

Thursday, October 17, 2013

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

Almost one in five (19.5%) Rhode Island children lived in poverty in 2012

Child poverty rate in Rhode Island stabilizes, but remains high

Providence, RI (September 19, 2013) - 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, almost one in five (19.5%) of Rhode Island's children was living in poverty in 2012. Rhode Island's childhood poverty rate had been steadily increasing since the recession, increasing from 15.5% in 2008 to 21.9% in 2012, but now seems to be stabilizing. The latest data, released today, reveals that 41,635 Rhode Island children lived in poverty in 2012. The child poverty rate for the

United States was 22.6% in 2012, up from 18.2% in 2008. "Children who live in poverty face the most challenges, during childhood and later in life" stated Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT. "They are more likely to have health and behavioral issues, to lack access to high-quality educational opportunities, to become parents as teens, and to earn less or be unemployed as adults." The new data show that in 2012, Rhode Island ranked 5th of the six New England states and 22nd nationally for child poverty (where 1st is best). This compares to 2011 when Rhode Island's child poverty rate was ranked 6th in New England and 27th nationally. The poverty data are based on the federal poverty threshold which is defined for 2012 as an income of \$18,498 a year for a family of three with two children and \$23,283 for a family of four with two children.