

Rhode Island's School Readiness Indicators

School readiness indicators are a tool to help state policymakers create effective policies and investments in children's early years. The following indicators are benchmarks for progress that will help us understand whether children have what they need to thrive and arrive at school ready to succeed.

Homeless Children: Number of children under 6 years of age who received emergency housing services at homeless shelters and domestic violence shelters

Infants, toddlers and preschoolers who are homeless are more likely to experience developmental delays and develop emotional problems

697¹

Mother's Education Level: Percentage of total births to women with less than a high school diploma

Higher education levels of parents contribute to a more supportive home learning environment for children and are linked to higher educational achievement.

15%²

Health Insurance: Percentage of children under age 6 who are covered by any kind of public or private health insurance, including Medicaid, during the previous calendar year

Children without health insurance often have poorer school attendance and lower school achievement.

94.8%³

Up-to-Date Immunizations: Percentage of children ages 19-35 months who have received the entire 4:3:1:3:3 Series of Vaccinations recommended by the Advisory Committee on Immunization Practices.

Late or missing immunizations can result in preventable illnesses that can lead to long-term health problems.
85%⁴

Births to Teens: Birth rate per 1,000 teens ages 15-17

Teen pregnancy and parenting threatens the development and economic well-being of teen parents as well as their children.
21.3⁵

Child Abuse and Neglect: Rate of indicated investigations of child abuse and neglect per 1,000 children under age 6

Children who have been neglected or physically abused are more likely to have cognitive and emotional problems when they arrive at school.
15⁶

Early Intervention: Percentage of all children ages birth to 3 enrolled in the Early Intervention program.

Early Intervention programs address medical conditions and developmental delays that put children at risk of entering school without the skills to succeed.
7%⁷

Early Head Start: Percentage of income-eligible children birth to age 3 enrolled in the Early Head Start program.

High quality early childhood programs for young children who are at risk due to socio-economic and environmental factors are very cost-effective.
4%⁸

Accredited Child Care: Percentage of child care centers serving young children that have NAEYC accreditation and family child care homes accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care

Children who received high-quality child care score higher on tests of both cognitive and social skills in their early school years.

Child care centers are accredited by NAEYC: 9%, Family child care homes are accredited by the National Association for Family Child Care: 1%⁹

Access to Child Care Subsidies: Number of children under age 6 receiving child care that is either fully or partially paid for with a child care subsidy from the Rhode Island Department of Human Services

Child care subsidies increase the likelihood that low-income parents will be able to obtain high quality child care and remain employed.

8,076¹⁰

Full-Day Kindergarten: Percentage of public school kindergarten children enrolled in a full-day kindergarten program

Children benefit academically from participation in full-day kindergarten and are more likely to be ready for first grade.

41%¹¹

Fourth Grade Reading Skills: Percentage of fourth-grade students who scored at or above the proficiency level for reading in the *New Standards English Language Arts Reference Exam*

Fourth grade reading scores are a key predictor of future academic success and a reliable indicator of school readiness.

Basic Understanding	70%
Analysis & Interpretation	57% ¹²

References

1 Rhode Island Emergency Shelter Information Project 1997-2002. Providence, RI: Emergency Food and Shelter Board.

2 Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002 average. Data from 2000-2002 are provisional.

3 Average of Census Bureau's March Current Population Survey files from 2001-2003, as calculated by the Annie E. Casey Foundation.

4 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Immunization Survey, 2002.

5 Rhode Island Department of Health, Division of Family Health, Maternal and Child Health Database, 1998-2002. Data for 2000-2002 are provisional.

6 Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth and Families, Rhode Island Children's Information System, 2003.

7 Rhode Island Department of Health, December 31, 2003.

8 Rhode Island Early Head Start Program, October 2003.

9 Options for Working Parents, Providence, RI, December 2003.

10 Rhode Island Department of Human Services December 2003.

11 Rhode Island Department of Elementary & Secondary Education, 2003-2004 school year.

12 Rhode Island Department of Elementary and Secondary Education, 2003-2004 school year.