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#RIFactbook

## **Rhode Island KIDS COUNT Releases 26th Annual *Factbook* Focusing on the Status of Rhode Island's Children**

*Annual Factbook charts improvements and declines in the well-being of Rhode Island's 203,908 children. The Factbook allows us to take stock of where Rhode Island effectively supports children's development and where we need to focus increased attention and efforts.*

*Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is focused on the impact that COVID-19 is having and will have on Rhode Islanders, particularly our most vulnerable children and families. Exacerbating racial and ethnic and economic disparities as a result of this crisis is a serious concern.*

Providence, RI (April 7, 2020) – Today, Rhode Island KIDS COUNT releases its twenty-sixth annual report on the well-being of Rhode Island's children and families. The **2020 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook** charts improvements and declines in the well-being of Rhode Island's 203,908 children. Data are presented for the state and for each of Rhode Island's 39 cities and towns. The Factbook indicators are grouped into five interrelated categories: family and community, economic well-being, health, safety, and education. There are a total of 70 indicators of child well-being in the *2020 Factbook*.

Elizabeth Burke Bryant, Executive Director of Rhode Island KIDS COUNT, said, "Healthy, well-educated children and strong families are the foundation of Rhode Island's well-being. The *Factbook* allows us to take stock of where Rhode Island effectively supports our children's development and where we need to focus increased attention and efforts. Unacceptable gaps continue to exist between children of color and White children in nearly every *Factbook* indicator. These gaps have persisted because of systemic racism and barriers to opportunity that must be addressed to ensure that every child has the opportunity to succeed."

Bryant continued: "The information presented in the *2020 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook* can help our state and local leaders and policymakers make well-informed policy decisions that support the well-being of all children and families in Rhode Island during this current public health crisis and every day. The *Factbook* is also an important tool to inform the work of nonprofit organizations, educators, and everyone working on behalf of children and families. Regardless of our individual roles, we have a shared responsibility to work together to improve the lives of children, youth, and families."

### **Public Health Crisis - COVID-19**

Rhode Island KIDS COUNT is focused on the impact that COVID-19 is having and will have on Rhode Islanders, particularly our most vulnerable children and families.

Rhode Island children and families are deeply impacted by the changes brought about by COVID-19. Many families are facing unemployment and the associated financial strains, child care programs have closed (leaving those who are still employed with serious

obstacles to both parenting and working), and distance learning is a new venture for Rhode Island educators and students. Children's mental health and the needs of children and youth in the child welfare system are other key areas of focus. Communities and public programs are working hard to adapt to meet the needs of Rhode Islanders with public health as the main priority.

Exacerbating racial and ethnic and economic disparities as a result of this crisis is a serious concern. Low-income families from marginalized communities will be particularly affected by the impact of this crisis from housing and nutrition to employment.

Some of the *Factbook* indicators are particularly relevant to the coronavirus crisis and the enormous challenges ahead:

- **Economic Well-Being**
  - Cost of Housing...*Factbook pages 26-27*
  - Secure Parental Employment...*Factbook pages 30-31*
  - Paid Family Leave...*Factbook pages 32-33*
  - Children in Poverty...*Factbook pages 36-39*
  - Children Receiving SNAP Benefits...*Factbook pages 44-45*
  - Women and Children Participating in WIC...*Factbook pages 46-47*
  
- **Health**
  - Children's Health Insurance...*Factbook pages 52-53*
  - Children's Mental Health...*Factbook pages 58-59*
  - Children With Special Needs...*Factbook pages 60-61*
  
- **Safety**
  - Children Witnessing Domestic Violence...*Factbook pages 104-105*
  - Child Abuse and Neglect...*Factbook pages 106-109*
  - Children in Out-of-Home Placement...*Factbook pages 110-111*
  
- **Education**
  - Licensed Capacity of Early Learning Programs...*Factbook pages 120-121*
  - Children Receiving Child Care Subsidies...*Factbook pages 122-123*
  - High Quality Early Learning Programs...*Factbook pages 124-127*
  - Public School Enrollment and Demographics...*Factbook pages 134-135*
  - Multilingual Learners/English Learners...*Factbook pages 140-141*

### **New Data Presented in the 2020 Rhode Island Kids Count Factbook**

- Increasing racial/ethnic diversity of Rhode Island children (p. 16)
- Educational outcomes for homeless children (pp. 28-29)
- Racial/ethnic disparities in maternal mortality and morbidity (p. 67)
- Services and supports for young children in the child welfare system (p. 108)
- Race/ethnicity of Rhode Island teachers, compared to students (p. 134)
- Increase in Multilingual Learners/English Learners in past 10 years (p. 140)

*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.*