

# DCYF Child Victimization in Rhode Island Communities

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Child victimization, also known as child abuse and neglect, is “any recent act or failure to act on the part of a parent or caretaker which results in death, serious physical or emotional harm, sexual abuse or exploitation; or an act or failure to act, which presents an imminent risk of serious harm.”<sup>1</sup>

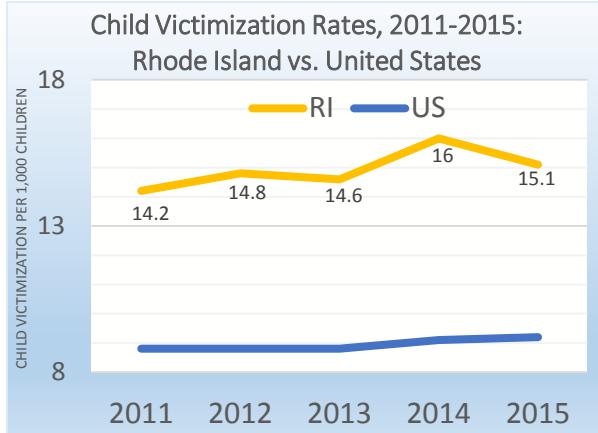


Figure 1. Source: National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NCANDS).<sup>a</sup>

➤ Rhode Island child victimization rates have consistently surpassed the nation over time, reaching almost twice the national rate in 2015.

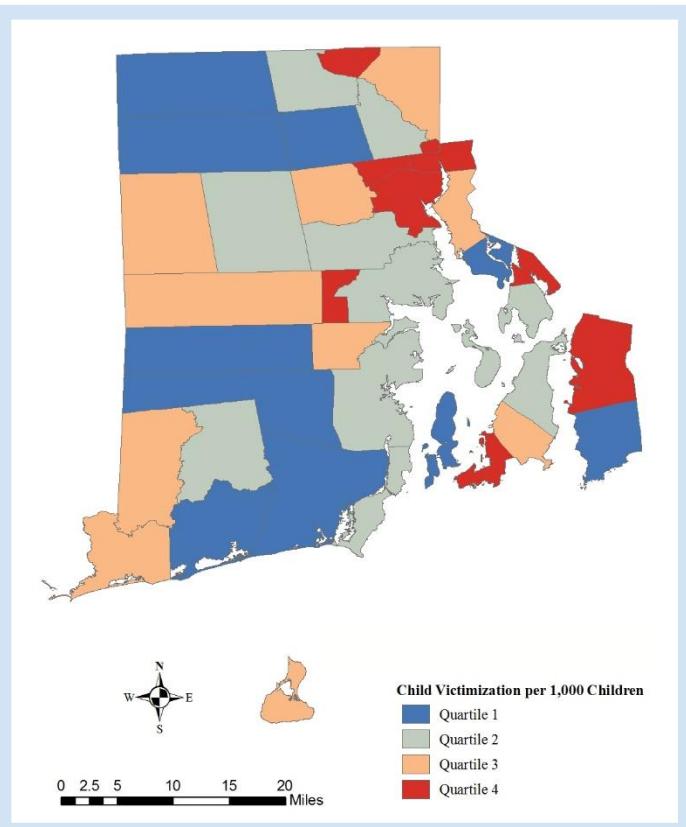


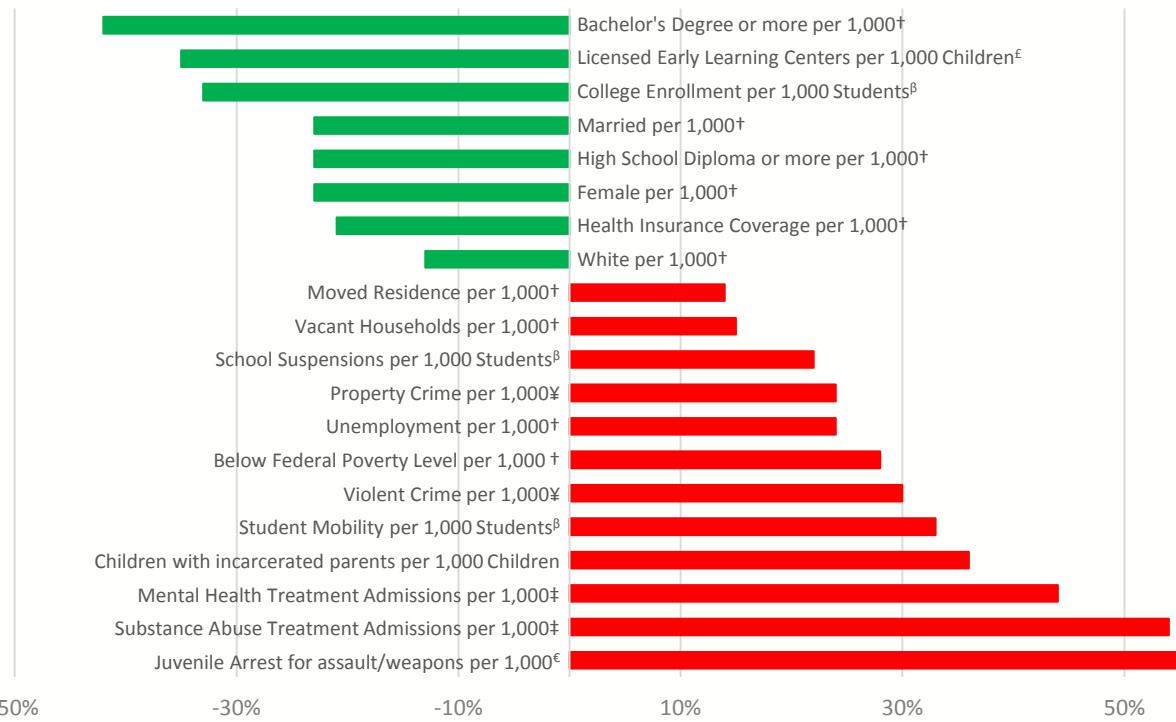
Figure 2. Source: Rhode Island Children's Information System (RICHIST) Federal Fiscal Year 2016, Rhode Island Department of Children, Youth & Families.<sup>b</sup>

Figure 3. Social-Ecological Model of Child Victimization.<sup>2</sup>

Child victimization is impacted by factors at the individual, relationship, community, and societal levels. Social and ecological factors include the setting for child maltreatment such as schools, workplaces, and neighborhoods.<sup>2</sup>

In Rhode Island, many social and ecological characteristics are associated with higher child victimization rates: poverty, crime, substance abuse and mental health burden, unemployment, and mobility. Other characteristics are associated with lower child victimization rates: towns with greater health insurance coverage, married, female, and white populations, higher levels of education, and more availability of early learning centers.

## Social-Ecological Characteristics Associated<sup>c</sup> with Childhood Victimization: Rhode Island 2016



Social and ecological level childhood victimization prevention requires involvement across sectors such as education, government, social services, health services, business/labor, justice, housing, media, and other non-governmental organizations.<sup>3</sup>

<sup>1</sup> U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, Administration for Children and Families, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, Children's Bureau. (2017). Child Maltreatment 2015. Available from <http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/cb/research-data-technology/statistics-research/child-maltreatment>.

<sup>2</sup> CDC. The Social-Ecological Model: A Framework for Prevention. (<https://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/overview/social-ecologicalmodel.html>)

<sup>3</sup> Fortson, B. L., Klevens, J., Merrick, M. T., Gilbert, L. K., & Alexander, S. P. (2016). Preventing child abuse and neglect: A technical package for policy, norm, and programmatic activities. Atlanta, GA: National Center for Injury Prevention and Control, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

<sup>a</sup>The number of victims is a unique count of children with substantiated maltreatment investigations. Rates were calculated by dividing the number of victims by the child population and multiplying by 1,000.

<sup>b</sup>Data unduplicated by child; child victims with out-of-state or unknown case address are excluded; child victims of maltreatment in foster care are excluded. rates were generated based on child population estimates from American Communities Survey 2012- 2016 Aggregated 5 year estimates.

<sup>c</sup>Poisson Regression was used to model child victimization counts with offset of child population in each community from American Communities Survey 2012-2016 Aggregated 5 year estimate. All characteristics had statistical significance at  $\alpha=0.05$ . All covariates were transformed to a standard normal distribution for ease of relative comparison. Data source for child victimization is RICHIST fiscal year 2016; data unduplicated by child; child victims with out-of-state or unknown case address are excluded; child victims of maltreatment in foster care are excluded.

<sup>d</sup>Juvenile arrests for assault/weapons offenses data are from Mongeau, T. & Tocco, G. (2017). 2016 juvenile detention data. Providence, RI: Rhode Island Department of Public Safety, Grant Administration Office.

<sup>e</sup>Data source for community characteristics is American Communities Survey 2012- 2016 Aggregated 5 year estimates.

<sup>f</sup>Data source Rhode Island Department of Corrections 2016; children of incarcerated parents is the number of children with parents serving sentences at the Rhode Island Department of Corrections per 1,000 children under age 18; data are reported via place of parent's last residence before entering prison and do not include Rhode Island children who have parents incarcerated at other locations.

<sup>g</sup>Data source Rhode Island Department of Education, 2015-2016 school year; student mobility defined as the number of students who enrolled in school after September 30 or withdrew from school before June 1 divided by the total enrollment for that school district; school suspensions per 100 is out-of-school suspensions for the school district at all grade levels divided by student enrollment multiplied by 100; % college enrollment is the percentage of high school graduates who enrolled in a two- or four-year college within 6 months.

<sup>h</sup>Data source RI Early Care and Education Data System; Licensed centers include child care programs, preschools, nursery schools, and centerbased Head Start and Early Head Start programs; rates were generated based on child population estimates from American Communities Survey 2012- 2016 Aggregated 5 year estimates.

<sup>i</sup>Data source for crime is Uniform Crime Reports (UCR) 2015; rates were generated based on adult population estimates from American Communities Survey 2012- 2016 Aggregated 5 year estimates.

<sup>j</sup>Data source for Mental Health and Substance Abuse Admissions is BHOLD fiscal year 2016; data unduplicated by patient; patients with out-of-state or unknown addresses are excluded; rates were generated based on adult population estimates from American Communities Survey 2012- 2016 Aggregated 5 year estimates.