.0% was ranked 6th in New England and 22nd nationally. The poverty data are based on the federal poverty threshold which is defined for 2011 as an income of \$18,123 a year for a family of three with two children and \$22,811 for a family of four with two children.

According to the Census data released today, in 2011, 11% (22,756) of Rhode Island children living in poverty were living in extreme poverty. Extreme poverty is defined as one-half of the federal poverty level, or \$9,062 a year for a family of three with two children and \$11,406 for a family of four with two children in 2011.

“The effects of the recession, including lingering unemployment, have hit Rhode Island harder and longer than expected and the state’s economic recovery has been slow,” noted Bryant. “In these challenging times, it is critical that we do everything we can to maintain state and federal programs that support the well-being of children and families in Rhode Island. Our Congressional leaders can help by preserving the Child Tax Credit (CTC) and Earned Income Tax Credit (EITC), two of the most important tax provisions for children. These two tax credits help families meet their children’s basic needs. In 2010, these two credits kept close to 5 million children out of poverty in the U.S.”

Child poverty data is available for Rhode Island’s cities and towns in *2012 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook*, which can be found at www.rikidscount.org.

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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.