

# Out-of-School Time

## DEFINITION

*Out-of-school time* is the number of children participating in organized afterschool programs. This indicator presents data on the number of licensed afterschool child care programs and slots for children ages six and older as well as available data on children served by after-school programs that do not require state licensing.

## SIGNIFICANCE

Organized programs for school-age children, offered when school is not in session, have grown over the past 50 years. Expansion of mothers' labor force participation, concerns over children being home alone, and federal investments such as the *Child Care Development and Block Grant Act* (1990) which provided the first major funding stream for out-of-school time programs, and the 21st Century Community Learning Centers (1998), contributed to growth. Out-of-school time programs can contribute significantly to children's development and learning.<sup>1</sup>

High-quality, organized after-school and summer programs improve the supervision and safety of youth, promote positive social skills, and, with sufficient dosage, improve student achievement. Quality out-of-school time programs provide engaging activities that are intentionally designed to promote youth development and are taught by trained,

dedicated instructors who work effectively with youth. Youth who participate consistently can show improved competence, caring, and connections.<sup>2,3</sup>

Many children lack access to out-of-school time programs. Nationally, 84% of low-income students whose families report a need for programs are not enrolled, compared to 59% of higher-income students.<sup>4</sup> In Rhode Island, 22,985 children are enrolled in out-of-school time programs, while an estimated 66,025 are not enrolled but would participate if opportunities were available.<sup>5</sup> Disparities also exist by race and ethnicity, with the highest need among Black (65%) and Hispanic (60%) children.<sup>6,7</sup> Rhode Island has the largest gap in after-school program participation between low-income and higher-income youth in the nation.<sup>8</sup>

Between 2020 and 2024, 79% of Rhode Island children ages six to 17 had all parents in the workforce, higher than the U.S. rate of 73%.<sup>9</sup> School hours only cover 20% of the time children and youth have available for learning, forming friendships, developing, and practicing skills, and exploring interests. There are not enough affordable, high-quality, out-of-school time programs to meet the needs of families and youth.<sup>10,11</sup> Increased federal, state, and local investments are needed to expand access to high-quality programs and to build and sustain an effective out-of-school time workforce.<sup>12</sup>



## Students Served by 21st Century Community Learning Centers by Grade Span, Rhode Island, 2024-2025 School Year

SCHOOL DISTRICT	GRADES PK-3	GRADES 4-5	GRADES 6-8	GRADES 9-12	TOTAL
Central Falls	167	115	161	17	460
East Providence	60	22	263	163	508
Newport	176	133	182	178	669
Pawtucket	420	313	<10	<10	735
Providence	62	16	647	688	1,413
Warwick	67	36	<10	<10	103
Woonsocket	380	253	146	<10	779
Charter Schools	112	68	135	16	331
State-Operated	<10	<10	<10	93	93
Collaboratives	<10	<10	99	<10	108
<b>Total</b>	<b>1,444</b>	<b>956</b>	<b>1,635</b>	<b>1,164</b>	<b>5,199</b>

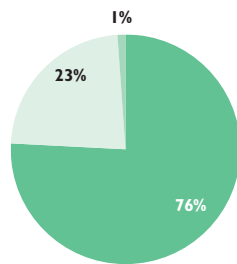
Source: RI Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports, 2024-2025 school year.

Data are not unduplicated as students can be served by more than one grantee. Beginning in 2021-2022, data includes only students who participated in 21st Century CLC programs for at least 15 hours.

- ◆ In the 2024-2025 school year in Rhode Island, 21st Century Community Learning Center grantees served 5,199 children and youth. Of these, 28% were in grades PK-3, 18% were in grades 4-5, 31% were in grades 6-8, and 22% were in grades 9-12.<sup>13</sup>
- ◆ During the summer of 2024, 1,362 Rhode Island children entering grades Pre-K through 12 participated in 21st Century Community Learning Center programs; 497 (36%) entering grades PK-3, 315 (23%) entering grades 4-5, 308 (23%) entering grades 6-8, and 242 (18%) entering grades 9-12.<sup>13</sup>
- ◆ In April 2023, Governor McKee announced a new out-of-school learning initiative, Learn365RI, designed to support partnerships between municipalities, school districts, and community-based organizations and improve student achievement, reduce chronic absenteeism, and increase Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA) completion.<sup>14</sup> The initiative reached 6,424 students, with the highest participation in Central Falls (1,008), Middletown (698), and Providence (636). Participation was highest among students in grades K-3 (34%) and starts to drop among high school students (14%). Overall, 55% of students participated in 15 or more hours of programming.<sup>15</sup>

## School-Age Child Care Subsidies by Type of Setting, Rhode Island, 2025

76% (1,869) ■ Licensed Center  
 23% (577) ■ Licensed Family Child Care  
 1% (13) ■ License-Exempt Provider



n=2,459

Source: Rhode Island Department of Human Services, December 2025.

◆ In January 2026 there were 10,928 slots for school-age children in licensed centers, 72% in independently licensed school-age programs and 28% in licensed early childhood centers. In addition, there were 370 family child care homes licensed to serve school-age children and youth (all licensed family child care programs in Rhode Island are licensed to serve children six weeks through age 12).<sup>16</sup>

◆ In January 2026 in Rhode Island, of the 93 independently licensed school-age programs, 12 (13%) had no rating, 30 (32%) had a one-star, 12 (13%) had a two star, 16 (17%) had a three-star, 15 (16%) had a four-star, and 8 (9%) had a five star rating in BrightStars, Rhode Island's Quality Rating and Improvement System.<sup>17</sup>

Table 40. Licensed School-Age Child Care Center Slots for Children Ages Six to 12, Rhode Island, January 2026

CITY/TOWN	NUMBER OF CHILDREN AGES 6 TO 12	SCHOOL-AGE SLOTS IN EARLY LEARNING CENTERS	SCHOOL-AGE SLOTS IN INDEPENDENT PROGRAMS	TOTAL NUMBER OF SLOTS
Barrington	1,860	81	138	219
Bristol	1,145	0	110	110
Burrillville	1,282	10	248	258
Central Falls	2,572	94	0	94
Charlestown	444	0	0	0
Coventry	2,562	122	50	172
Cranston	6,148	286	338	624
Cumberland	2,901	28	602	630
East Greenwich	1,448	70	80	150
East Providence	3,039	49	499	548
Exeter	474	0	100	100
Foster	306	26	0	26
Glocester	706	27	0	27
Hopkinton	688	0	0	0
Jamestown	391	0	0	0
Johnston	2,049	137	0	137
Lincoln	1,955	57	378	435
Little Compton	206	0	26	26
Middletown	1,405	48	132	180
Narragansett	614	0	0	0
New Shoreham	81	0	0	0
Newport	1,400	44	243	287
North Kingstown	2,127	71	100	171
North Providence	2,182	44	368	412
North Smithfield	939	40	130	170
Pawtucket	6,430	195	659	854
Portsmouth	1,264	26	146	172
Providence	15,706	917	1,407	2,324
Richmond	629	0	52	52
Scituate	693	39	0	39
Smithfield	1,301	126	246	372
South Kingstown	1,716	69	50	119
Tiverton	1,092	36	0	36
Warren	726	13	60	73
Warwick	5,476	176	878	1,054
West Greenwich	519	0	0	0
West Warwick	2,287	94	175	269
Westerly	1,480	61	0	61
Woonsocket	3,756	78	649	727
Five Core Cities	29,864	1,328	2,958	4,286
Remainder of State	52,135	1,736	4,906	6,642
Rhode Island	81,999	3,064	7,864	10,928

### Source of Data for Table/Methodology

Number of children ages six to 12 years is from the U.S. Census Bureau, Census 2020 Table PCT12.

Rhode Island Department of Human Services, number of licensed child care center slots and programs for school-age children, January 2026. These numbers do not include licensed family child care home slots or community programs for youth that are exempt from licensing.

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

### References

- Mahoney, J. L., Parente, M. E., & Zigler, E. F. (2009). Afterschool programs in America: Origins, growth, popularity, and politics. *Journal of Youth Development*, 4(3).
- McCombs, J., Whitaker, A., & Yoo, P. (2017). *The value of out-of-school time programs*. RAND Corporation.
- Smith, E. P., Witherspoon, D. P., & Osgood, D. W. (2017). Positive youth development among diverse racial-ethnic children: Quality afterschool contexts as developmental assets. *Child Development*, 88(4), 1063–1078.
- Afterschool Alliance's fifth edition of *America After 3PM*. (2025). *Lost Opportunity Afterschool Programs in Demand, But Out of Reach for Many*. <https://afterschoolalliance.org/documents/AA3PM-2025/National-AA3PM-Fact-Sheet-2025.pdf>
- Afterschool Alliance. (2025). *Afterschool in Rhode Island: Programs in demand, but out of reach for many (America After 3PM)*.
- Afterschool Alliance. (2026). *America after 3PM for Black families (5th ed.)*.
- Afterschool Alliance. (2026). *America after 3PM for Hispanic families (5th ed.)*.
- 50CAN & Edge Research. (2024). *The state of educational opportunity in America: A 50-state survey of 20,000 parents*. 50CAN. <https://50CAN.org>
- U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey. (2020-2024). *Table DP03*.

(continued on page 187)

<sup>6</sup> Zablotsky, B., Black, L. I., Maenner, M. J., & Schieve, Laura A.,...Boyle, Coleen A. (2019). Prevalence and trends of developmental disabilities among children in the United States: 2009-2017. *Pediatrics*, 144(4), e20190811.

<sup>7</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education, Office for Diverse Learners. (2026). *Special Education Census, June 30, 2025*.

<sup>8</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (n.d.). *June 2019 Special Education Census*.

<sup>9</sup> U.S Department of Health and Human Services and U.S. Department of Education. (2023). *Policy statement on inclusion of children with disabilities in early childhood programs*. <https://sites.ed.gov/ideal>

(continued from page 131)

#### References for Public School Enrollment and Demographics

<sup>1</sup> Barton, P. E. & Coley, R. J. (2009). *Parsing the achievement gap II*. Educational Testing Service.

<sup>2</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (2026). *Public schools enrollment dashboard*.

<sup>3</sup> RIDE. (2025). *Private/parochial school data, 2024-2025 school year*.

<sup>4</sup> RIDE. (2025). *RI Pre-K enrollment October 1, 2025*.

<sup>5</sup> RIDE, Office of Diverse Learners. (2025). *Special Education Census, 2024-2025 school year*.

<sup>6</sup> RIDE, Office of Diverse Learners. (2025). *English Learner Census, 2024-2025 school year*.

<sup>7</sup> Carver-Thomas, D. (2018). *Diversifying the teacher profession: How to recruit and retain teachers of color*. Learning Policy Institute.

<sup>8</sup> New England Secondary School Consortium. (2020). *Increasing the racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the educator workforce: A call to action for leaders*. <https://www.greatschoolspartnership.org/diversifying-the-educator-workforce/>

<sup>9</sup> Lachlan-Haché, L., Creque, D., Kimmel, L., El-Mekki, S., Corsello. (2023). *Prioritizing an integrated approach to educator shortages and workforce diversity, part 2: Innovative strategies and examples across the talent development continuum*. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/ED660776.pdf>

(continued from page 133)

#### Source of Data for Table/Methodology for Children Participating in School Meals

Collaboratives include Urban Collaborative Accelerated Program, West Bay Collaborative and YouthBuild Preparatory Academy.

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

The October 2025 enrollment is for the full month of October and is not comparable with the October 1, 2025 enrollment numbers reported elsewhere in the 2026 *Factbook*.

#### References for Children Participating in School Meals

<sup>1</sup> Hayes, T., & Williams, A. (2021). *The School Breakfast Program and National School Lunch Program: A Primer*. <https://www.americanactionforum.org/print/>

<sup>2</sup> United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). *School breakfast program participation and meals served*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

<sup>3</sup> United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). *National school lunch program: Participation and lunches served*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

<sup>4</sup> United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). *School breakfast program: Children participating*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

<sup>5</sup> United States Department of Agriculture: Food and Nutrition Service. (2025). *National school lunch program: Total participation*. <https://www.fns.usda.gov/pd/child-nutrition-tables>

<sup>6</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (2026). *October 1, 2025*.

<sup>7</sup> Cullen, K. W., & Chen, T. (2017). The contribution of the USDA school breakfast and lunch program meals to student daily dietary intake. *Preventive Medicine Reports*, 5, 82–85.

<sup>8</sup> The Annie E. Casey Foundation. (2025). *KIDS COUNT Data Center*. <datacenter.kidscount.org>

<sup>9</sup> No Kid Hungry. (2023). *How does hunger affect learning?* <https://www.nokidhungry.org/blog/how-does-hunger-affect-learning>

<sup>10</sup> Utah Food Bank. (2023). *Back to school hunger: Addressing a hidden educational barrier*. <https://www.utahfoodbank.org/2023/08/08/back-to-school-hunger-addressing-a-hidden-educational-barrier>

<sup>11</sup> Cook, J., Jeng, K. (2009). *Child food insecurity: The economic impact on our nation*. Feeding America.

<sup>12</sup> Food Research and Action Center. (2016). *Research brief: Breakfast for learning*. <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/breakfastforlearning-1.pdf>

<sup>13</sup> Food Research and Action Center. (2021). *School meals are essential for student health and learning*. <https://frac.org/wp-content/uploads/School-Meals-are-Essential-Health-and-Learning.pdf>

<sup>14</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (n.d.). *School breakfast program*. Retrieved March 26, 2025, from <https://ride.ri.gov/child-nutrition/nutritionprograms/>

<sup>15</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (n.d.). *National school lunch program*. Retrieved March 26, 2025, from <https://ride.ri.gov/child-nutrition/nutrition-programs/national-school-lunch-program>

<sup>16</sup> *State of Rhode Island General Assembly*. (n.d.). Retrieved March 18, 2026, from [https://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease/\\_layouts/15/ril.pressrelease.inputform/DisplayForm.aspx?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=374693](https://www.rilegislature.gov/pressrelease/_layouts/15/ril.pressrelease.inputform/DisplayForm.aspx?List=c8baae31-3c10-431c-8dcd-9dbbe21ce3e9&ID=374693)

<sup>17</sup> Rhode Island Department of Human Services. (n.d.). *SUN Bucks*. Retrieved January 25, 2026, from <https://dhs.ri.gov/programs-and-services/supplemental-nutrition-assistance-program-snap/supplemental-nutrition-10>

<sup>18</sup> First Focus Campaign for Children. (2023). *Universal school meals: Policy brief*. <https://campaignforchildren.org/resource/issue-brief-universal-school-meals/>

<sup>19</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education, Child Nutrition Programs, Office of School Health and Wellness. (n.d.). *October 2025*.

<sup>20</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2024). *Community eligibility: The key to hunger-free schools 2024*. <https://frac.org/cep-report-2024>

<sup>21</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2025). *School meals support children's health and learning*. <https://frac.org/school-meals>

<sup>22</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (n.d.). *Free or reduced-price school meals application*. Retrieved January 26, 2026, from <https://ride.ri.gov/child-nutrition/free-or-reduced-price-school-meals-application>

<sup>23</sup> School Nutrition Association. (2025). *Impact of HR 1 on school meal programs*. <https://schoolnutrition.org/wp-content/uploads/2025/08/TAM-25-SNA-BBB-Bill-Summary.pdf>

<sup>24</sup> Food Research & Action Center. (2025). *State-by-state CEP fact sheets 2025: Rhode Island*. <https://frac.org/research/resource-library/cep-fact-sheets-2025>

(continued from page 135)

#### References for Out-of-School Time

<sup>10</sup> Mahoney, J. L., Parente, M. E., & Zigler, E. F. (2010). After-school program participation and children's development. In *After-School Program Participation and Children's Development*.

<sup>11</sup> *State of out of school time learning programs in Rhode Island*. (2019).

<sup>12</sup> Afterschool Alliance. (2023). *21st Century Community Learning Centers: Accelerating learning, supporting families, earning results*. [www.afterschoolalliance.org](http://www.afterschoolalliance.org)

<sup>13</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education, Office of Student, Community and Academic Supports. (2026). *21st Century Community Learning Center enrollment 2024-2025*.

<sup>14</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (n.d.). *Learn365RI*. <https://ride.ri.gov/>

<sup>15</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (2025). *Learn365 FY25 Children and Youth Participation*.

<sup>16</sup> Rhode Island Department of Human Services and Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children. (n.d.). *January 2026*.

<sup>17</sup> *Rhode Island Department of Human Services and Rhode Island Association for the Education of Young Children*. (n.d.).

(continued from page 137)

#### References for Multilingual Learners

<sup>2</sup> Tung, R. (2013). Innovations in educational equity for English language learners. *Voices in Urban Education*, 2–5.

<sup>3</sup> Rhode Island Department of Education. (2024). *Rhode Island's Strategy for Improving Outcomes for Multilingual Learners*. [ride.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur806/files/2024-09/Encl5d\\_MLL\\_Deck\\_Regs.pdf](https://ride.ri.gov/sites/g/files/xkgbur806/files/2024-09/Encl5d_MLL_Deck_Regs.pdf)