



RHODE ISLAND'S YOUNG ADULT WORKFORCE

Young adults face growing economic challenges:

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GIVEN THESE CHALLENGES, IT IS CRUCIAL TO ASK:

What do we know about RI's young adult workforce?

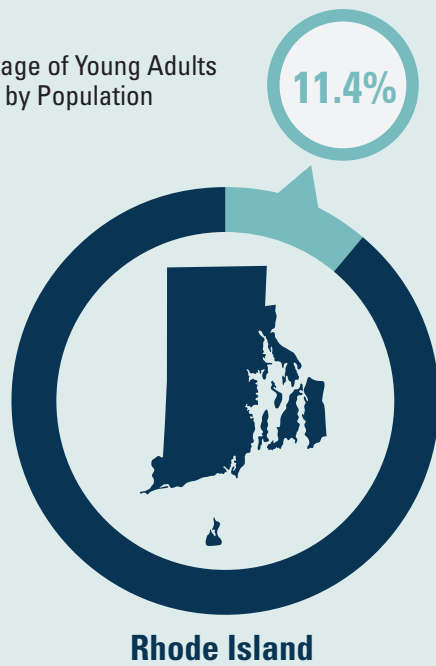
POPULATION

119,962

Young Adults in RI
Ages 18-24 (2011)

Young adults are a larger part of Rhode Island's population than in the rest of New England and the nation as a whole.

Percentage of Young Adults (18 - 24) by Population



RACE / ETHNICITY

Young adults in Rhode Island reflect the growing diversity of the state and nation. Latinos comprise the largest minority group.



69.5% White alone, not Hispanic or Latino

15.5% Hispanic or Latino

6.3% Black or African American alone, not Hispanic or Latino

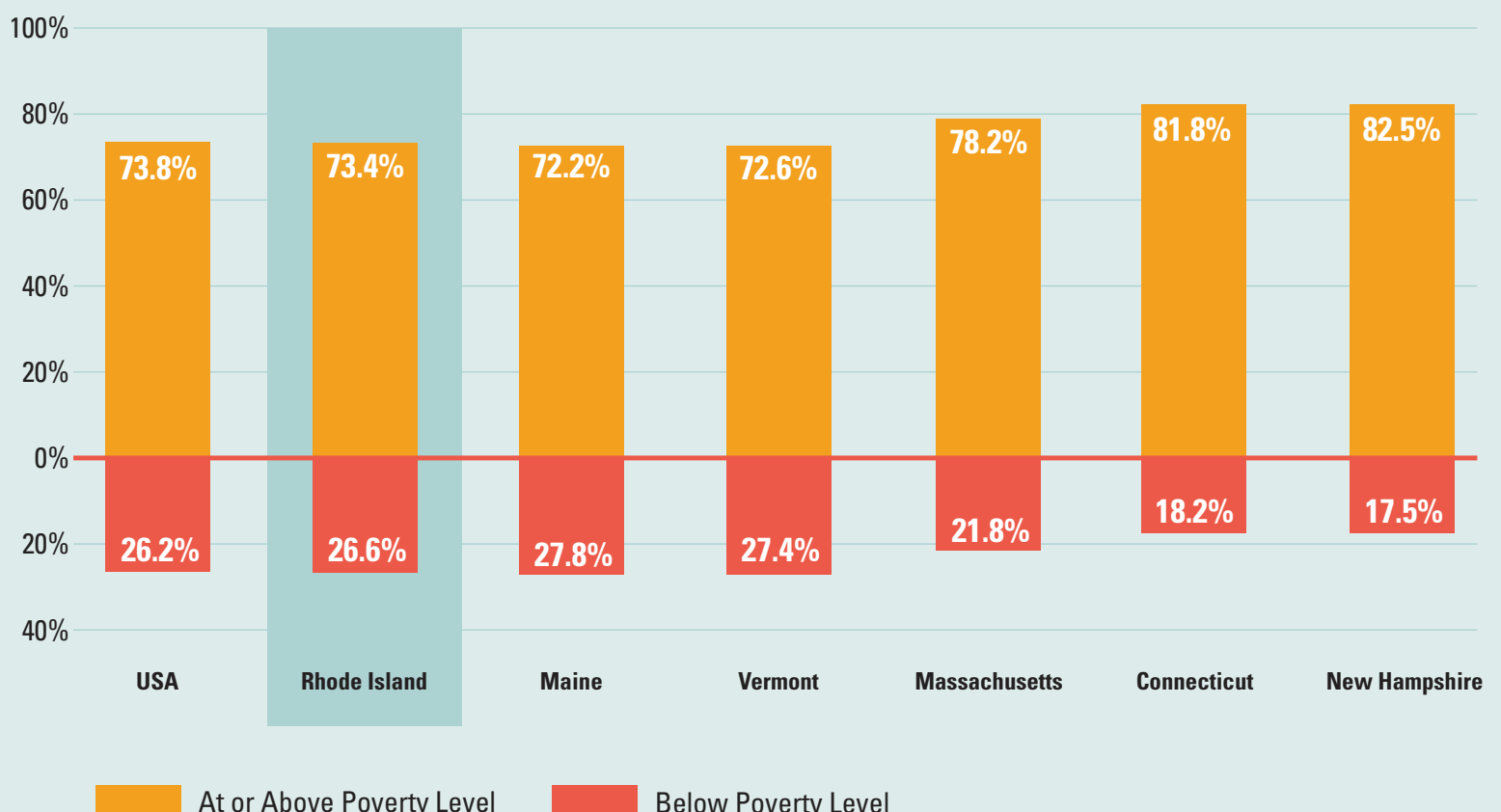
4.5% Asian alone, not Hispanic or Latino

3.8% Two or more races or some other race alone, not Hispanic or Latino

0.4% American Indian and Alaskan Native alone or Native Hawaiian and other Pacific Islander alone, not Hispanic or Latino

POVERTY

The poverty rate among Rhode Island's young adults is slightly higher than that of the nation, and falls in the higher range of New England states.



The Employment Challenge

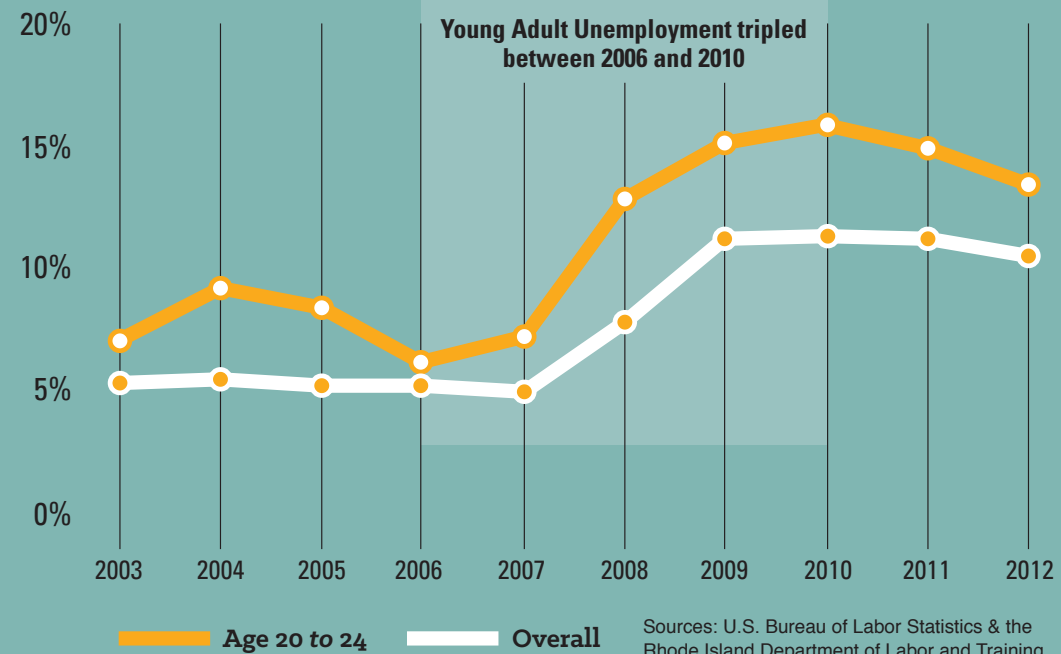
UNEMPLOYMENT & THE GREAT RECESSION

The Great Recession has meant higher unemployment.

Long-term career consequences of unemployment are especially harmful to young adults, particularly those at lower skill levels.

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Rhode Island Unemployment Rates 2003-2012



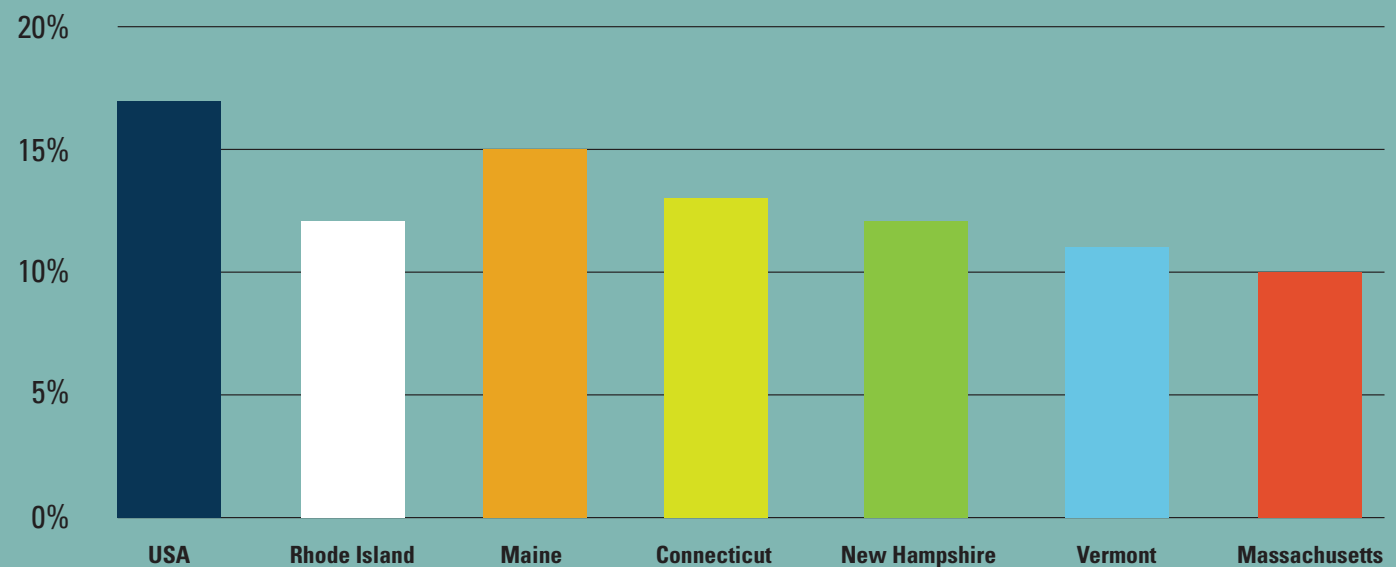
DISENGAGED YOUNG ADULTS

Young adults are not positioned for successful workforce engagement when they:

- lack job skills (nothing further than a high school diploma);
- are not pursuing further education; and
- are not currently working.

Fortunately, Rhode Island has fewer young adults fitting all three of these descriptions than the nation as a whole, and is about on par among New England states.

Persons Age 18 to 24 Not Attending School, Not Working, And No Degree Beyond High School ~ 2011



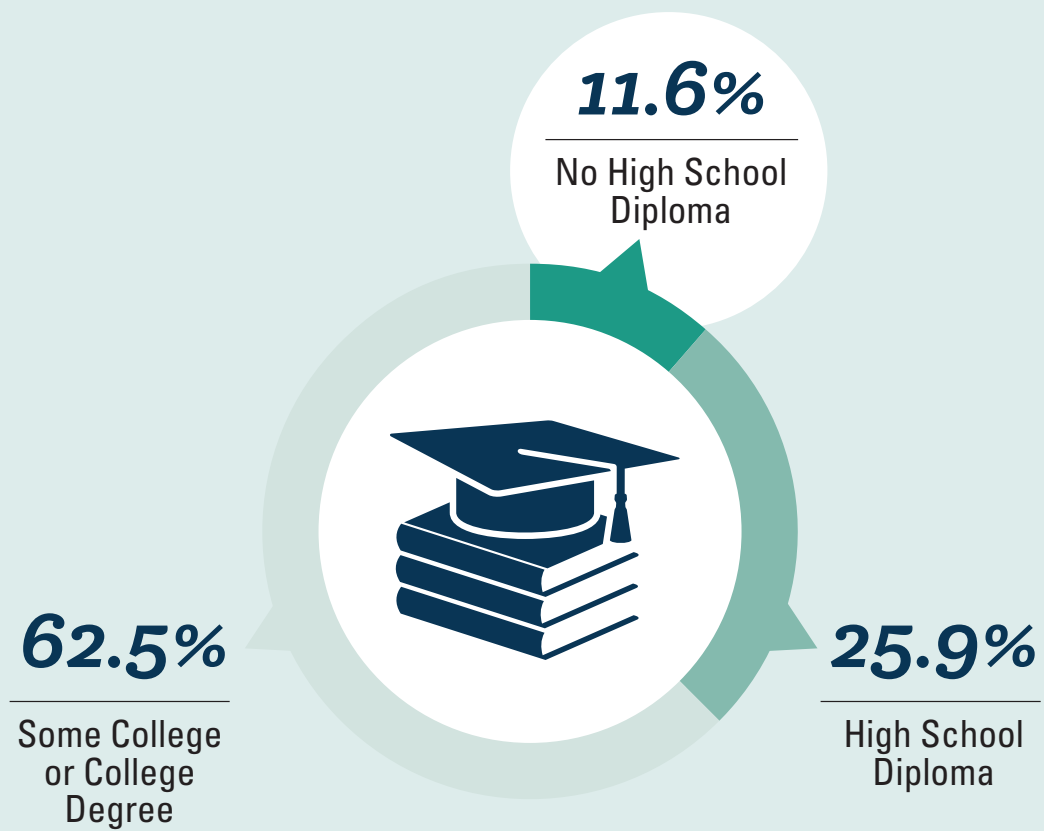
Source: Population Reference Bureau, analysis of data from the U.S. Census Bureau, 2011 American Community Survey via the KIDS COUNT Data Center.

Education and the Emerging Workforce

EDUCATIONAL ATTAINMENT

- A majority of RI's young adults have at least some college experience.
- This is important, as an increasing number of occupations require a college degree.
- Employment and wage levels are generally higher for those with more advanced educational credentials.

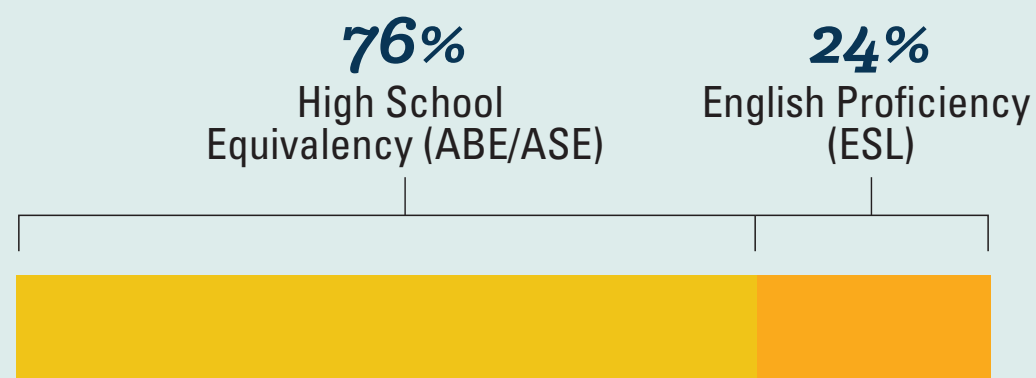
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ADULT EDUCATION

Of young adults without a high school diploma, less than 15% are in Adult Education programs. About a quarter of these are studying to improve their English language skills.

2,071 Adult Education Students, Age 18-24



Figures represent Adult Education students in Fiscal Year 2012. Source: Rhode Island Department of Education.

STANDARDIZED TEST SCORES

These scores gauge two basic workforce skills: math & reading.

Of RI's young adult high school grads, only slightly more than 40% met the state benchmark for math proficiency, while about three quarters were at least "proficient" in reading.

Percentages reflect 11th Grade NECAP scores for graduates of RI public high schools and who were aged 18 to 24 in 2011. Source: Rhode Island Department of Education.

Standardized Test Achievement Levels of RI's Young Adults



Voting as Civic Engagement

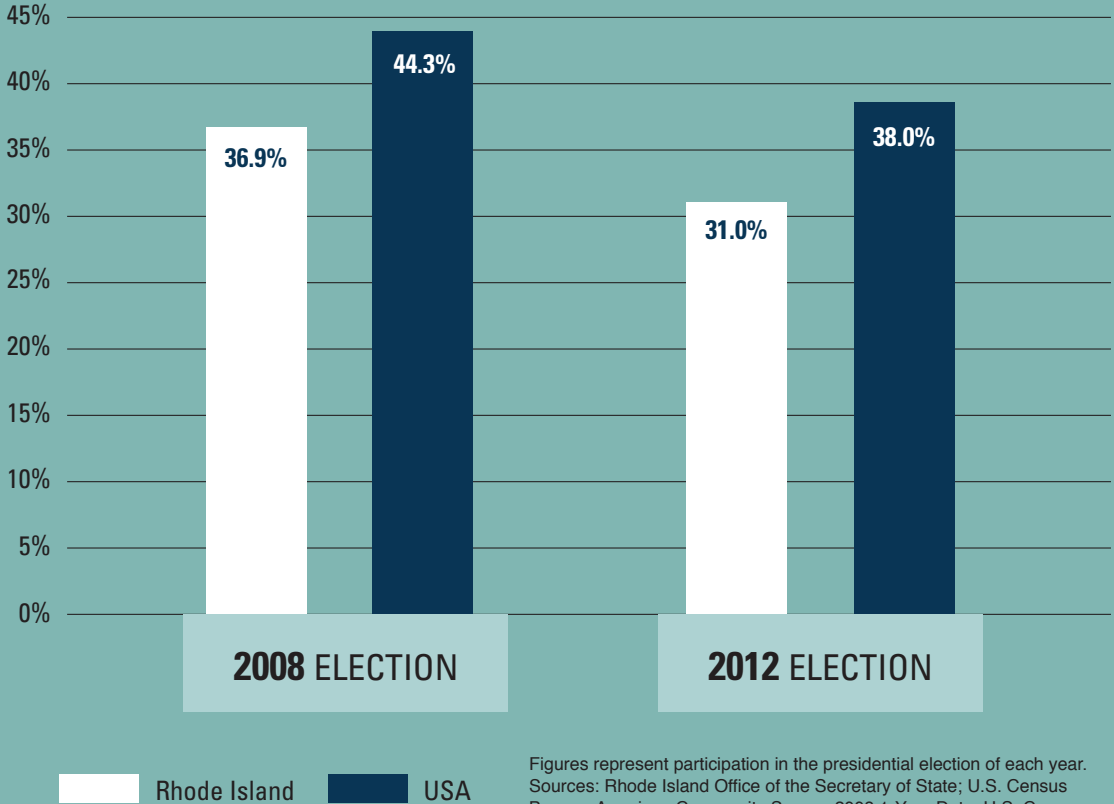
VOTER PARTICIPATION

Voter participation among RI's young adults mirrors the national trend, which was downward from 2008 to 2012.

RI's young adults voted in smaller numbers than their national peers in both elections.



Voter Participation Among Young Adults



Figures represent participation in the presidential election of each year. Sources: Rhode Island Office of the Secretary of State; U.S. Census Bureau, American Community Survey, 2008 1-Year Data; U.S. Census Bureau, Current Population Survey, November 2012 and earlier reports.

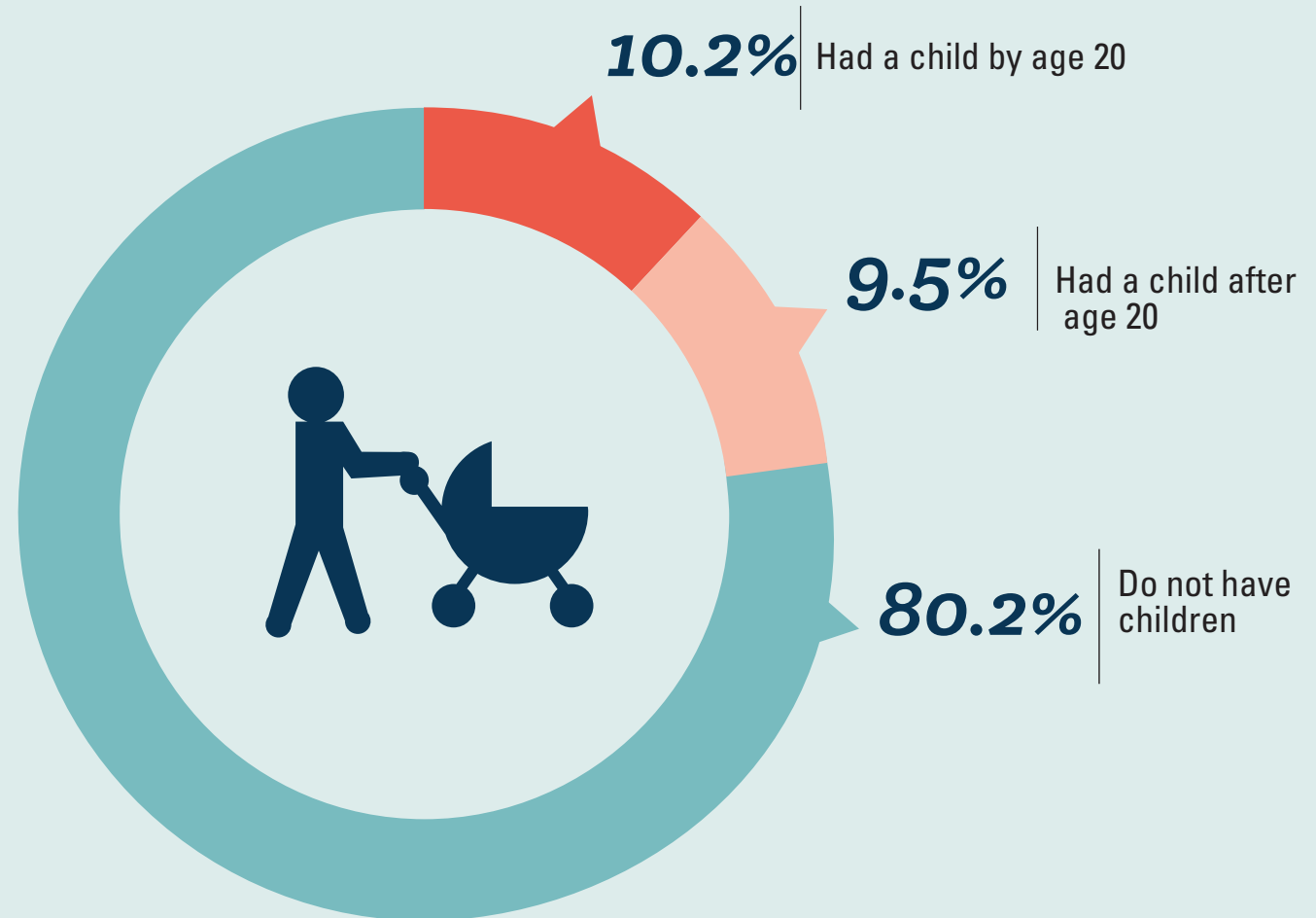
Teen Motherhood

TEEN MOTHERS

Births to women under age 20 often lead to poor educational, health, and economic outcomes for these women and their children.

Among Rhode Island's young adult women, 10.2% had children in their teens.

Among RI Women Aged 18 to 24:



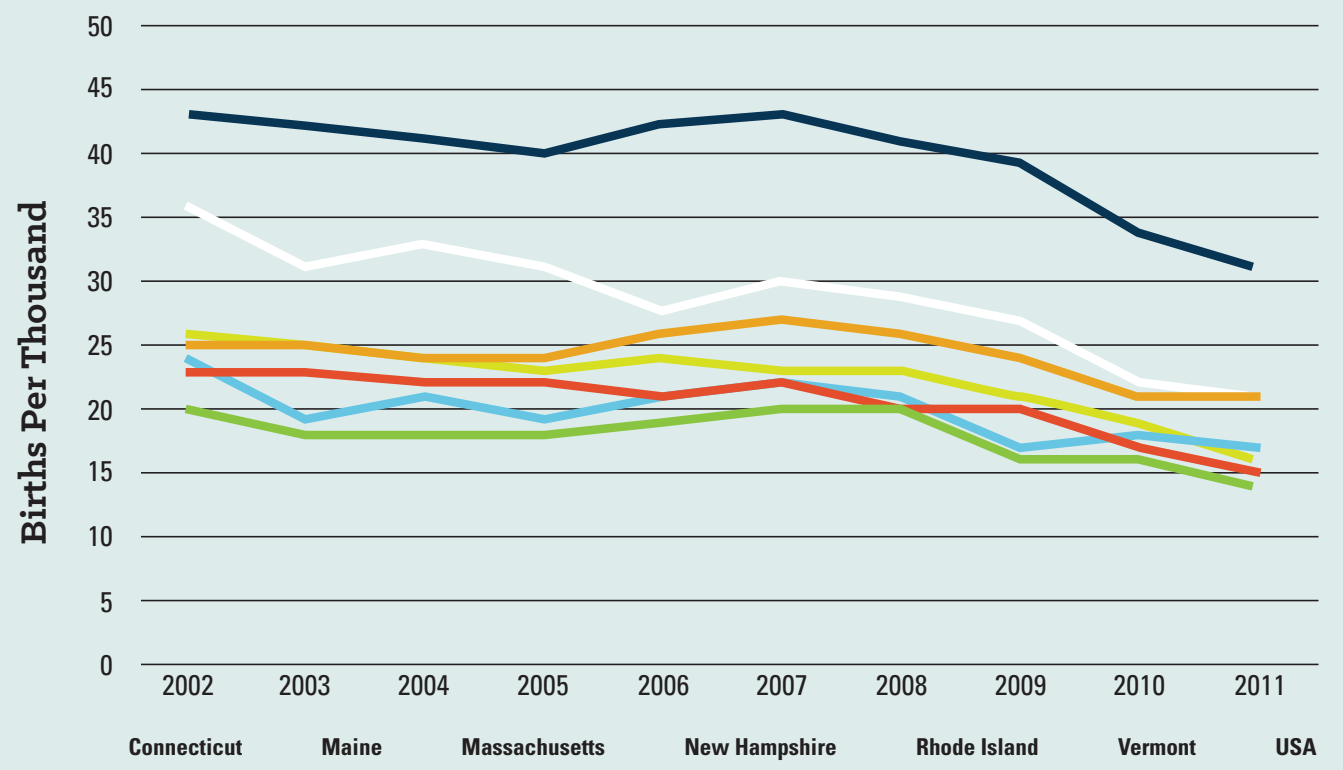
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Figures are estimates based upon births recorded in the Rhode Island Department of Health KIDSNET database and the total R.I. population of females aged 18 to 24 in 2011.

BIRTHS TO TEENS

Rhode Island's teen birth rate is lower than the national rate and consistent with rates in New England. Rates have declined in recent years.

Teen Birth Rate



Figures are estimates based upon births recorded in the Rhode Island Department of Health KIDSNET database and the total R.I. from: the U.S. Census Bureau; the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention; and the National Center for Health Statistics.

THE BIG QUESTIONS

The experience of RI's young adults in preparing for and entering into the workforce will have a decades-long impact on the state's economy. This infographic has provided an overview of this group. More detailed analyses will be possible with the upcoming addition of wage and employment data to the RI DataHUB. Questions that warrant further investigation include:

What is the employment and earnings status of young adults who studied in RI's education and training systems, including adult education?

Which industries employ our young adults? Which industries don't?

What skills and characteristics are common among young adults employed in growing industries and well-compensated jobs?

How are teen mothers faring in terms of education and employment upon reaching adulthood?

To what extent do earnings correlate with civic engagement?

Can we find evidence of a "brain drain" in RI?

For Further Reading:

The growing economic challenges faced by young adults:

DEMOS report on young adult employment challenges:

http://www.demos.org/sites/default/files/publications/Stuck%28uploaded%29_3.pdf

New York Times Economix blog post on long-term consequences of unemployment:

http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/09/06/persistent-scars-of-long-term-joblessness/?_r=1

PewResearch report on young adult economic challenges:

<http://www.pewsocialtrends.org/2012/02/09/young-underemployed-and-optimistic/>

Unemployment & young adults:

Economist article “Generation Jobless”:

<http://www.economist.com/news/international/21576657-around-world-almost-300m-15-24-year-olds-are-not-working-what-has-caused>

Study on the Career Effects of Graduating in a Recession:

http://www.columbia.edu/~vw2112/papers/cycl_upgr_oreovonwaheisz.pdf

Education and jobs:

New York Times Economix blog post on educational attainment and pay:

http://economix.blogs.nytimes.com/2013/02/19/college-premium-better-pay-better-prospects/?ref=business&_r=0

New York Times article on increasing employer demand for college degrees:

<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/02/20/business/college-degree-required-by-increasing-number-of-companies.html?pagewanted=all>

Teen Pregnancy:

Federal findyouthinfo.gov resource page on teen pregnancy:

<http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/youth-topics/teen-pregnancy-prevention/adverse-effects-teen-pregnancy>

The National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy report on the effects of teen pregnancy:

<http://www.thenationalcampaign.org/why-it-matters/pdf/Childbearing-Education-EconomicWellbeing.pdf>