

# Child Population

## DEFINITION

*Child population* is the total number of children under age 18 and the percentage change between 2010 and 2020 in the total number of children under age 18.

## SIGNIFICANCE

According to the 2020 U.S. Census, there were 1,097,379 Rhode Island residents. Children under age 18 made up 19% of the population. Rhode Island's child population decreased from 247,822 in 2000 to 223,956 in 2010 and then further to 209,785 in 2020 (a 15% decrease from 2000 to 2020).<sup>1-3</sup> In 2020, 30% (62,971) of Rhode Island children were under age six, 22% (45,198) were ages six to nine, 30% (61,948) were ages 10 to 14, and 19% (39,668) were ages 15 to 19.<sup>1</sup>

Between 2020 and 2024, there were 117,871 households with children under age 18 in Rhode Island, representing 27% of all households.<sup>4</sup> In Rhode Island, between 2020 and 2024, 123,746 (60%) children under age 18 lived in married-couple households, 64,067 (31%) children lived in single parent households, and 17,467 (8%) children lived with relatives, including grandparents.<sup>5</sup> A total of 3,376 (2%) children lived with foster families or other non-relative heads of household.<sup>6</sup> There were 571 (<1%) children and youth under age 18 who lived in group

quarters and 133 (<1%) youth who were householders or spouses.<sup>7</sup>

Rhode Island's children are diverse in race, ethnicity, language, and country of origin. Mirroring the national trend, the Hispanic child population in Rhode Island has grown since 2000, both in numbers and as a percentage of the child population. In 2020, Hispanic children made up 26% of children under age 18 in the United States and 27% of children under age 18 in Rhode Island.<sup>1,8</sup>

Between 2020 and 2024, there were 11,412 foreign-born children under the age of 18 living in Rhode Island, representing approximately 6% of the child population.<sup>9</sup> Of Rhode Island children ages five to 17, 76% speak only English at home, 18% speak Spanish, 4% speak other Indo-European languages, 1% speak Asian or Pacific Island languages, and 1% speak other languages at home.<sup>10</sup>

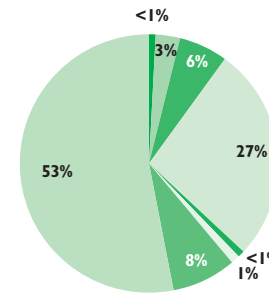
Sexual orientation and gender identity are other important facets of diversity among youth. According to the *2023 Youth Risk Behavior Survey*, 17.5% of high school students in Rhode Island described themselves as lesbian, gay, or bisexual. In addition, 5.2% described themselves as other and 4.8% as questioning. Among high school students, 3.9% described themselves as transgender.<sup>11</sup>



## Rhode Island Children Under Age 18, 2020

### By Race/Ethnicity\*

<1% (814)	American Indian and Alaska Native
3% (6,955)	Asian
6% (13,462)	Black
27% (56,113)	Hispanic or Latino
<1% (65)	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander
1% (2,939)	Some Other Race
8% (17,822)	Two or More Races
53% (111,615)	White

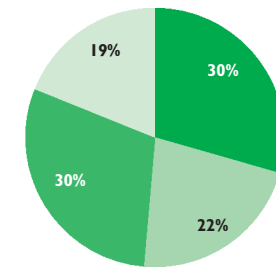


n=209,785

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020, Table P2 and Table P4. All categories are mutually exclusive. If Hispanic was selected as an ethnicity, individuals are not included in other racial categories.

### By Age

30% (62,971)	Under Age 6
22% (45,198)	Ages 6 to 9
30% (61,948)	Ages 10 to 14
19% (39,668)	Ages 15 to 17



n=209,785

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020, Table P2 and Table P4.



## Decennial Census 2020

- ◆ In 2020, the U.S. Census Bureau conducted its most recent decennial Census. Although the overall population of Rhode Island (1,097,379) grew by 4.3% from 2010 to 2020, the child population (209,785) declined by 6.3% over this same period.<sup>1,3,12</sup>
- ◆ Certain populations have been historically hard to count in the decennial Census, including young children under age five, immigrants, low-income populations, People of Color, people experiencing homelessness, and people in non-traditional households.<sup>13</sup> The 2020 Census reveals that People of Color and young children continue to be undercounted, and Children of Color were undercounted at an even higher rate than in 2010.<sup>14,15</sup>

Table 1.

Child Population, Rhode Island, 2010 and 2020

CITY/TOWN	2010 TOTAL POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	2020 TOTAL POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	CHANGE IN POPULATION UNDER AGE 18	% CHANGE IN POPULATION UNDER AGE 18
Barrington	4,597	4,489	-108	-2.3%
Bristol	3,623	2,887	-736	-20.3%
Burrville	3,576	3,229	-347	-9.7%
Central Falls	5,644	6,411	767	13.6%
Charlestown	1,506	1,161	-345	-22.9%
Coventry	7,770	6,655	-1,115	-14.4%
Cranston	16,414	15,744	-670	-4.1%
Cumberland	7,535	7,550	15	0.2%
East Greenwich	3,436	3,465	29	0.8%
East Providence	9,177	7,886	-1,291	-14.1%
Exeter	1,334	1,175	-159	-11.9%
Foster	986	790	-196	-19.9%
Glocester	2,098	1,896	-202	-9.6%
Hopkinton	1,845	1,613	-232	-12.6%
Jamestown	1,043	871	-172	-16.5%
Johnston	5,480	5,119	-361	-6.6%
Lincoln	4,751	4,640	-111	-2.3%
Little Compton	654	568	-86	-13.1%
Middletown	3,652	3,487	-165	-4.5%
Narragansett	2,269	1,651	-618	-27.2%
New Shoreham	163	189	26	16.0%
Newport	4,083	3,660	-423	-10.4%
North Kingstown	6,322	5,496	-826	-13.1%
North Providence	5,514	5,802	288	5.2%
North Smithfield	2,456	2,274	-182	-7.4%
Pawtucket	16,575	16,455	-120	-0.7%
Portsmouth	3,996	3,444	-552	-13.8%
Providence	41,634	41,021	-613	-1.5%
Richmond	1,849	1,627	-222	-12.0%
Scituate	2,272	1,866	-406	-17.9%
Smithfield	3,625	3,411	-214	-5.9%
South Kingstown	5,416	4,339	-1,077	-19.9%
Tiverton	2,998	2,723	-275	-9.2%
Warren	1,940	1,826	-114	-5.9%
Warwick	15,825	14,034	-1,791	-11.3%
West Greenwich	1,477	1,251	-226	-15.3%
West Warwick	5,746	5,787	41	0.7%
Westerly	4,787	3,826	-961	-20.1%
Woonsocket	9,888	9,467	-421	-4.3%
Five Core Cities	77,824	77,014	-810	-1.0%
Remainder of State	150,215	136,431	-13,784	-9.2%
Rhode Island	223,956	209,785	-14,171	-6.3%

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2010, Summary File 1 and Census 2020, Table P2 and Table P4.

Five core cities are Central Falls, Newport, Pawtucket, Providence, and Woonsocket.

### References

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2020). *Table P2 and Table P4*.
- <sup>2</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2000). *Summary File 1. Table DP-1*.
- <sup>3</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2010). *Summary File 1. Table DP-1*.
- <sup>4</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table DP02*.
- <sup>5</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B09002*.
- <sup>6</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B09018*.
- <sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B09001*.
- <sup>8</sup> Pena, J., Figueroa, M.A., Rios-Vargas, M., & Marks, R. (2023). *Hispanic population is younger but aging faster than non-Hispanic population: One in every four children in the United States were of Hispanic origin in 2020*. <https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2023/05/hispanic-population-younger-but-aging-faster.html>
- <sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B05003*.
- <sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B16007*.
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- <sup>12</sup> America Counts Staff. (2021). *Rhode Island's population grew 4.3% last decade*.
- <sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2018). *2020 census: Counting everyone once, only once, and in the right place*. <https://www2.census.gov/cac/nac/meetings/2018-11/chapin-hard-to-count.pdf>

(continued on page 172)

# Methodology and References



## Family Income Levels Based on the Federal Poverty Measures

The poverty *thresholds* are the original version of the federal poverty measure.

They are updated each year by the Census Bureau. The thresholds are used mainly for statistical purposes — for instance, estimating the number of children in Rhode Island living in poor families. The poverty threshold is adjusted upward based on family size and whether household members are children, adults, or 65 years of age and over. In 2025, the federal poverty threshold was \$25,938 for a family of three with two children and \$32,649 for a family of four with two children. The *poverty guidelines* are the other version of the federal poverty measure. They are issued each year in the Federal Register by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS).

## Family Income Levels Based on the 2026 Federal Poverty Guidelines

FEDERAL POVERTY GUIDELINES	ANNUAL INCOME FAMILY OF THREE	ANNUAL INCOME FAMILY OF FOUR
50% FPL	\$13,660.00	\$16,500.00
100% FPL	\$27,320.00	\$33,000.00
130% FPL	\$35,516.00	\$42,900.00
150% FPL	\$40,980.00	\$49,500.00
180% FPL	\$49,176.00	\$59,400.00
185% FPL	\$50,542.00	\$61,050.00
200% FPL	\$54,640.00	\$66,000.00
225% FPL	\$61,470.00	\$74,250.00
250% FPL	\$68,300.00	\$82,500.00

(continued from page 9)

### References for Child Population

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). *Census bureau releases estimates of undercount and overcount in the 2020 census*.  
<sup>15</sup> O'Hare, W. P. (2022). *New Census bureau data show young children have a high net undercount in the 2020 Census*. <https://countallkids.org/wp-content/uploads/2022/03/CAK-Report-on-Release-of-PES-and-DA-data-March-10-2022-FINAL-3-10-2022.pdf>

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<sup>7</sup> Right from the Start Campaign. (2025). *Right from the Start FY 2026 state budget priorities for kids & families*. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/inbrief-adversity-1.pdf>

<sup>8</sup> Office of the Surgeon General. (2024). *Parents under pressure: The U.S. Surgeon General's advisory on the mental health & well-being of parents*. <https://www.hhs.gov/surgeongeneral/reports-and-publications/parents/index.html>

<sup>9</sup> Zero to Three. (2023). *State of babies yearbook: 2023*.

<sup>10</sup> Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. (n.d.). *The impact of early adversity on children's development*. <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/wp-content/uploads/2024/10/inbrief-adversity-1.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Harvard University Center on the Developing Child. (2018). *What are ACEs and how do they relate to toxic stress?* <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/infographics/aces-and-toxic-stress-frequently-asked-questions/>

<sup>12</sup> Rhode Island Department of Health. (n.d.). *Vital Records, Rivers Database 2004-2025*.

<sup>13</sup> Rhode Island Department of Health. (2025). *KIDSNET Database*.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Maternal and Child Health Bureau. (2025). *III.E.2.c. state action plan – perinatal/infant health – annual report – Rhode Island - 2025*. <https://mchb.tvisdata.hrsa.gov/Narratives/AnnualReport/2/a9e6648f-c775-41be-816f-9fd5d995b5c>

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### References for Family Structure

<sup>4</sup> VanOrman, A. G., & Scommenga, P. (2016). Understanding the dynamics of family change in the United States. *Population Bulletin*, 7(1).

<sup>5</sup> Cohn, D., Horowitz, J., Minkin, R., Fry, R., & Hurst, K. (2022). *Financial issues top the list of reasons U.S. adults live in multigenerational homes*. Pew Research Center.

<sup>6</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2023). *Child Well-Being in Single-Parent Families*. <https://www.aecf.org/blog/child-well-being-in-single-parent-families>

<sup>7</sup> Generation United. (2021). *Family matters: Multigenerational living is on the rise and here to stay*. <https://www.gu.org/resources/multigenerational-families>

<sup>8</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B09002*.

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B09018*.

<sup>10</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B11017*.

<sup>11</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2010-2014). *Table B11017*.

<sup>12</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2020). *PCT14H*.

<sup>13</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2020). *PCT14D*.

<sup>14</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2020). *PCT14B*.

<sup>15</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, Census. (2020). *PCT14I*.

<sup>16</sup> Rose, J. (2024). *Policies for housing with heart*. Stanford Social Innovation Review.

<sup>17</sup> The Economic Progress Institute. (2024). *The 2024 Rhode Island standard of need*.

<sup>18</sup> Generation United. (2022). *Together at the table: Supporting the nutrition, health and well-being of grandfamilies*.

<sup>19</sup> Lent, J. P., & Otto, A. (2018). Grandparents, grandchildren, and caregiving: The impacts of America's substance use crisis. *Generations*, 42(3), 15–22.

<sup>20</sup> Generations United. (2017). *In loving arms: The protective role of grandparents and other relatives in raising children exposed to trauma*. <https://www.gu.org/resources/the-state-of-grandfamilies-in-america-2017/>

<sup>21</sup> Peterson, T. L. (2018). Grandparents raising grandchildren in the African American community. *Generations*, 42(3), 30–36.

<sup>22</sup> Advisory Council to Support Grandparents Raising Grandchildren. (2021). *Supporting Grandparents Raising Grandchildren (SGRG) Act: Initial report to Congress*. [https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE\\_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress\\_2021-11-16.pdf](https://acl.gov/sites/default/files/RAISE_SGRG/SGRG-InitialReportToCongress_2021-11-16.pdf)

<sup>23</sup> *Child Support Program Rules and Regulations*, 218-RICR-30-00-1 (2021). [sos.ri.gov](https://sos.ri.gov)

<sup>24</sup> Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families. (2024). *RICHIST*.

<sup>25</sup> Children's Defense Fund. (2015). *The Title IV-E Guardianship Assistance Program (GAP): An update on implementation and moving GAP forward*. <https://www.grandfamilies.org/Portals/0/Documents/Fostering%20Connections/Title%20IV-E%20GAP%20Update.pdf>

<sup>26</sup> Children's Bureau. (2023). *Title IV-E guardianship assistance*. <https://acf.gov/cb/grant-funding/title-iv-e-guardianship-assistance>

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### References for Mother's Education Level

<sup>6</sup> National Center for Education Statistics. (2024). *Characteristics of Children's Families. Condition of Education*. U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education Sciences. [https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2024/ccc\\_508c.pdf](https://nces.ed.gov/programs/coe/pdf/2024/ccc_508c.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table B20004*.

<sup>8</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (n.d.). *KIDS COUNT Data Center*. [datacenter.kidscount.org](https://datacenter.kidscount.org)

<sup>9</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table S1702*.