



CONTACT: Katherine Linwood, Communications Manager  
klinwood@rikidscount.org

## Rhode Island Ranks 26th in the 2026 National KIDS COUNT Data Book

*Annual Report Introduces New Index to Increase Accountability  
By Showing How State Policies and Public Investment Improve Children's Lives*

**JUNE 8, 2026 – PROVIDENCE, RI** — Rhode Island ranks 26th among the 50 states for child well-being, according to the 2026 *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, an annually published resource that tracks child well-being across the country. Every year, the *Data Book* presents national and state data from 16 indicators in four domains — economic well-being, education, health, and family and community factors — and ranks the states according to how children are faring overall and by domain. Rhode Island’s rank of 26th, based on 2024 data, is a drop from its rank of 20th based on 2023 data.

For the first time this year, states receive a comprehensive score (from 0 to 1,000) in the Data Book, not just a ranking. The scores track 16 indicators in four domains — economic well-being, education, health, and family and community factors — over a five-year period from 2019 to 2024. The new scoring system shows whether policies and public investment are actually improving children’s lives, not merely how states compare to each other. Rhode Island received a score of 583, slightly above the national score of 547.

- Rhode Island’s lower overall ranking is driven primarily by declines in Economic Well-Being and Family & Community Context. In fact, from 2019 to 2024 Rhode Island experienced the steepest decline in its Economic Well-Being score by a wide margin, with its score plummeting by 161 points, compared to 29 states that saw improvements in this area.
- Based on data from 2023, Rhode Island ranked 26th in Economic Well-Being and 14th in Family and Community; using the most recent data from 2024, the state ranks 36th and 26th, respectively.
- Rhode Island saw stability in Education, with a score of 408, and improvement in Health score, moving from 682 to 737.

In its 37<sup>th</sup> year of publication, the *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* provides reliable statewide data to help leaders see where progress is being made, where greater support is needed, and which strategies are making a difference. By offering both a big-picture view and a local

road map, the *Data Book* equips policymakers, advocates, and communities with the information they need to make decisions that help kids and young people thrive throughout their lives.

“Behind every number in this report is a child who is either hungry or fed, housed or homeless, progressing academically or falling behind. No state is consistently getting this right,” said Lisa M. Lawson, President and CEO of the Annie E. Casey Foundation. “The Data Book challenges us to follow the evidence and do what delivers results.”

#### **Rhode Island’s rankings for the four domains are below:**

- **Economic Well-Being:** 36<sup>th</sup>
- **Education:** 25<sup>th</sup>
- **Health:** 11<sup>th</sup>
- **Family & Community Context:** 26<sup>th</sup>

“We know what kids need to grow up healthy and connected so they can thrive as adults: Stable homes, strong schools, nutritious food, meaningful relationships and opportunities to learn, play and grow,” said Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Executive Director Paige Parks. “Rhode Island needs to continue tackling the housing crisis. Rhode Island’s housing is considered one of the least affordable in the country. We must also work to help families meet their economic needs through strategies like the proposed state Child Tax Credit and much-needed improvements to the Rhode Island Works program. We can see from this new methodology that the federal Child Tax Credit contributed to an increase in Rhode Island’s Economic Well-Being score between 2021 and 2022- the only increase in this domain over the five-year period.”

#### **Call to Action for Rhode Islanders**

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT encourages lawmakers and officials in Rhode Island to use this detailed information to unite and respond with initiatives that invest in children and families.

Throughout this legislative session, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT has been advocating for [budget and legislative priorities that advance our mission](#). We are now in the final week of the session. **We urge Rhode Islanders to advocate for these priorities as the legislative session comes to a close.** Now is the time to contact legislators and House and Senate leadership to ensure that these important items are passed!

- **Quick advocacy opportunities - take action with these easy tools:** [Raising Rhode Island](#) and [Right From the Start](#)

- **Call or email your own State Representative/Senator:**

- Visit [vote.ri.gov](http://vote.ri.gov) to find your State Representative/Senator.
- You can also make a call or send an e-mail to Speaker Blazejewski's office [rep-blazejewski@rilegislature.gov](mailto:rep-blazejewski@rilegislature.gov) (401-222-2466) and President Lawson's office [sen-lawson@rilegislature.gov](mailto:sen-lawson@rilegislature.gov) (401-222-4901) to tell them you support these priorities.

### **RELEASE INFORMATION**

The *2026 KIDS COUNT Data Book* will be available at <http://www.aecf.org/databook>. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about the Data Book can use the KIDS COUNT Data Center at [datacenter.aecf.org](http://datacenter.aecf.org).

### **ABOUT THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION**

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's young people by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work, and grow. For more information, visit [www.aecf.org](http://www.aecf.org). KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

### **ABOUT RHODE ISLAND KIDS COUNT**

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT advances equitable policies that improve the lives of all Rhode Island children and eliminate disparities through the power of data, advocacy, and civic action. For more information, visit [www.rikidscount.org](http://www.rikidscount.org).