

Community Needs Assessment Johnston, North Providence, Smithfield

In the spring of 2021, Tri-County Community Action commissioned a community needs assessment for the Health Equity Zone to be launched in Johnston, North Providence, and Smithfield. The needs assessment comprised several components. In terms of quantitative data, the needs assessment included information from public data sources such as the American Community Survey, Rhode Island Kids Count, and others (see appendix for a full list of data sources). Tri-County also conducted a community survey, and stakeholder interviews were held with community leaders across the three communities. There were also focus groups convened with Tri-County managers.

Together this information surfaced several key themes across the three communities:

1. Housing
2. Behavioral Health
3. Food Insecurity
4. Education
5. Healthcare (both in terms of access and chronic disease)
6. Employment
7. Older Adults

Each of these topics is highlighted below:

Housing

A significant percentage of renters in all three communities are rent-burdened, meaning they spend more than 30% of their income on housing. This ranges from 39% of renters in Johnston to 52% of renters in North Providence. Homeowners are comparably challenged, with between 23% (North Smithfield) and 30% (North Providence) spending more than 30% of their income on housing. At present, none of the three communities meet the State target for having 10% of the housing stock deemed “affordable.” The recent increase in real estate prices has only made the cost of housing more expensive for many.

Behavioral Health

While there is a paucity of data, community stakeholders and Tri-County staff alike identified significant unmet mental health needs for people of all ages in the three communities. These needs have largely been driven by the impact of the pandemic over the past 18 months, with a lack of social interaction for many in the community. Substance abuse is also a growing concern, particularly in terms of opiates. Johnston and Smithfield, for example, are well on their way to having the highest number of Suspected Opioid Overdose Related Emergency Department Visits since 2016. North Providence projects to exceed its highest number of Opioid Overdose Related Emergency Medical Services runs since 2016. North

Providence also has higher rates of child abuse and families with an incarcerated parent than the state average.

Food Insecurity

When it comes to young and school-age children, data indicates a relatively low uptake of supplemental food programs among lower-income families in the three communities. For example, enrollment of income-eligible families in the WIC (Women, Infants and Children) is lower in all three communities than the statewide average. There are also low participation rates by children from low-income families in the free school breakfast program. A survey of community members indicated that more than half of residents believe that healthy food options are not affordable. Nearly 2/3 of respondents reported that they had prepared meals (fast food or takeout) at least once a week. Stakeholders also identified food insecurity as a high priority need for many in the three communities. There are six food pantries (as of 2019) located across the three communities.

Education/Educational Attainment

Education can be considered as three different issues: early childhood education, K-12, and post-secondary education.

In terms of *early childhood education*, only between 32% (Smithfield) and 53% (North Providence) of low-income children living in the three communities are enrolled in the Early Head Start program. Pre-K and Head Start enrollment rates in the three communities also lag behind the statewide average.

Concerning *K-12 education*, third-grade reading and math scores in Johnston and North Providence trail statewide performance levels, although both communities outperform the state by 8th grade in reading and North Providence (and Smithfield) outperform the state in 8th-grade math. Graduation and college enrollment rates in all three communities exceed the state average.

For *post-secondary education*, more than one-third of residents age 25 and older have a high school degree or less across all three communities, with 36% of Smithfield residents, 42% of North Providence residents, and 47% of Johnston residents have not entered college. Post-secondary educational attainment is predictive of employment and income rates.

Healthcare

A range of health-related concerns for residents of the three communities also emerged from the data. *Key Maternal and Child Health* findings included the following:

- Children (2-17) Overweight – Johnston and North Providence exceed the state average
- Children (2-17) Obese – North Providence exceeds the state average
- Pediatric Asthma Visits to the ER – North Providence exceeds the state average
- Teen Birth Rate – North Providence exceeds the state average
- Preterm Births -- North Providence exceeds the state average

Key Chronic Disease findings included the following:

- Over the past five years, Tri-County has seen an increase in the percentage of patients with hypertension (27%) and diabetes (13.5%), while the rate of patients with asthma has slightly dropped from 7.3% to 5.7% since 2016.
- Among older adults (65+), residents from all three communities have higher rates of high cholesterol and clinical diagnoses of obesity than the state average.
- Between 65% (Smithfield) and 70% (Johnston) of residents ages 65 and older have at least four out of 15 chronic health conditions.
- Older adults living in these three communities have higher rates of anxiety and depression than the state average.

Employment

While Smithfield's per capita household income exceeds the state's average, Johnston and North Providence trail behind the state. Unemployment rates for younger residents (teens and young adults) are generally higher than the unemployment rate for the overall working-age population. Between 3% (Smithfield) and 11% (North Providence) of residents live in poverty. Note that this data precedes the pandemic.

DATA SOURCES

- US Census – 2019 American Community Survey <https://data.census.gov/cedsci/all?q=2019%20acs>
- RI Department of Statewide Planning – RI Data Center <http://www.planning.ri.gov/planning-areas/demographics/ri-data-center.php>
- RI Kidscount – 2020 FactBook <https://www.rikidscount.org/Data-Publications/RI-Kids-Count-Factbook>
- 2020 Uniform Crime Report Crime in Rhode Island <https://risp.ri.gov/documents/UCR/2020.pdf>
- Housing Works RI – 2015 and 2019 FactBooks https://www.housingworksri.org/Portals/0/Uploads/Documents/2019%20Pages/HFB2019_compressed.pdf
- RI Department of Health <https://health.ri.gov/data/diseases/> and <https://ridoh-overdose-surveillance-rihealth.hub.arcgis.com/>
- Prevent Overdose RI <https://preventoverdoseri.org/>
- Healthy Aging Data Report 2020 <https://healthyagingdatareports.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/RI-Healthy-Aging-Report-2020.pdf>
- RI Department of Education <https://www.ride.ri.gov/InformationAccountability/RIEducationData/SurveyWorks.aspx>



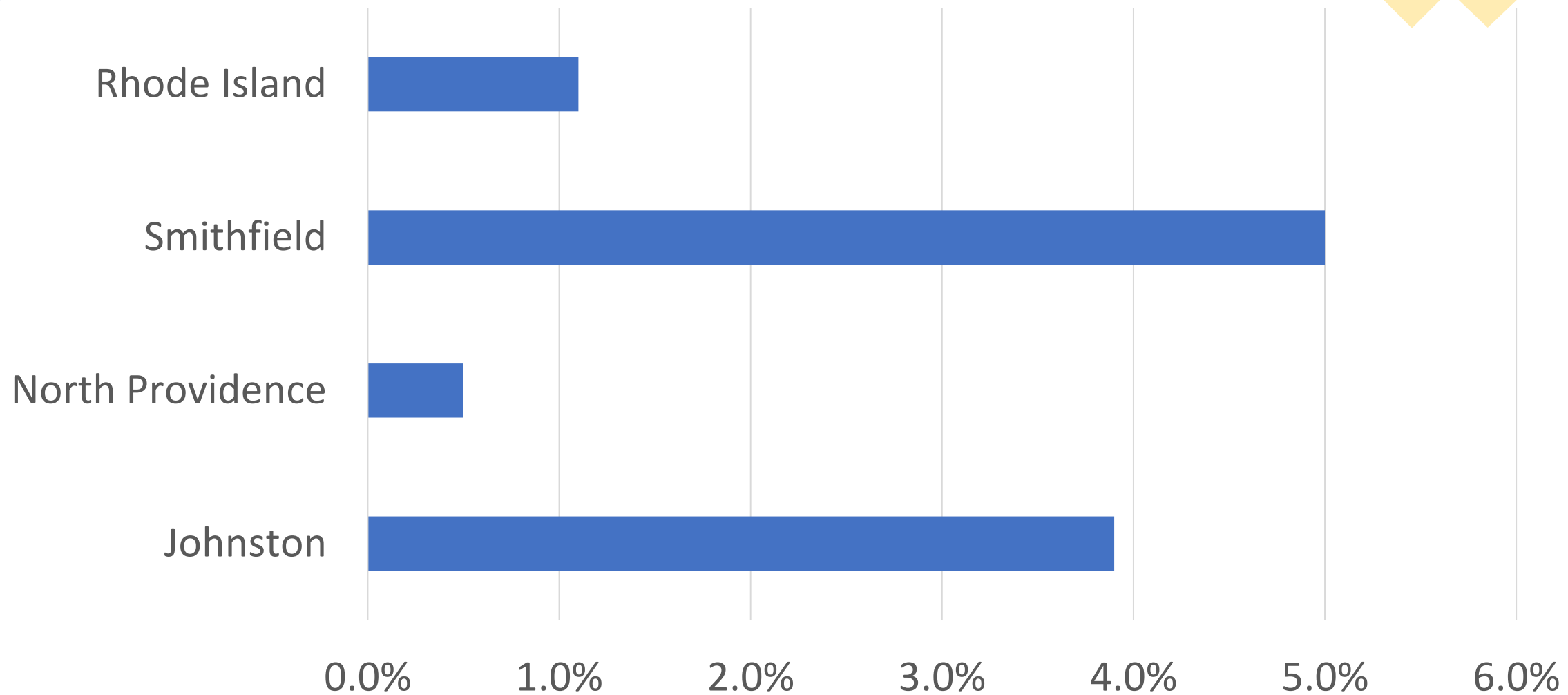
Health Equity Zone Community Level Data

North Providence, Johnston, and Smithfield

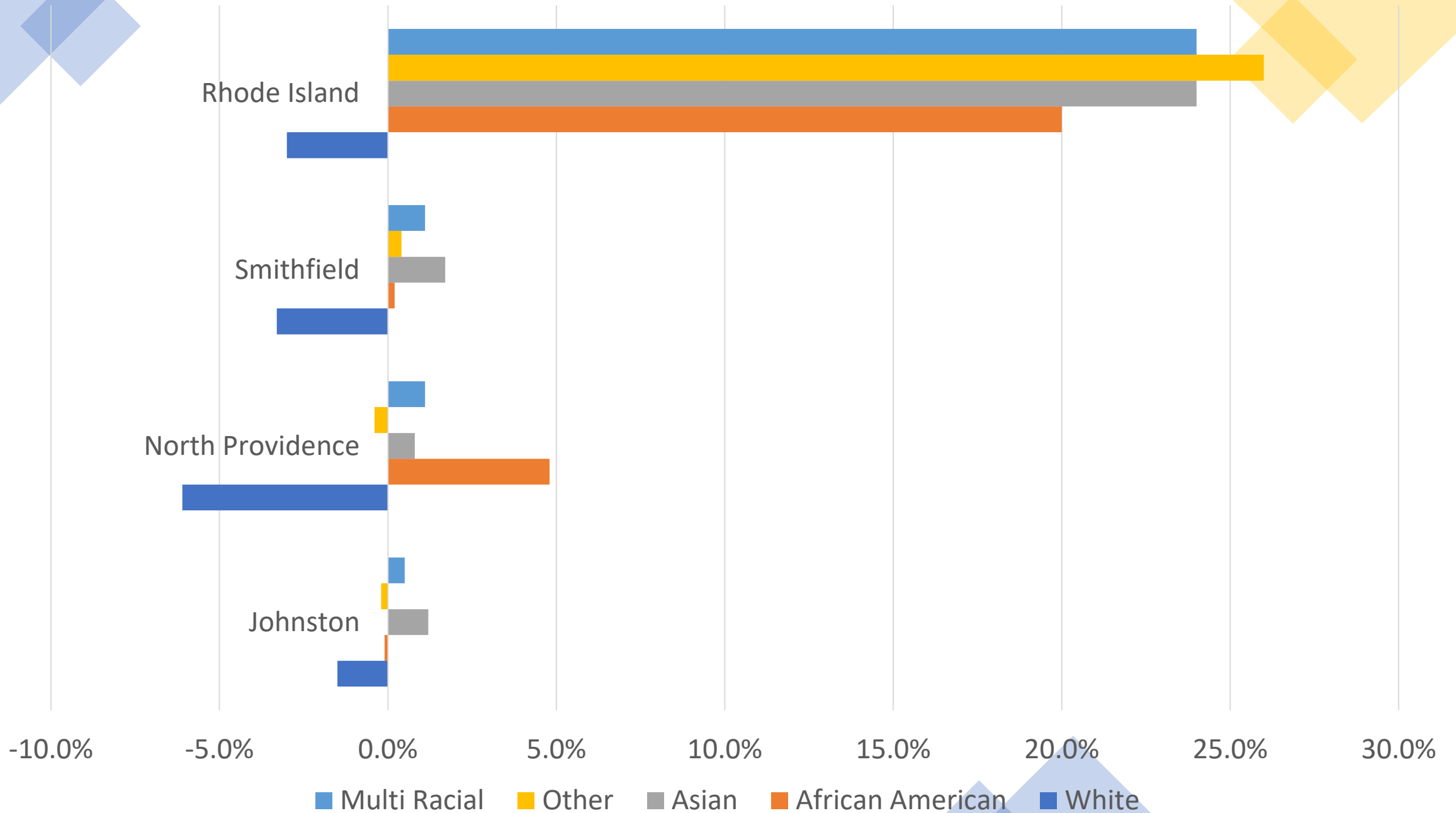


Demographics

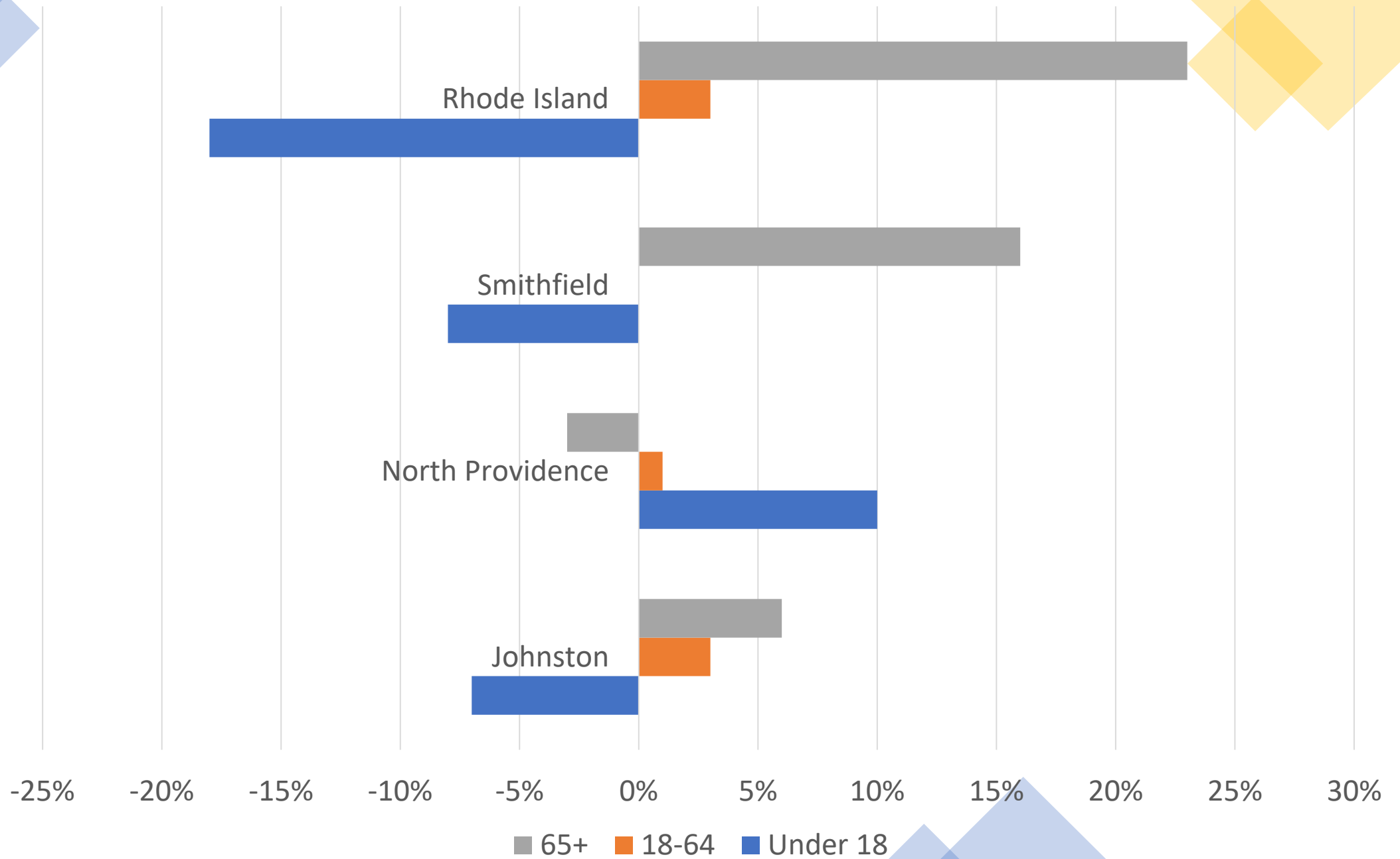
2000-2020 Change in Population



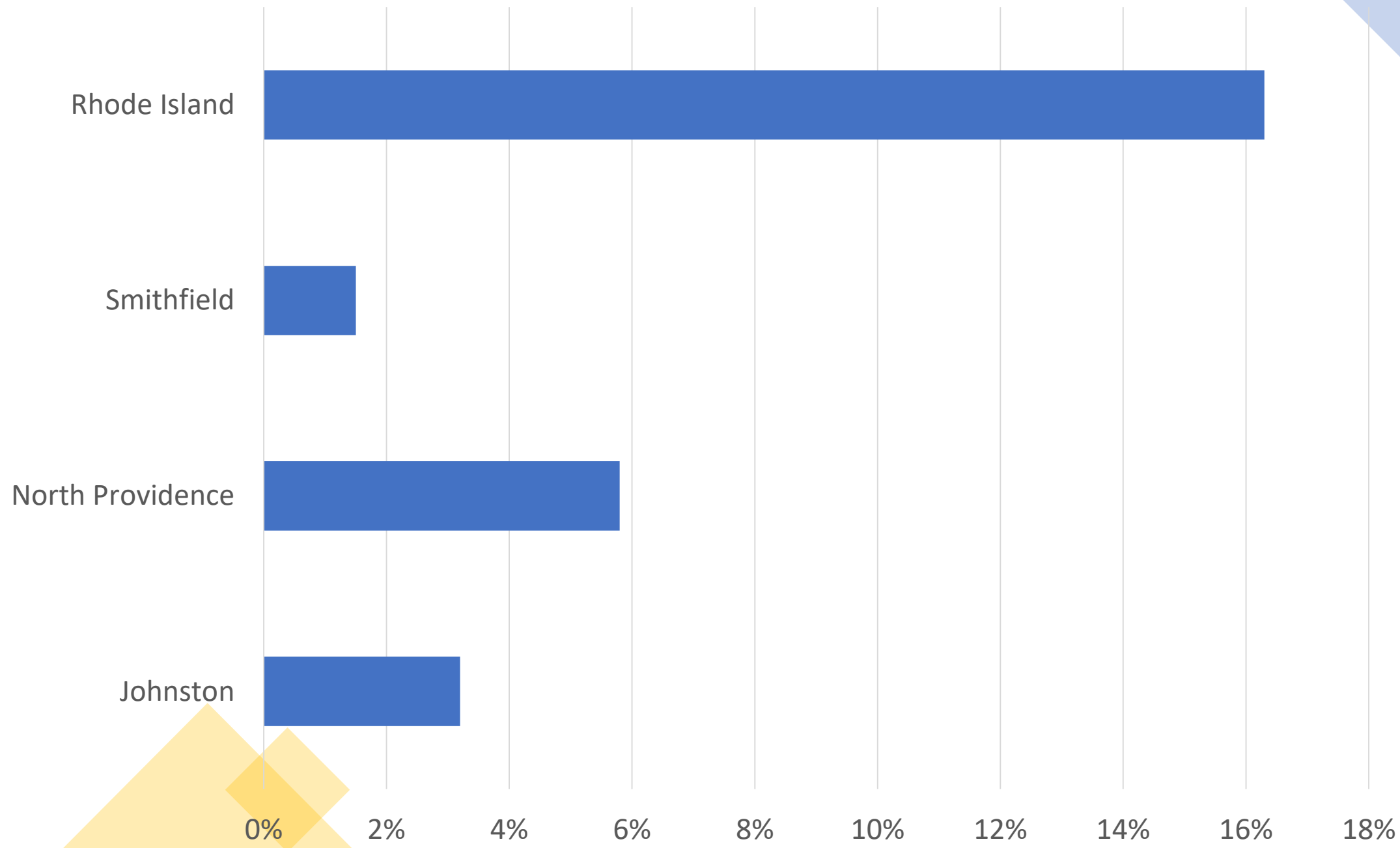
2010-2020 Change in % of Population



Change in Population By Age (2010 to 2019)

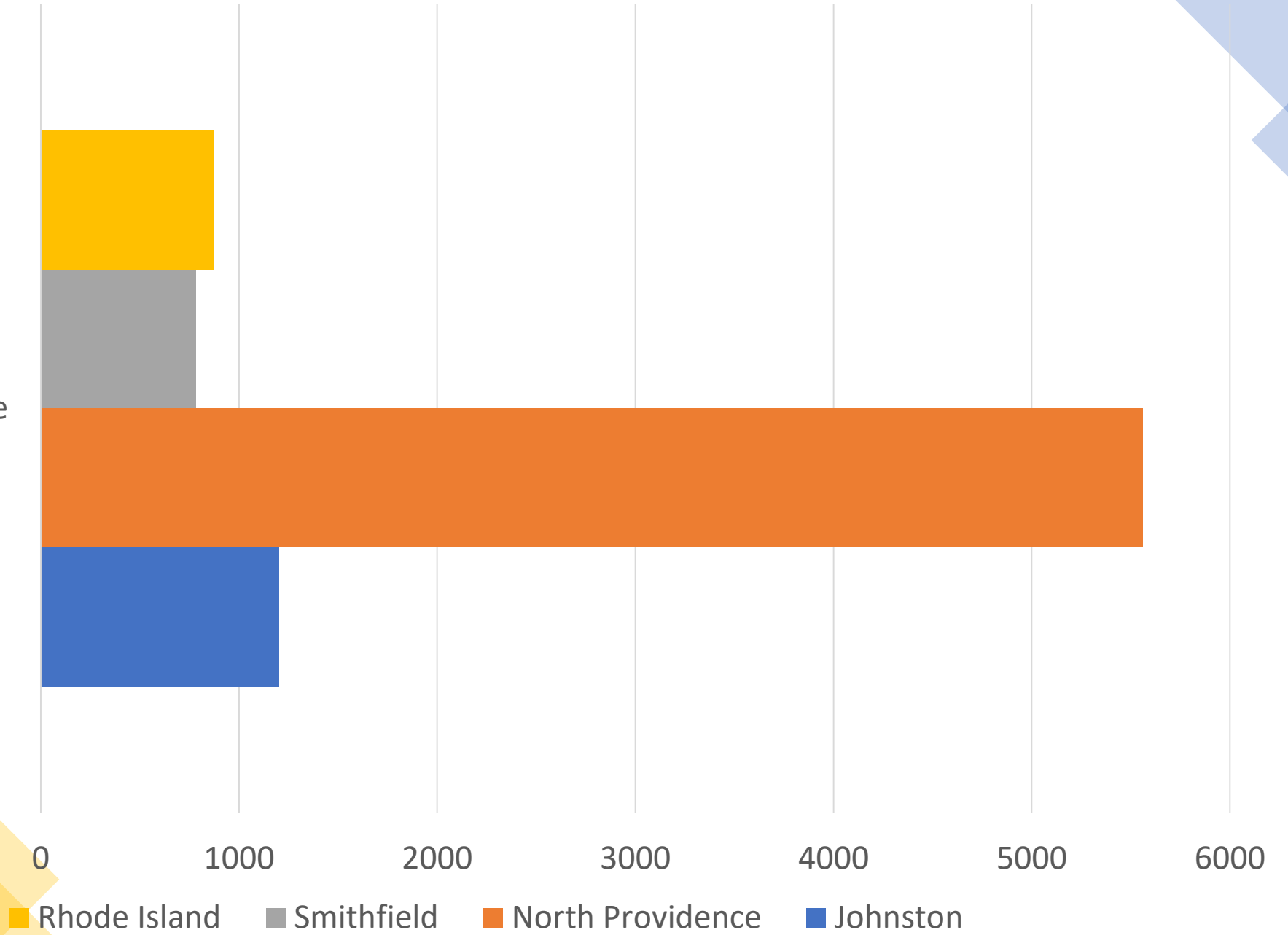


Percentage Residents Latino/Hispanic (2019)



Residential Density

Residents/Square Mile





Income

Estimated Median Household Income 2019

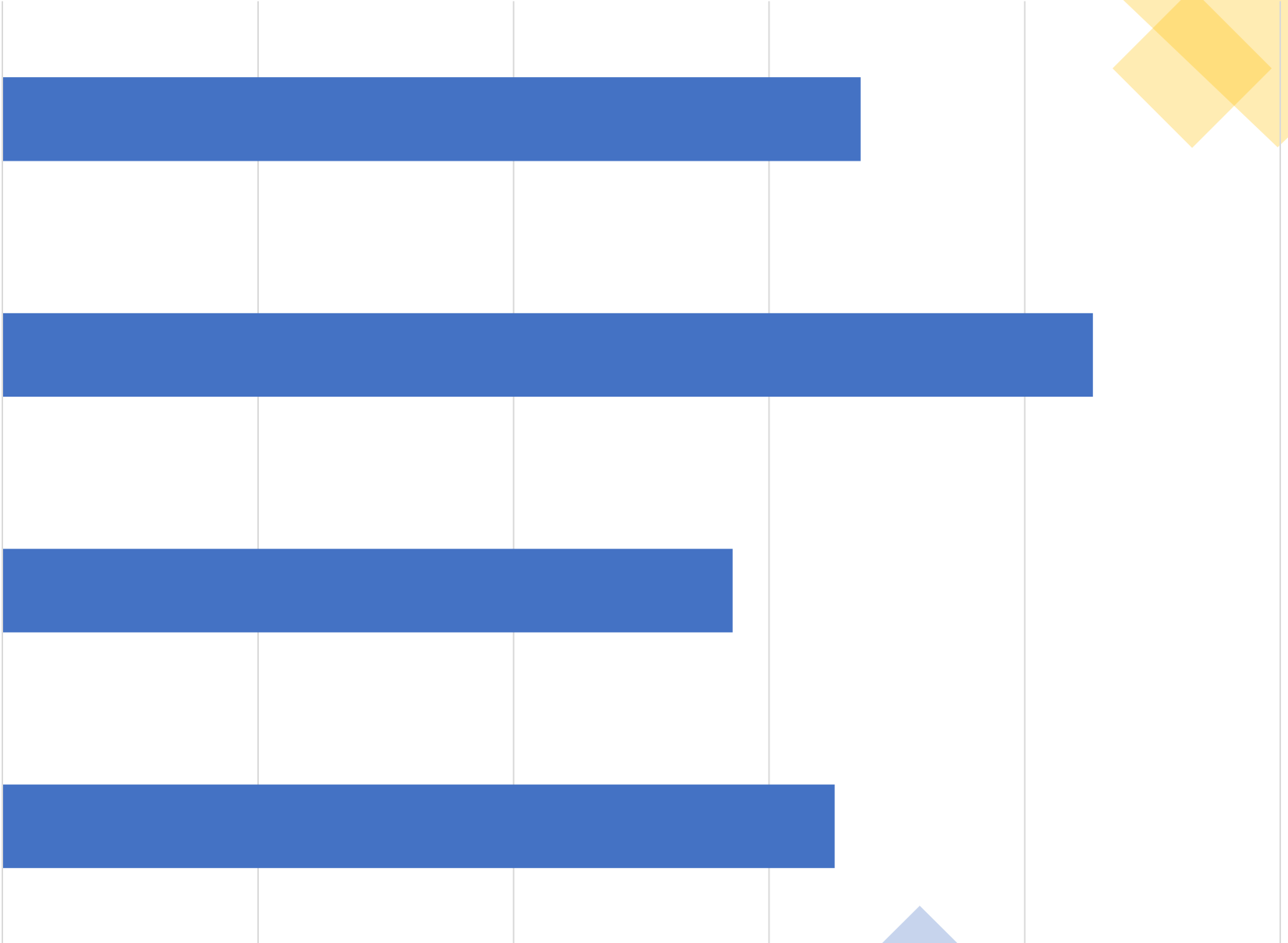
Rhode Island

Smithfield

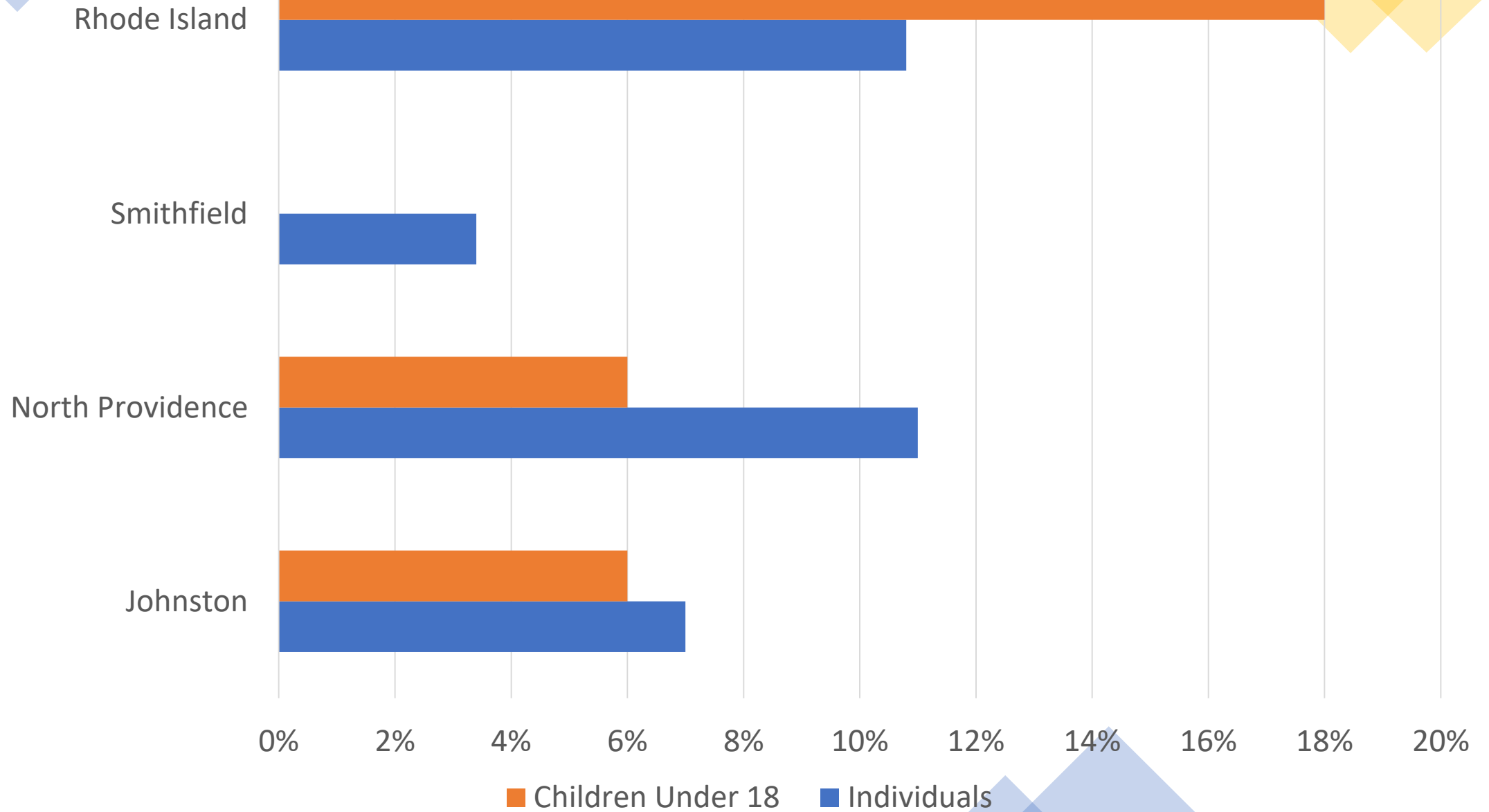
North Providence

Johnston

\$- \$20,000.00 \$40,000.00 \$60,000.00 \$80,000.00 \$100,000.00



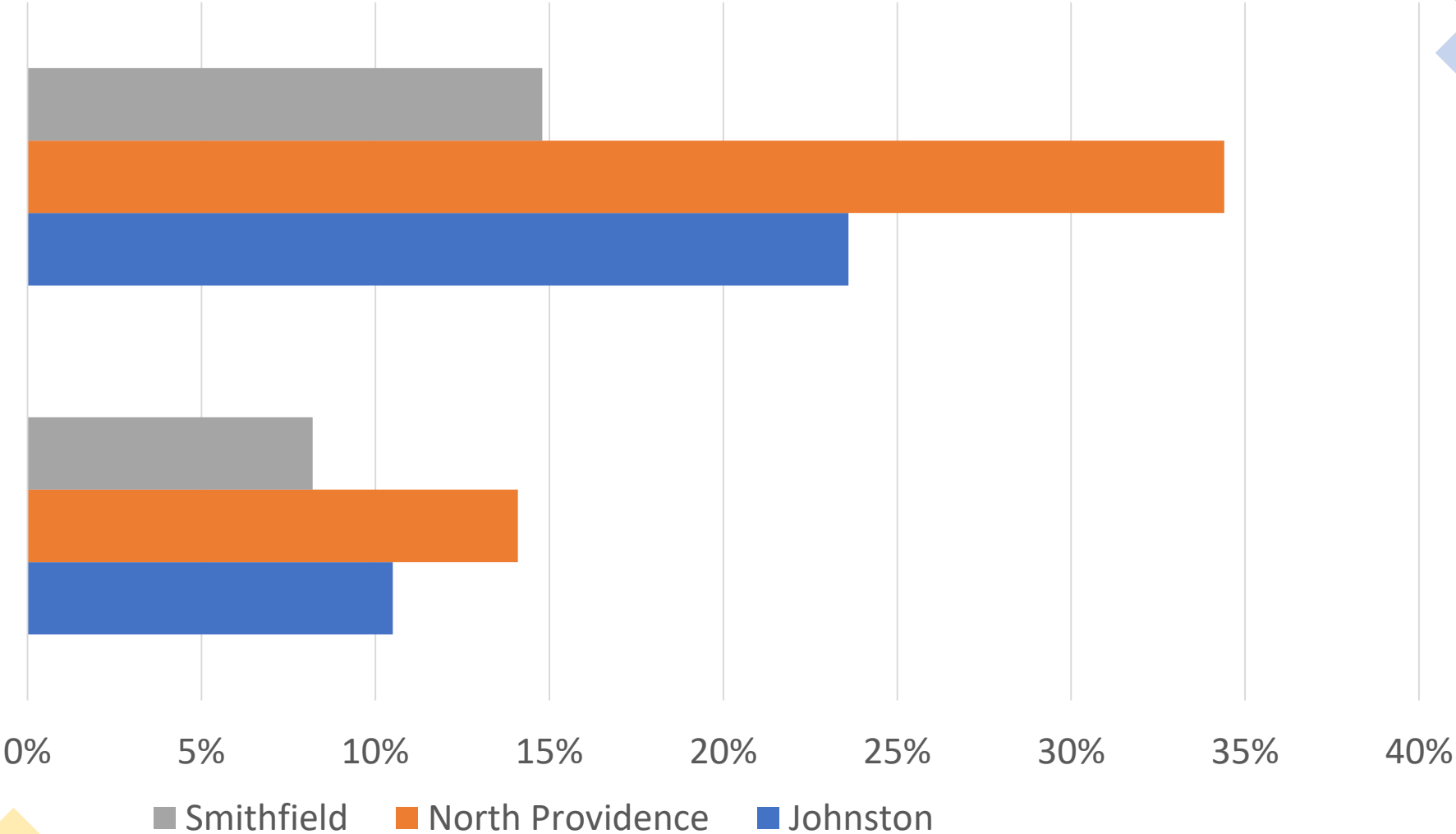
Estimated % Living Below Poverty Level



SNAP Benefits Recipients (2019)

Families w Children <18

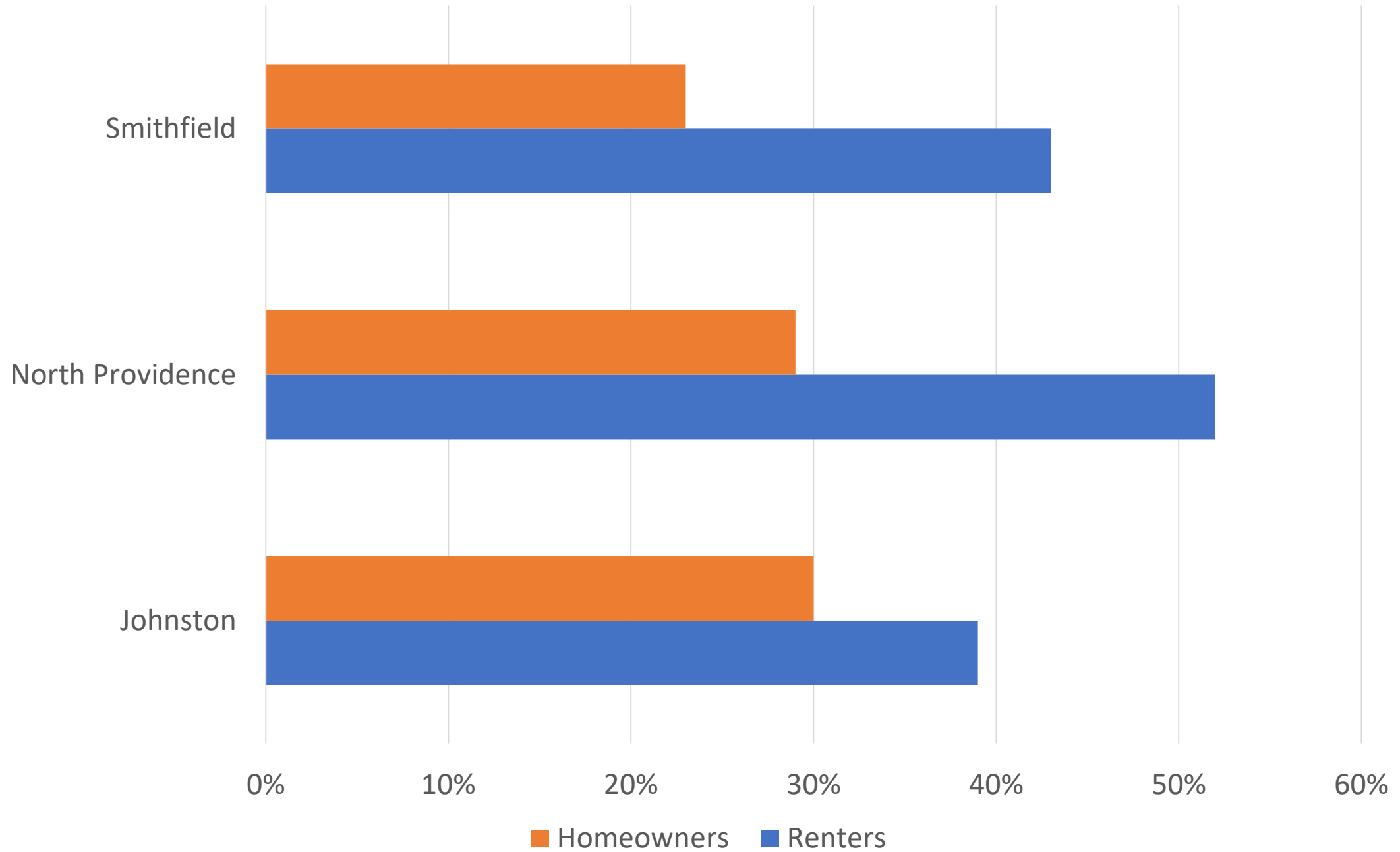
Households



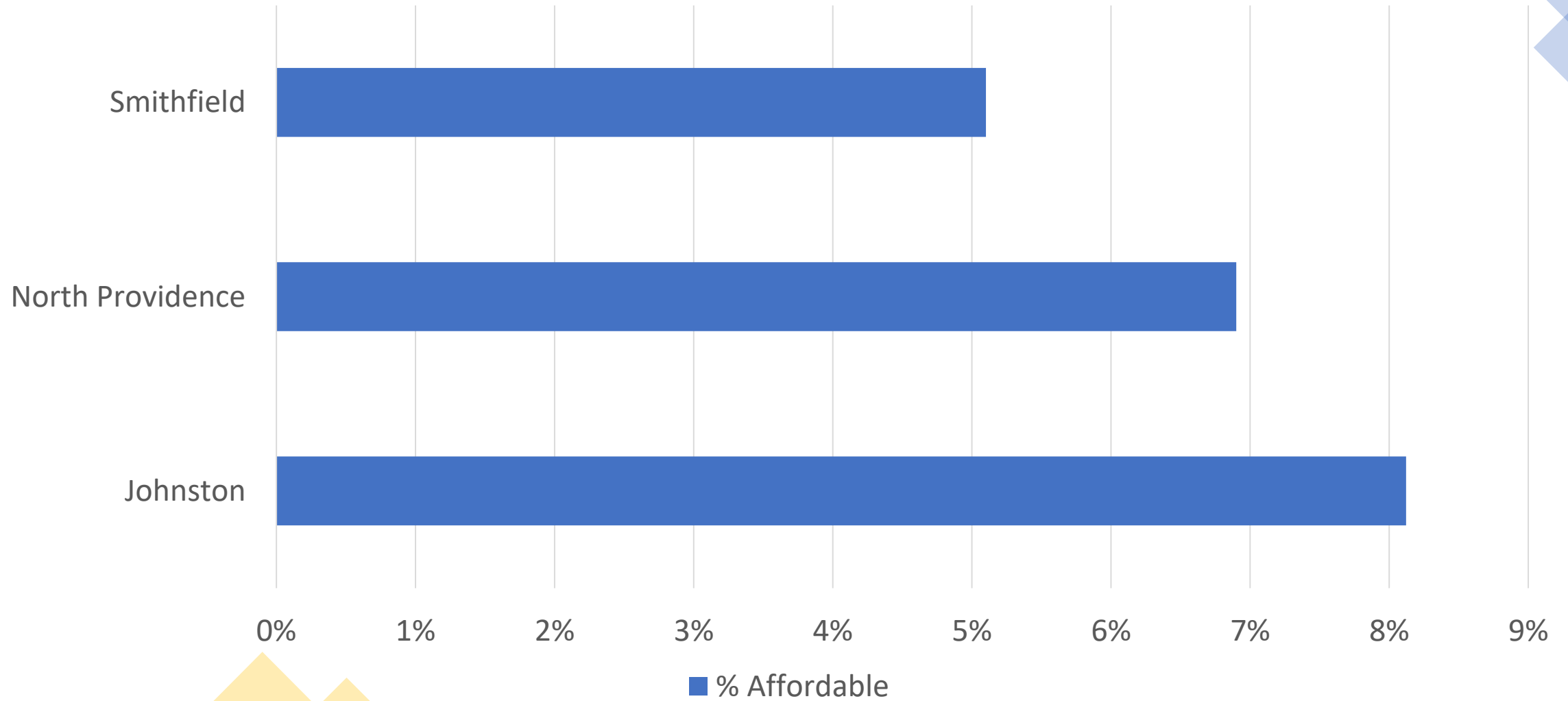
The image features a large, dark blue, irregular shape that resembles a watercolor splash or an ink blot. This shape is centered on a white background and has several smaller, lighter blue splatters and droplets scattered around its edges. The word "Housing" is written in a white, sans-serif font, centered within the dark blue area.

Housing

% Residents Housing Cost Burdened 2019



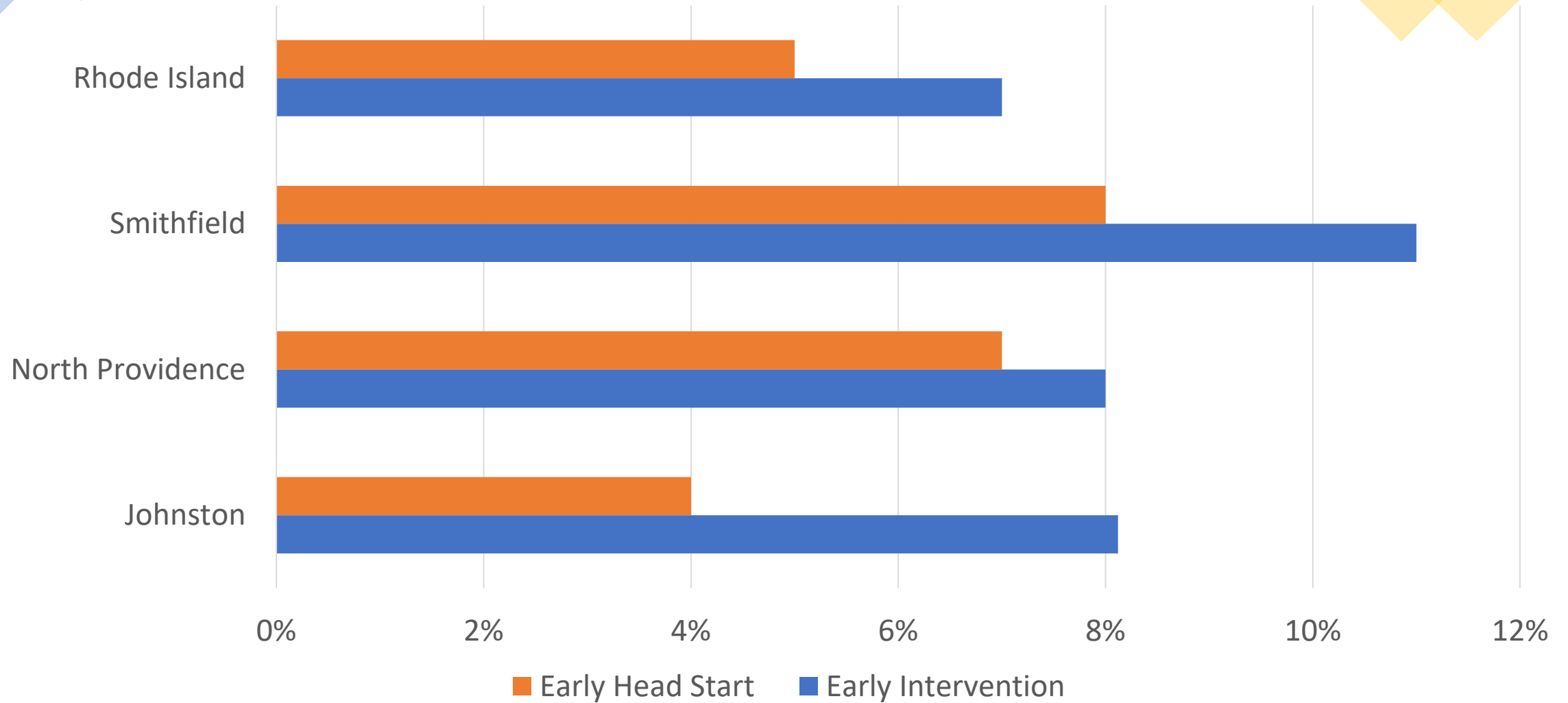
% of Housing Deemed "Affordable" (2019)



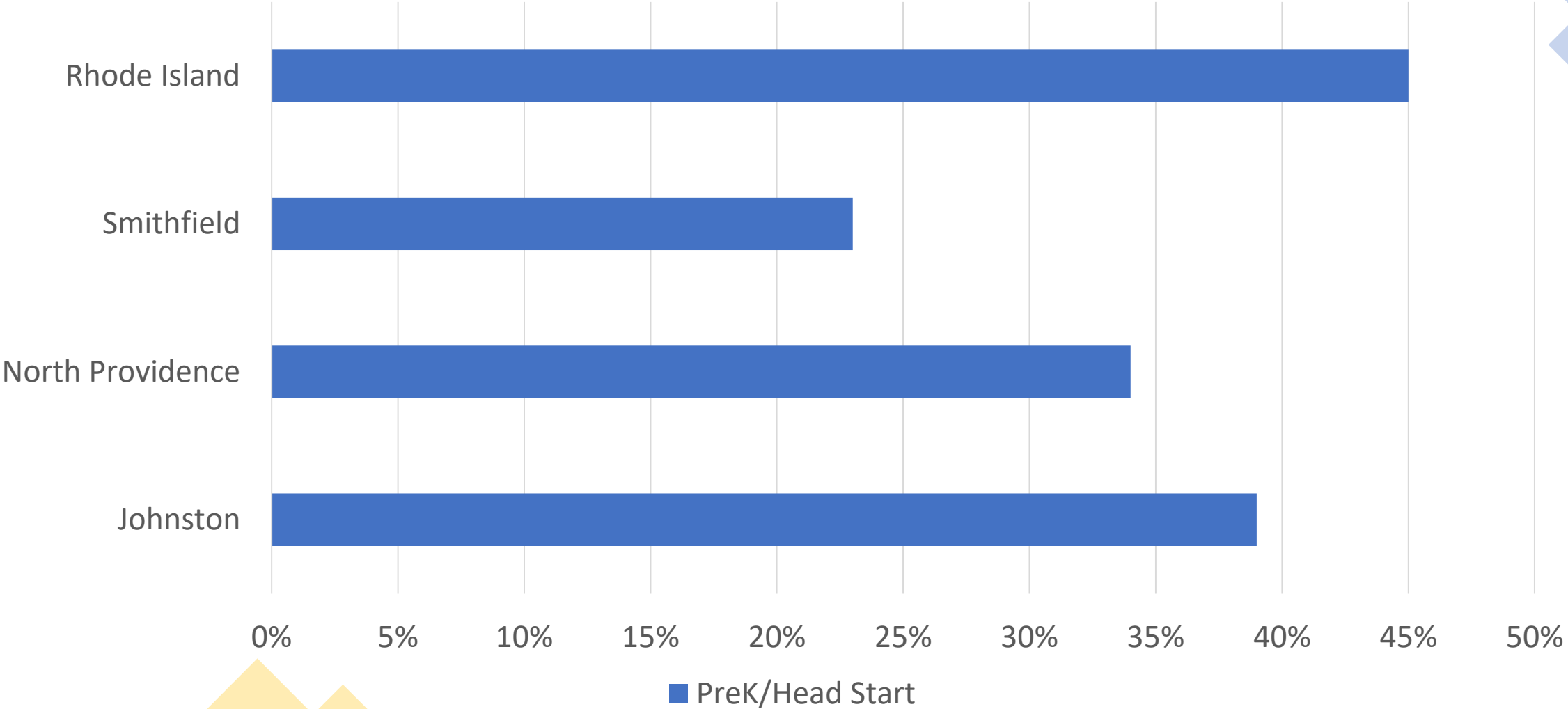
The image features a large, dark blue, irregular shape that resembles a watercolor splash or an ink blot. This shape is centered on a white background and has several smaller, lighter blue splatters and droplets around its edges, giving it a dynamic, artistic feel. The text "Early Childhood" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font across the middle of the dark blue area.

Early Childhood

Early Intervention and Early Head Start 2019 Participation Rates



Pre-K and Head Start Enrollment Rates



% Low Income Children Enrolled in Head Start (2019)

Low Income Participation Rate

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

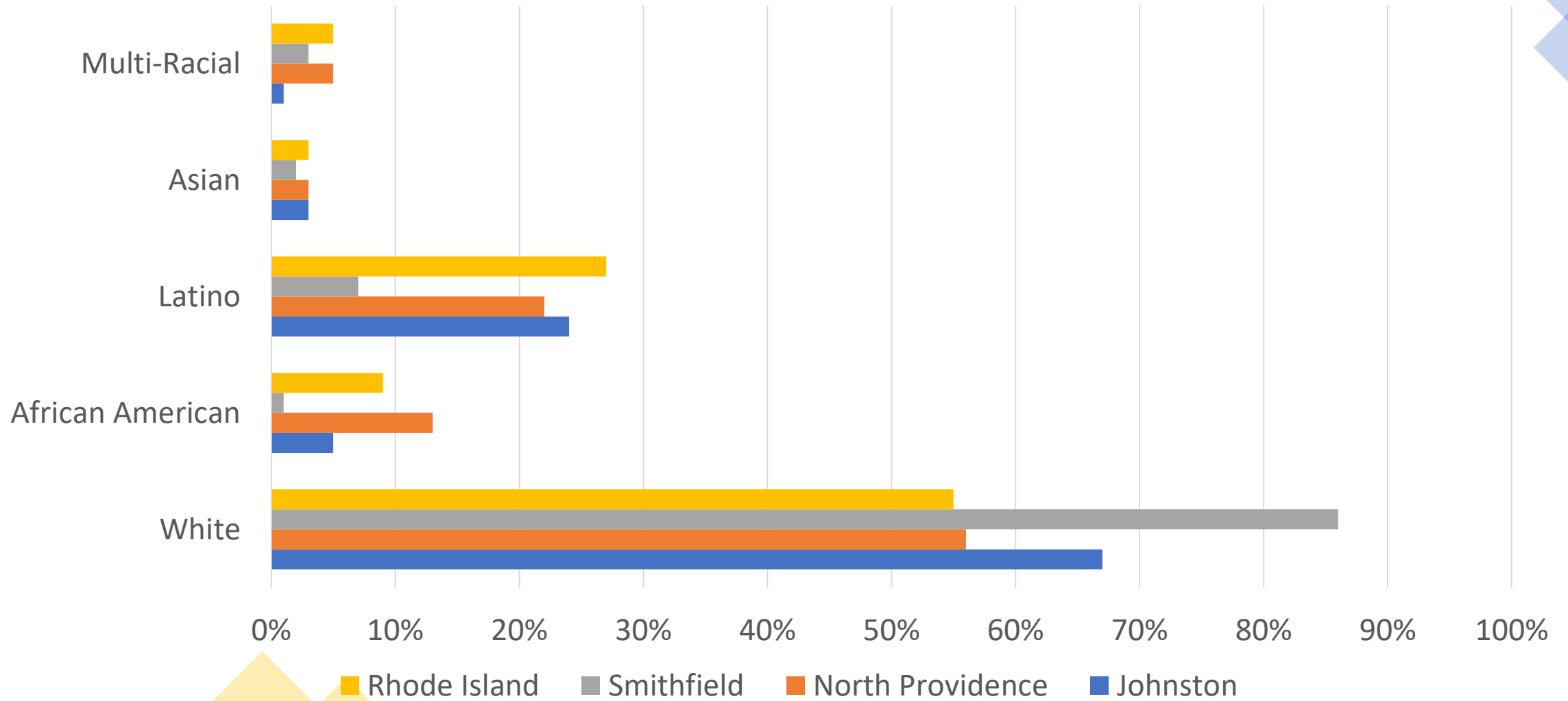
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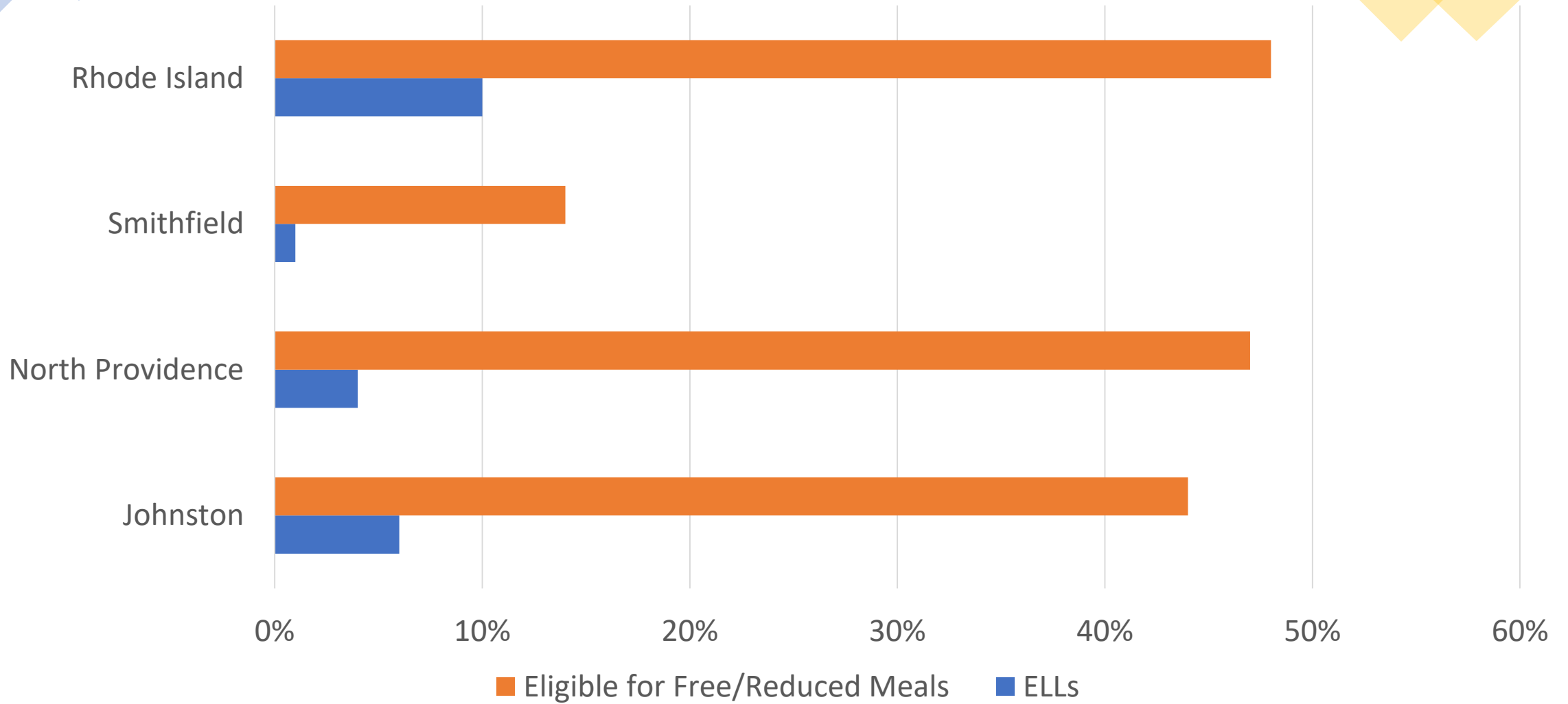
The image features a large, dark blue, irregular shape that resembles a watercolor splash or an ink blot. This shape is centered on a white background and has several smaller, lighter blue splatters and droplets around its edges, giving it a dynamic, artistic feel. The word "Education" is written in a clean, white, sans-serif font, centered within the dark blue area.

Education

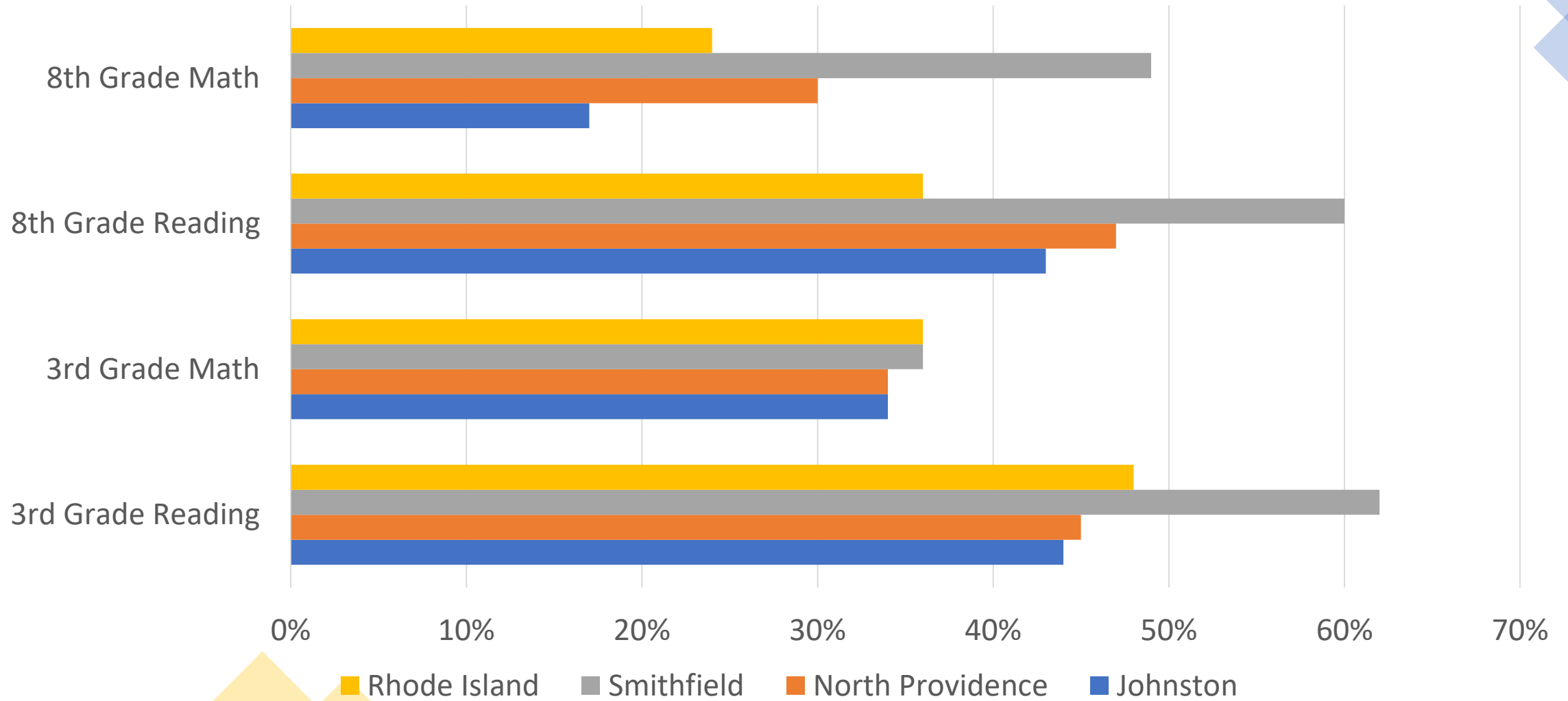
K-12 Demographics



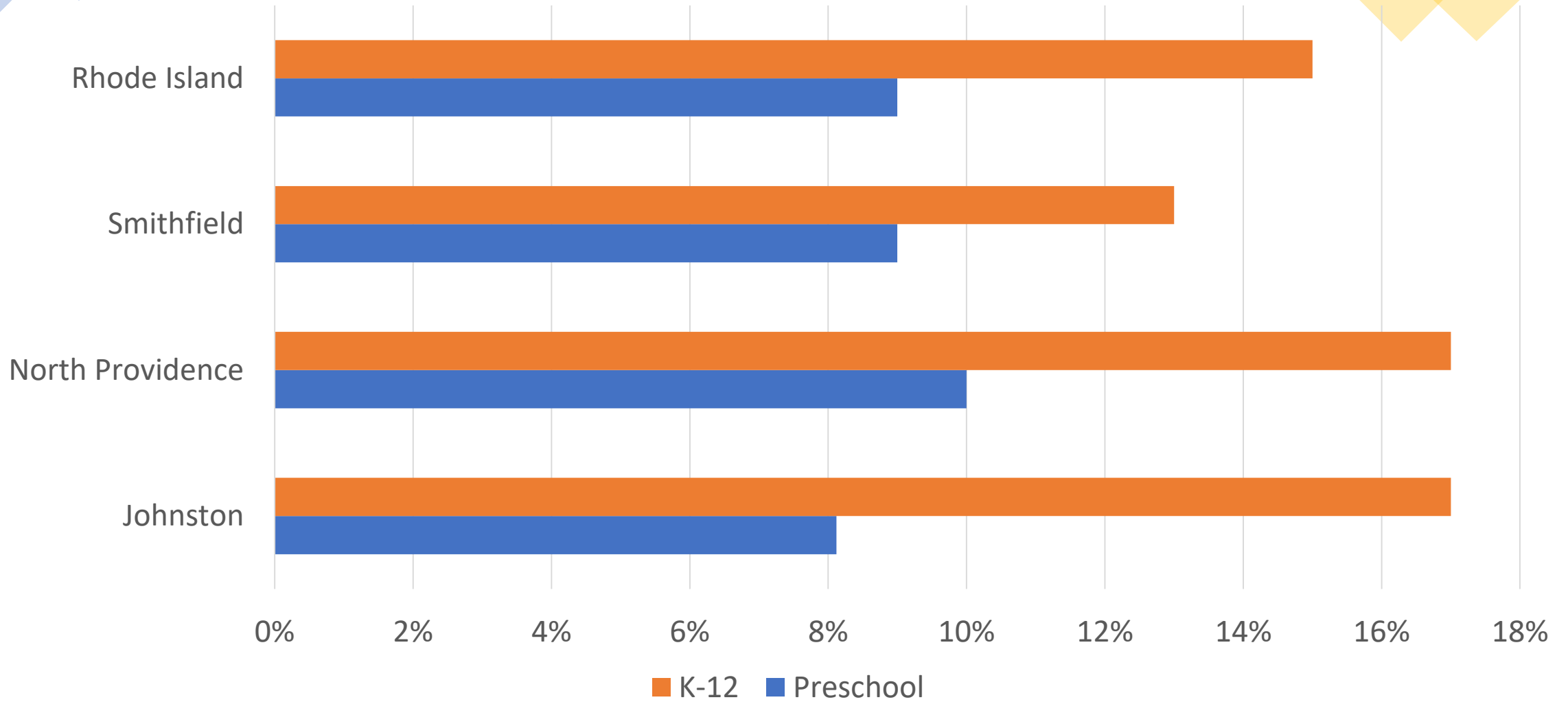
K-12 Demographics



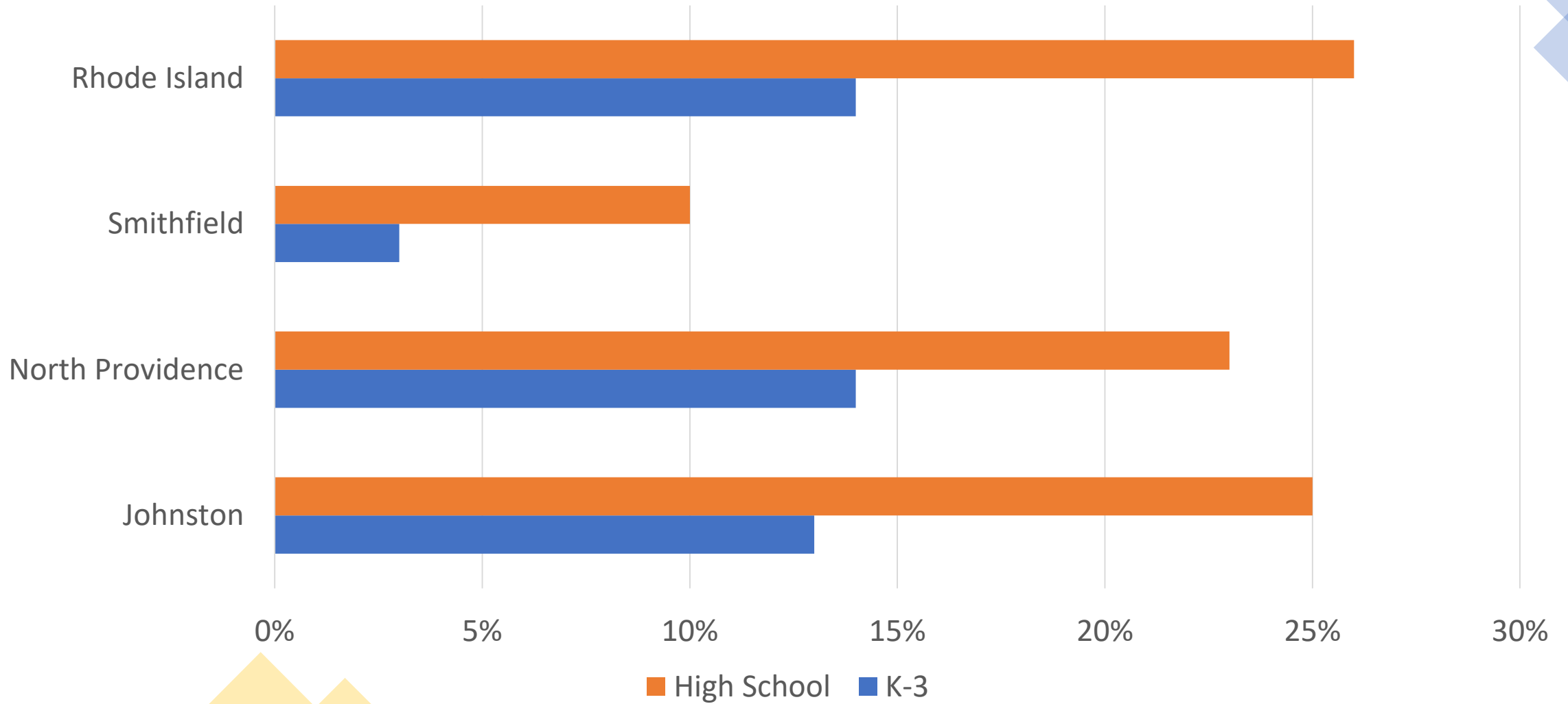
Reading and Math Results (2019)



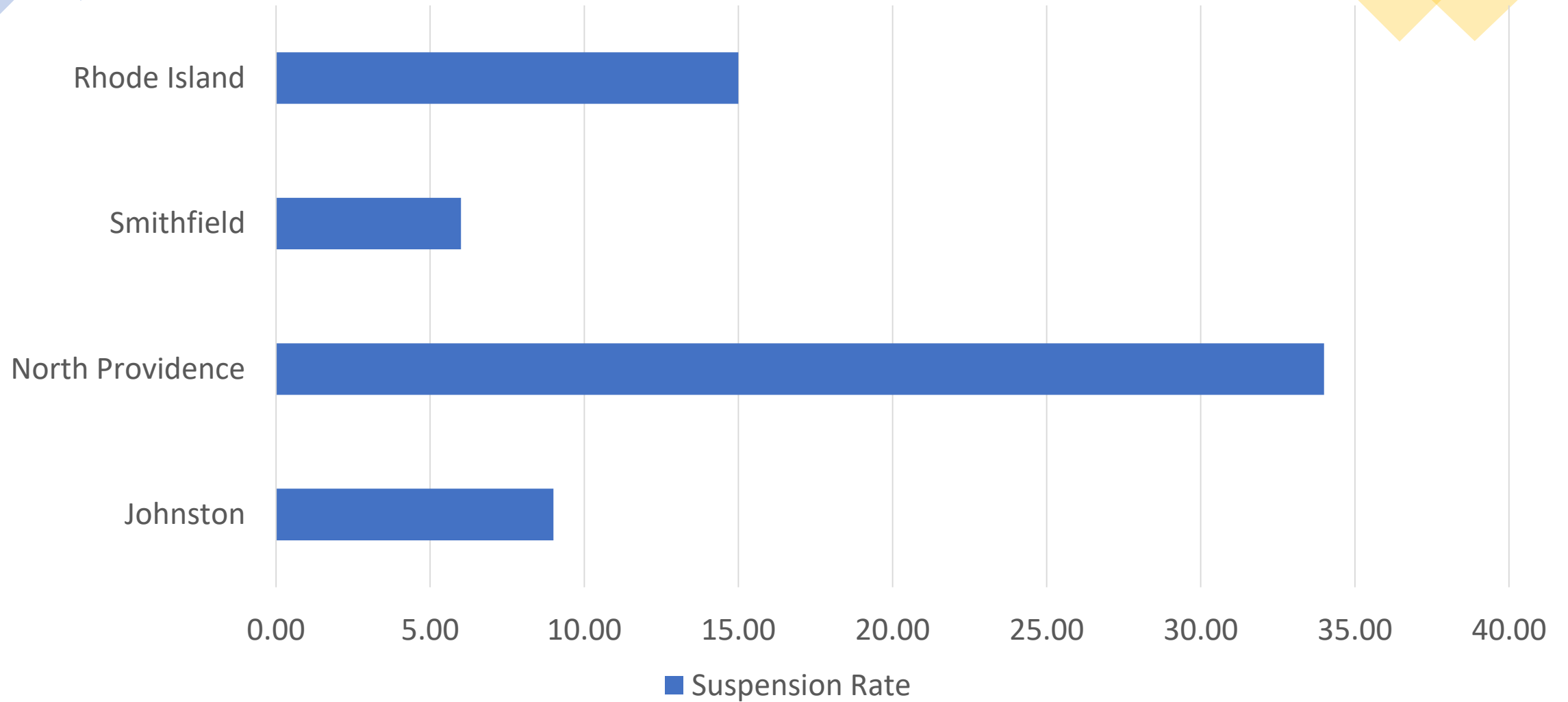
Special Education Rates



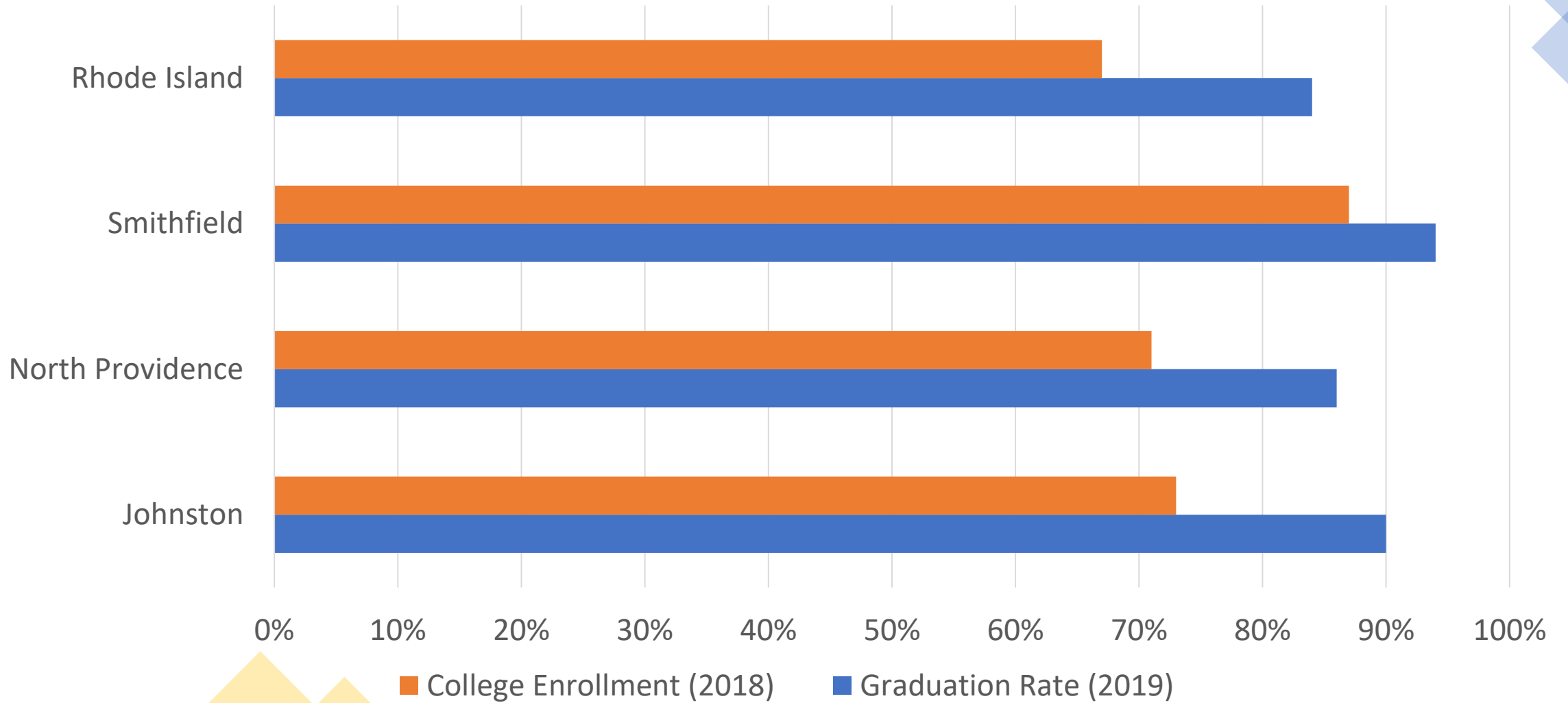
Chronic Absence (2019)



Suspension Rate Per 100 Students (2019)



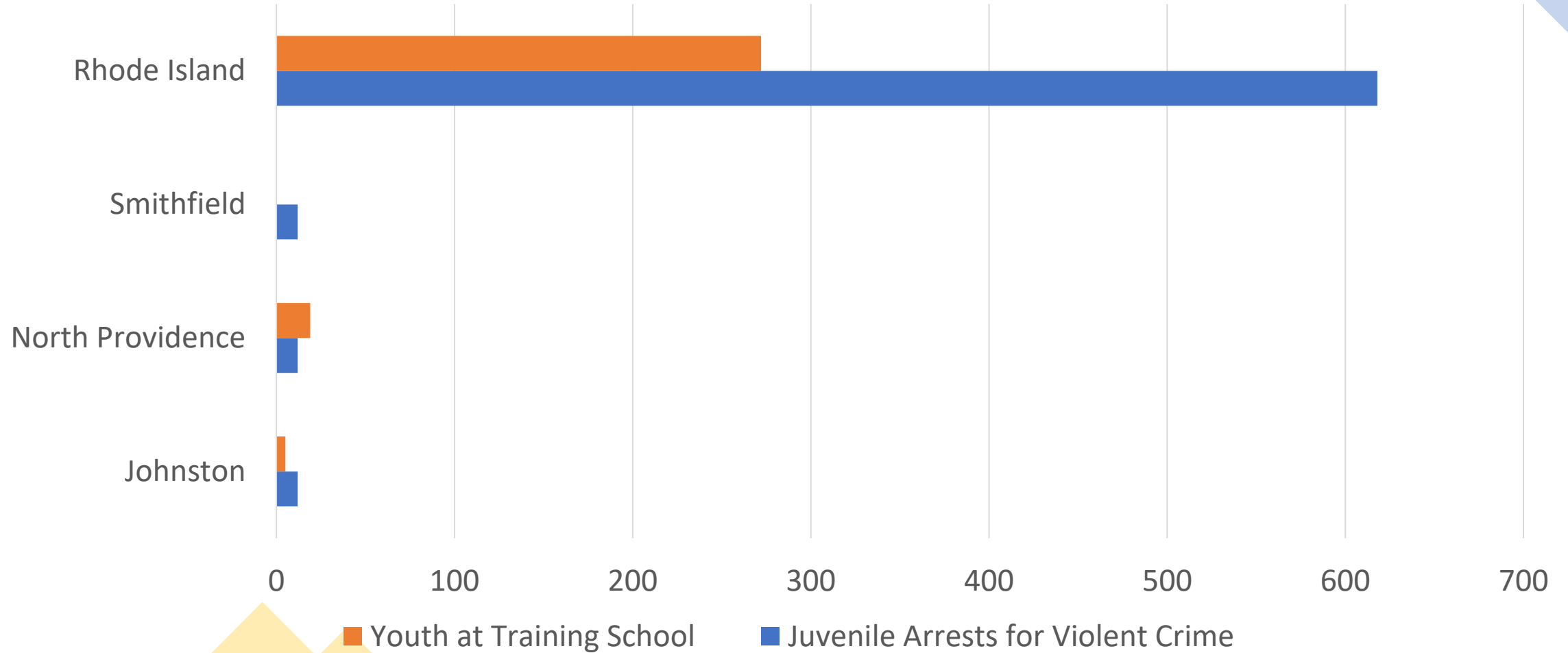
Graduation and College Enrollment



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Safety

Youth Violence and Youth at Training School (2018)

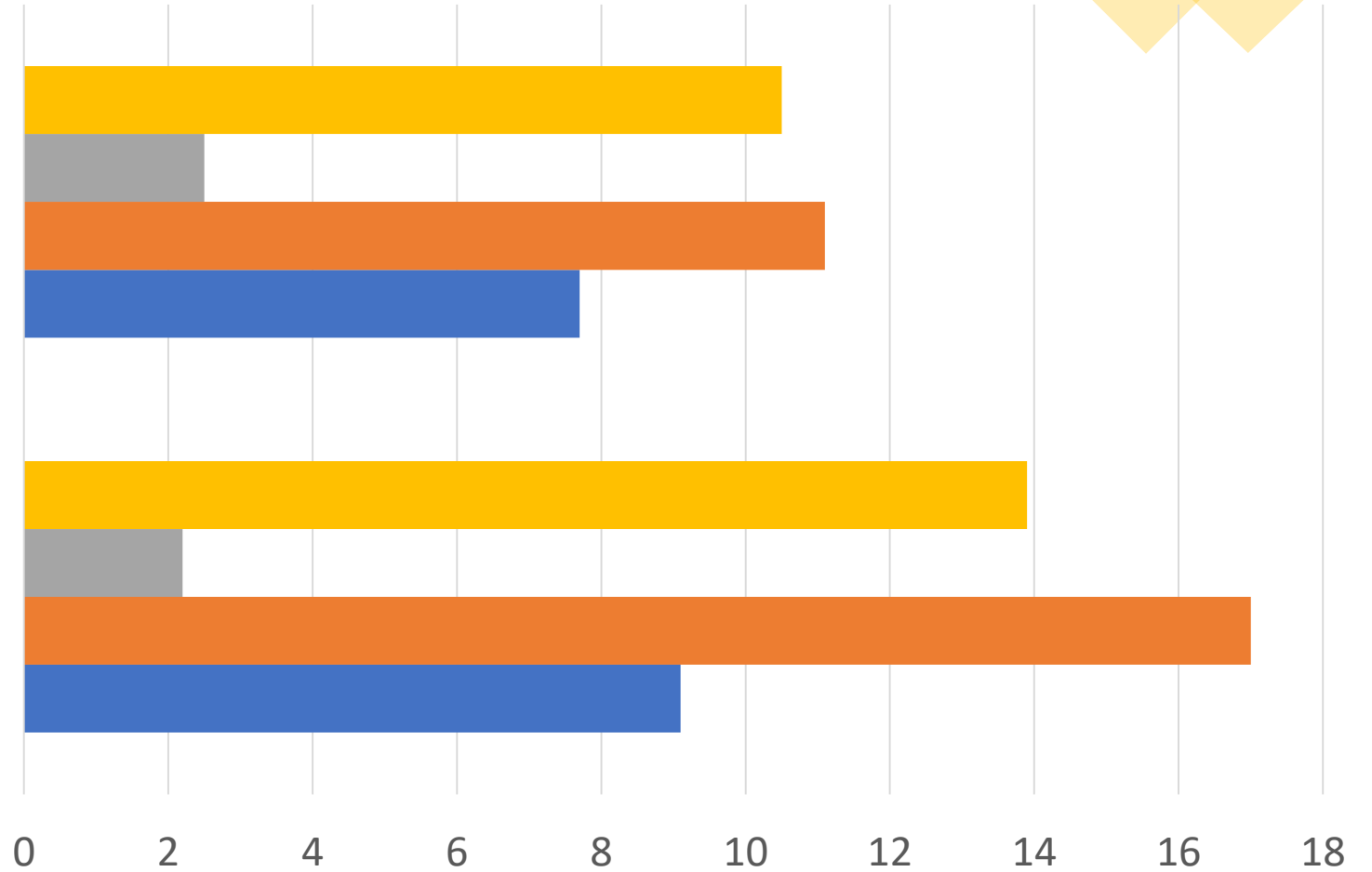


Rate of Child Abuse and Incarcerated Parents (per 1000 children)

Children with Incarcerated Parents Rate

Child Abuse Rate

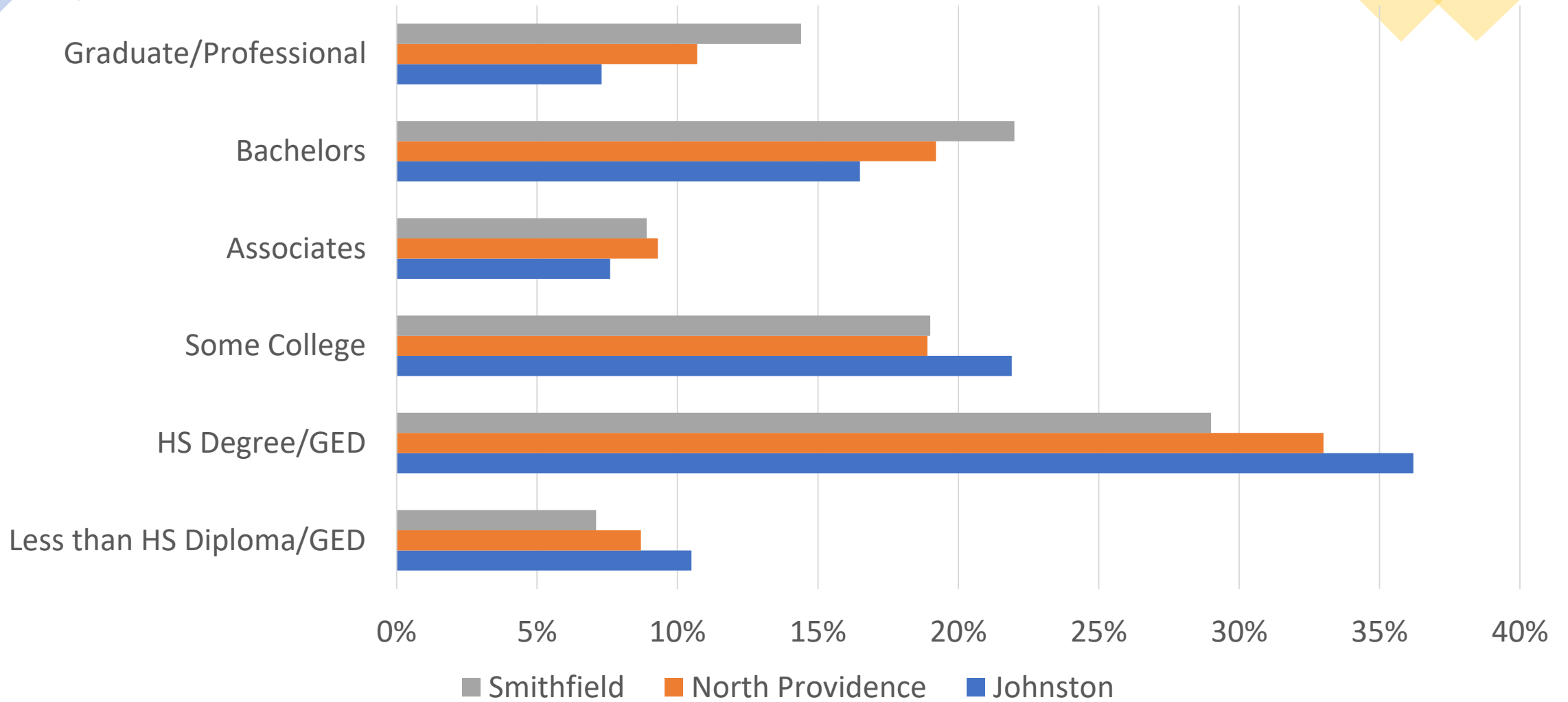
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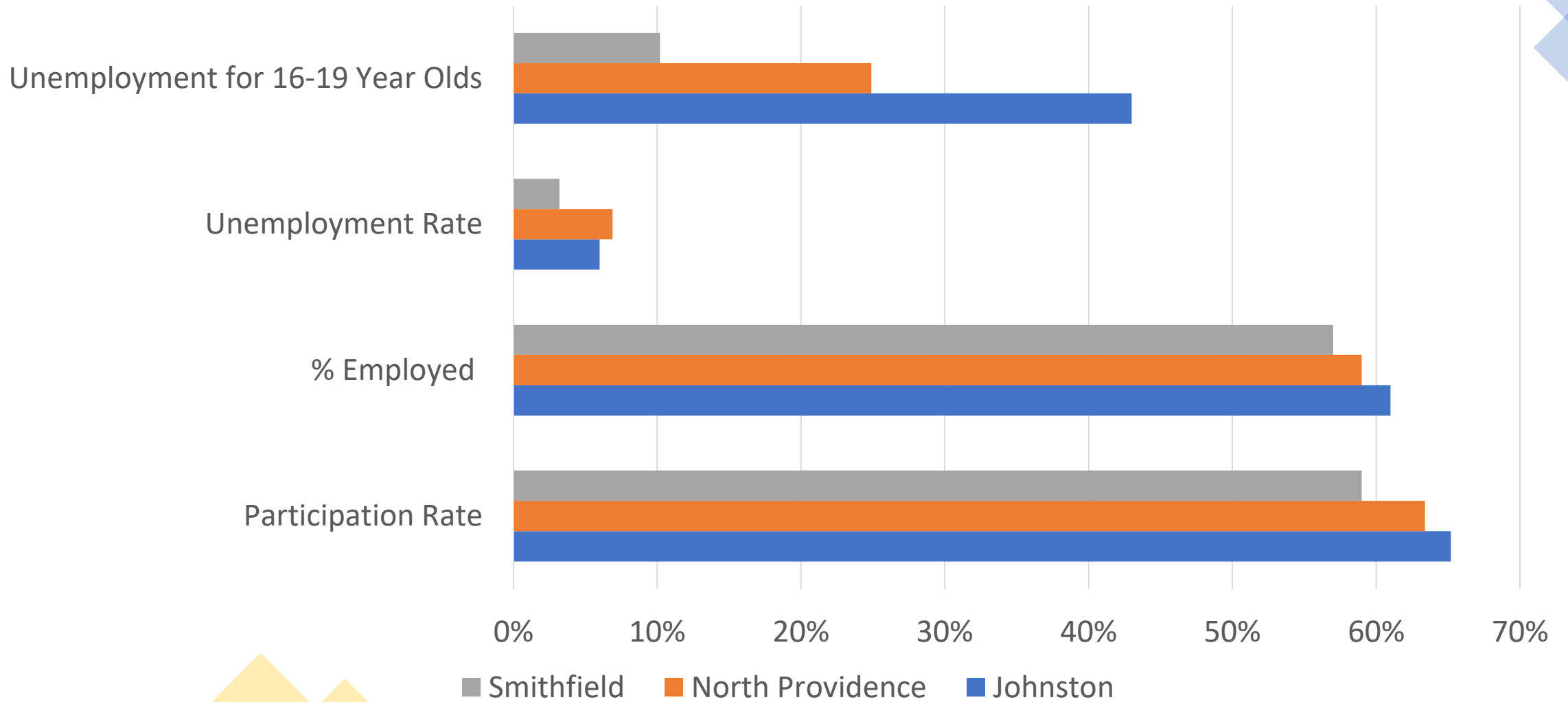
The image features a large, dark blue, irregular shape that resembles a splatter or a cloud of ink. This shape is centered on a white background and has several smaller, lighter blue splatters around its edges. The word "Workforce" is written in a white, sans-serif font, centered within the dark blue shape.

Workforce

Degree Attainment (25 Years and Older) 2019



Employment (2019)





Children's Health

WIC Participation Rates (2019)

% Eligible Enrolled

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

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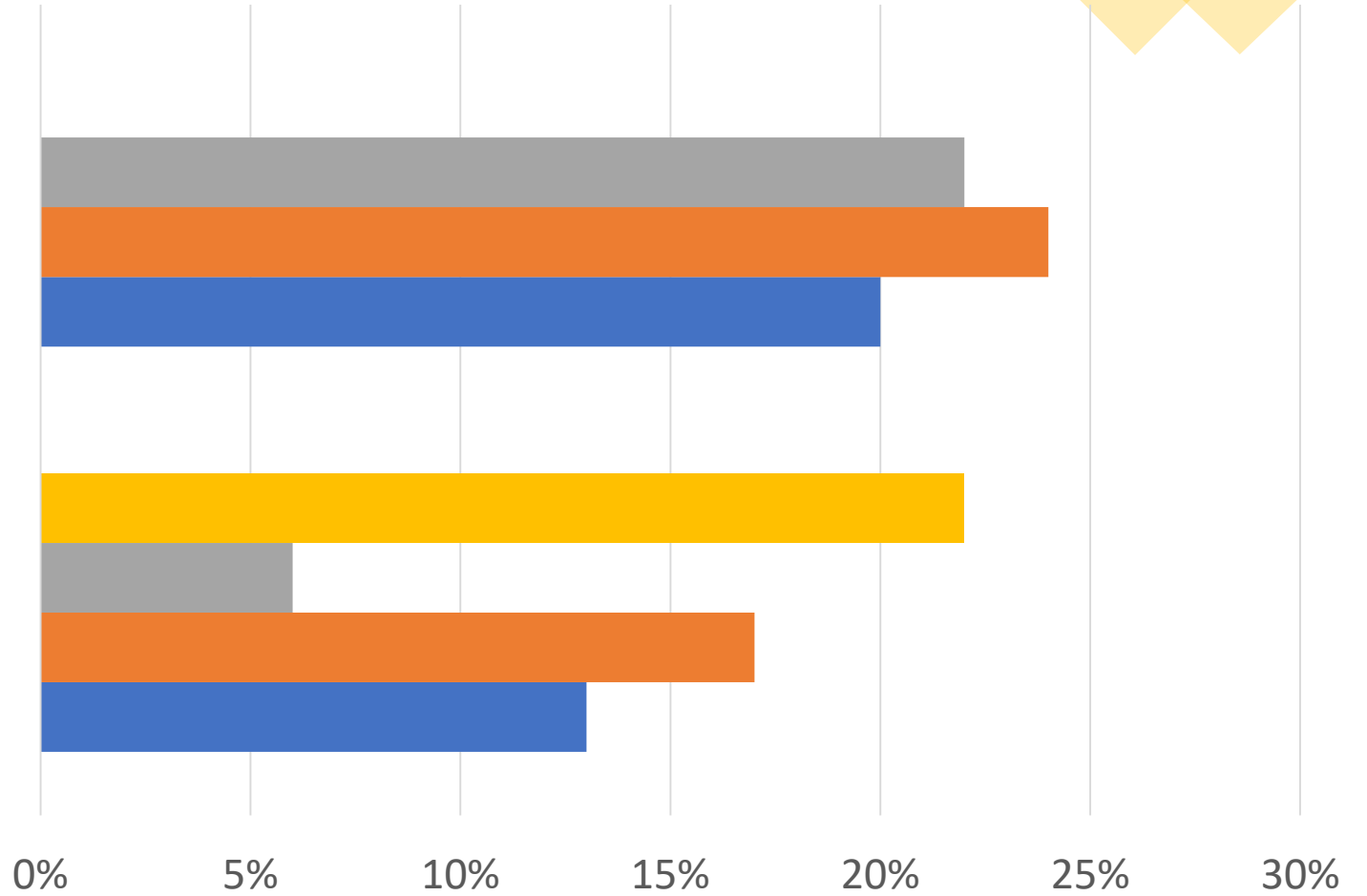


School Breakfast Participation Rate (2019)

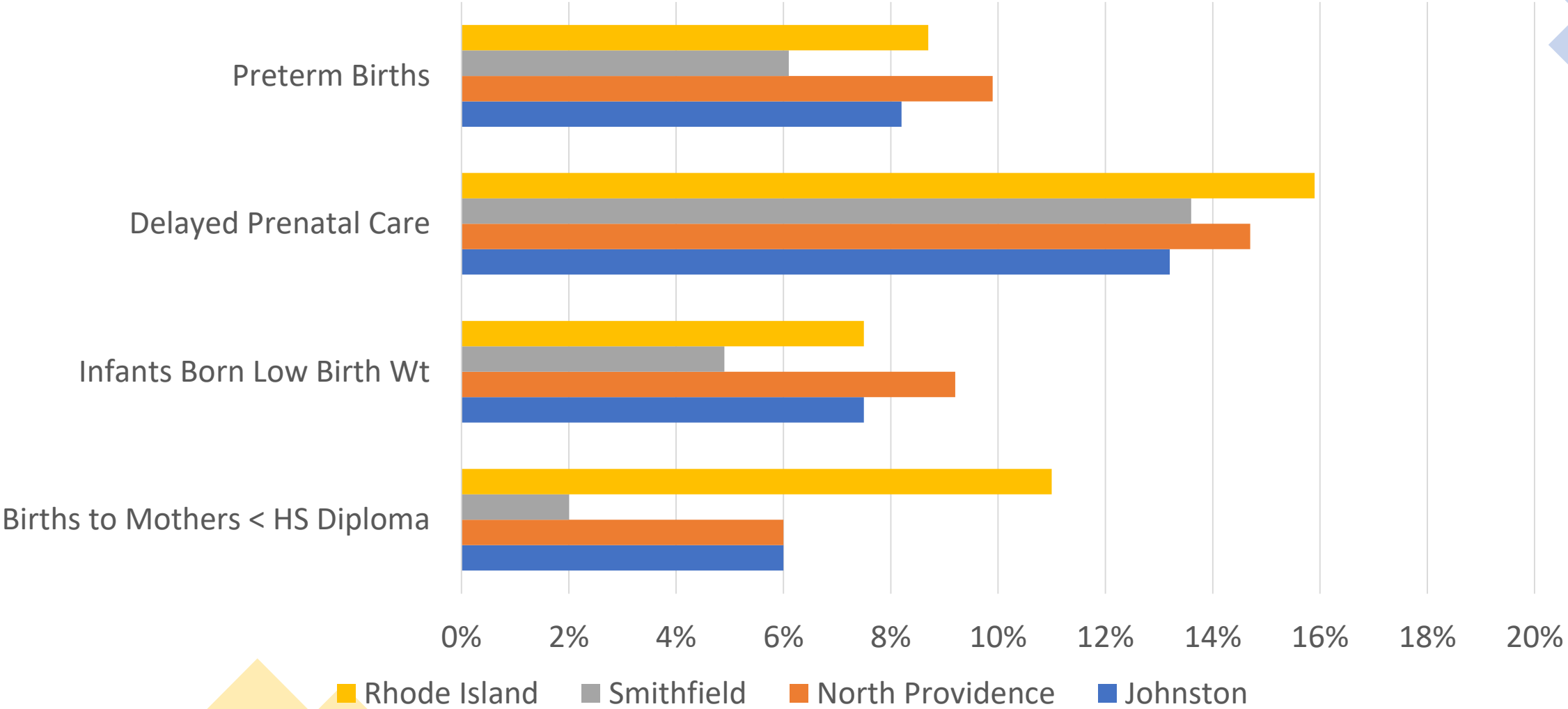
Participation Rate for Low Income Children

Participation Rate Overall

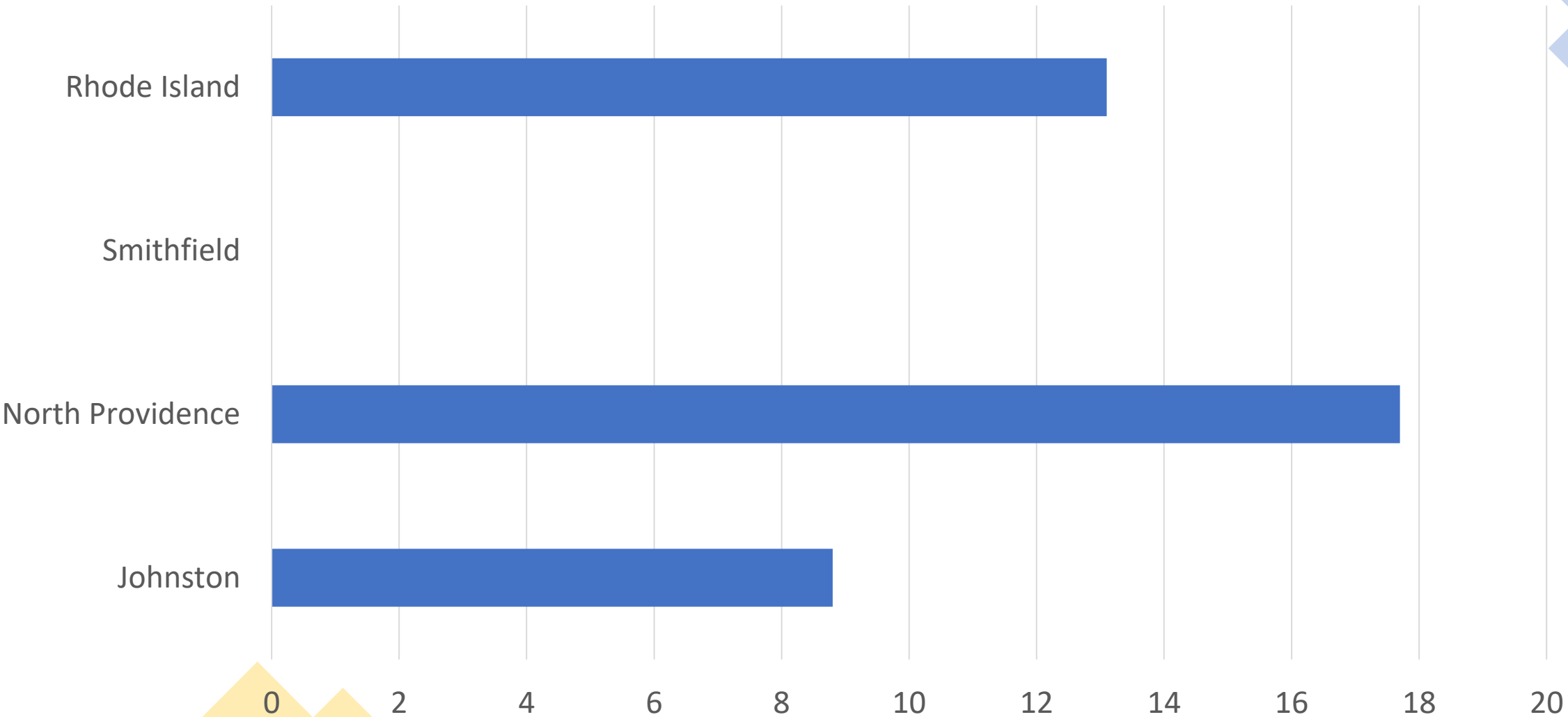
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Maternal and Child Health Indicators (2014-2018)

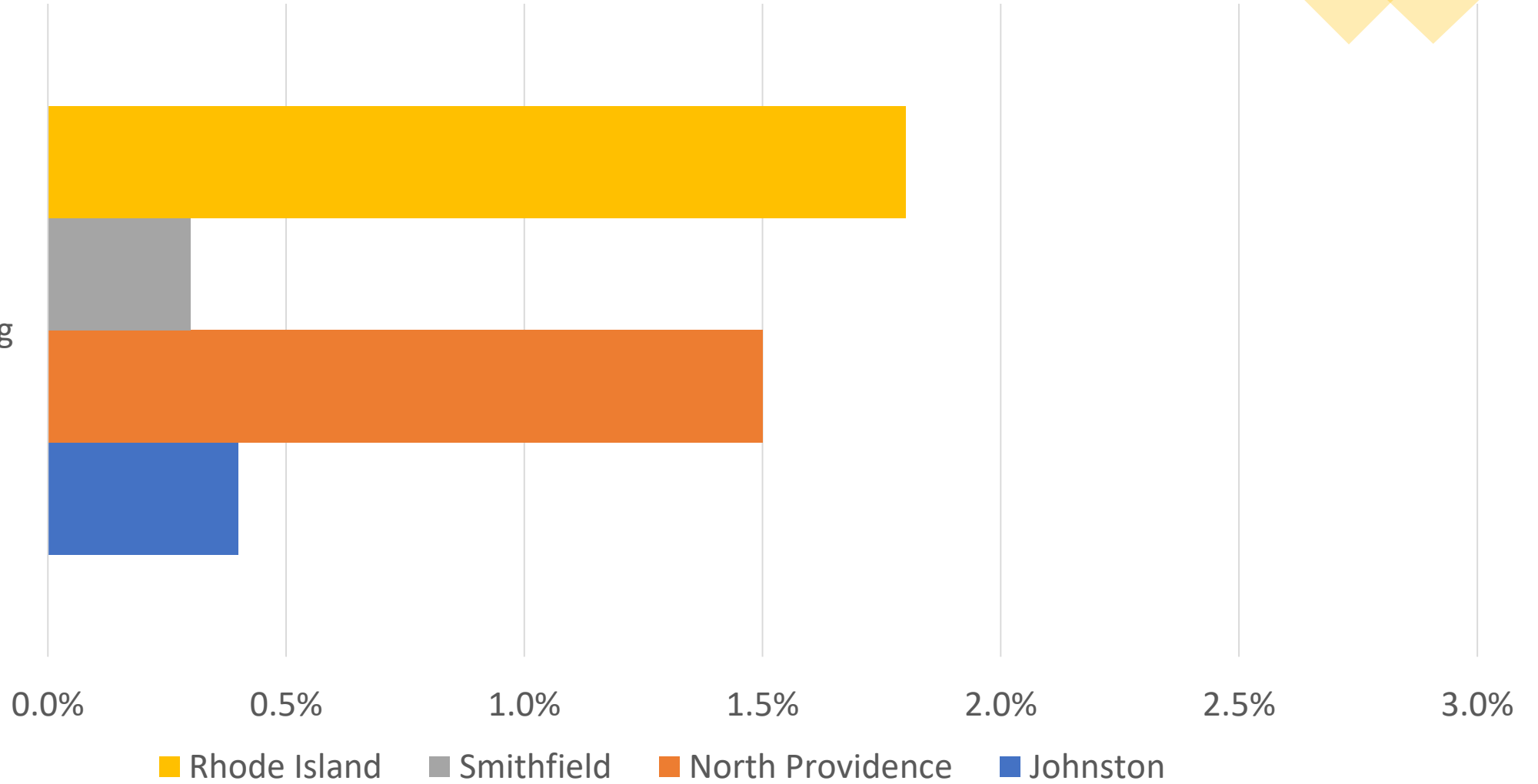


Births to Teens (per 1000)

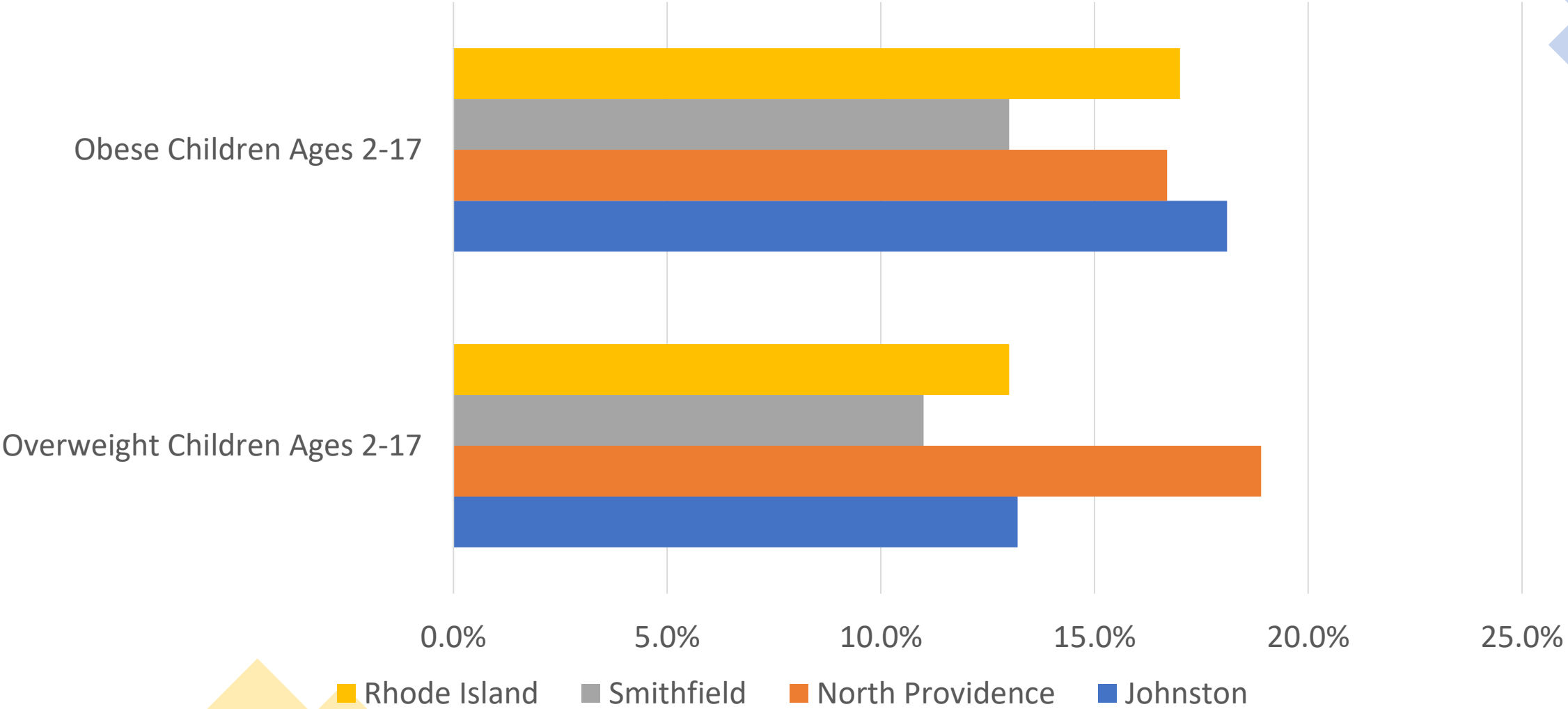


Lead Poisoning Children Under 6 (2018)

Lead Poisoning

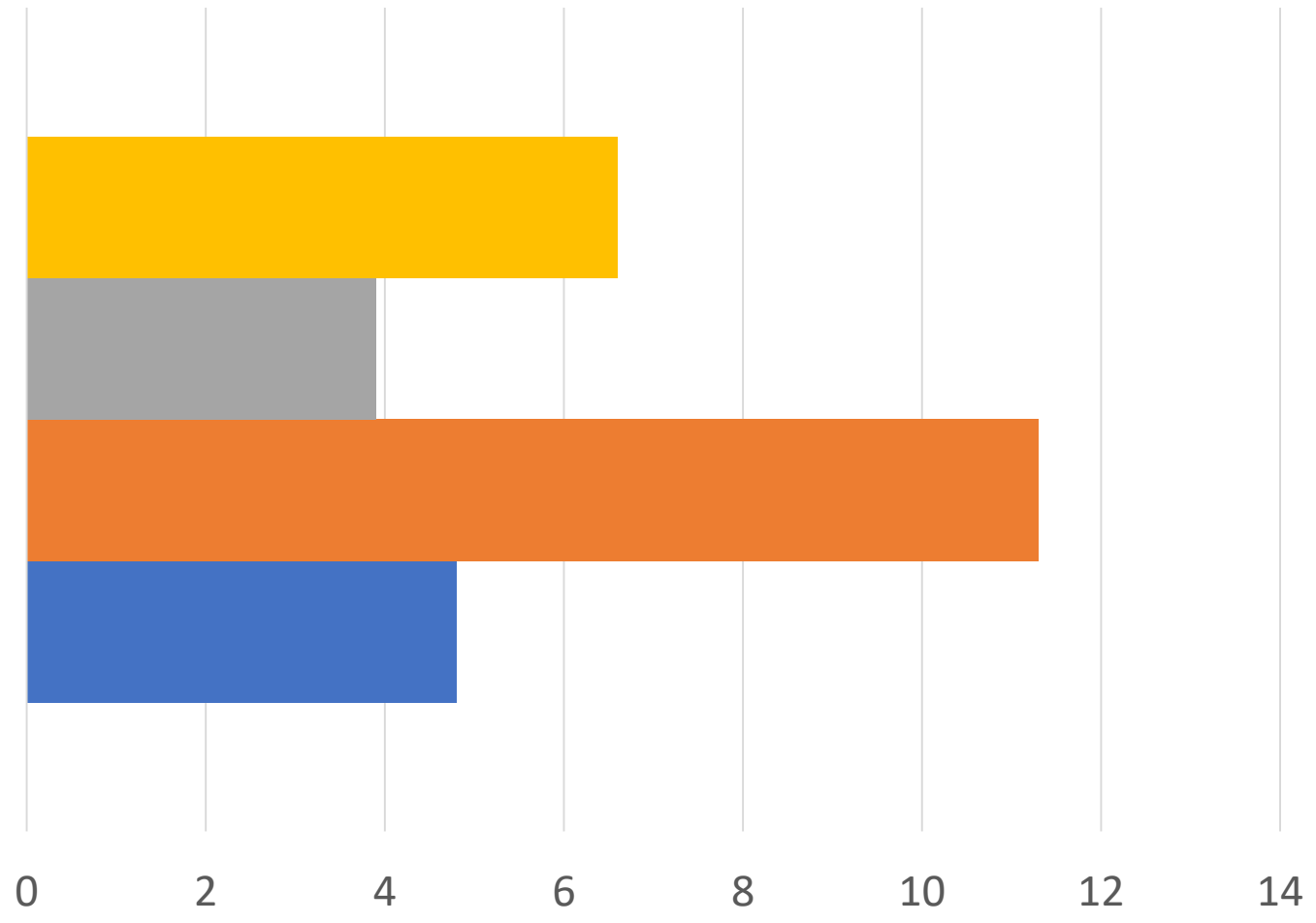


Childhood Obesity (2018)



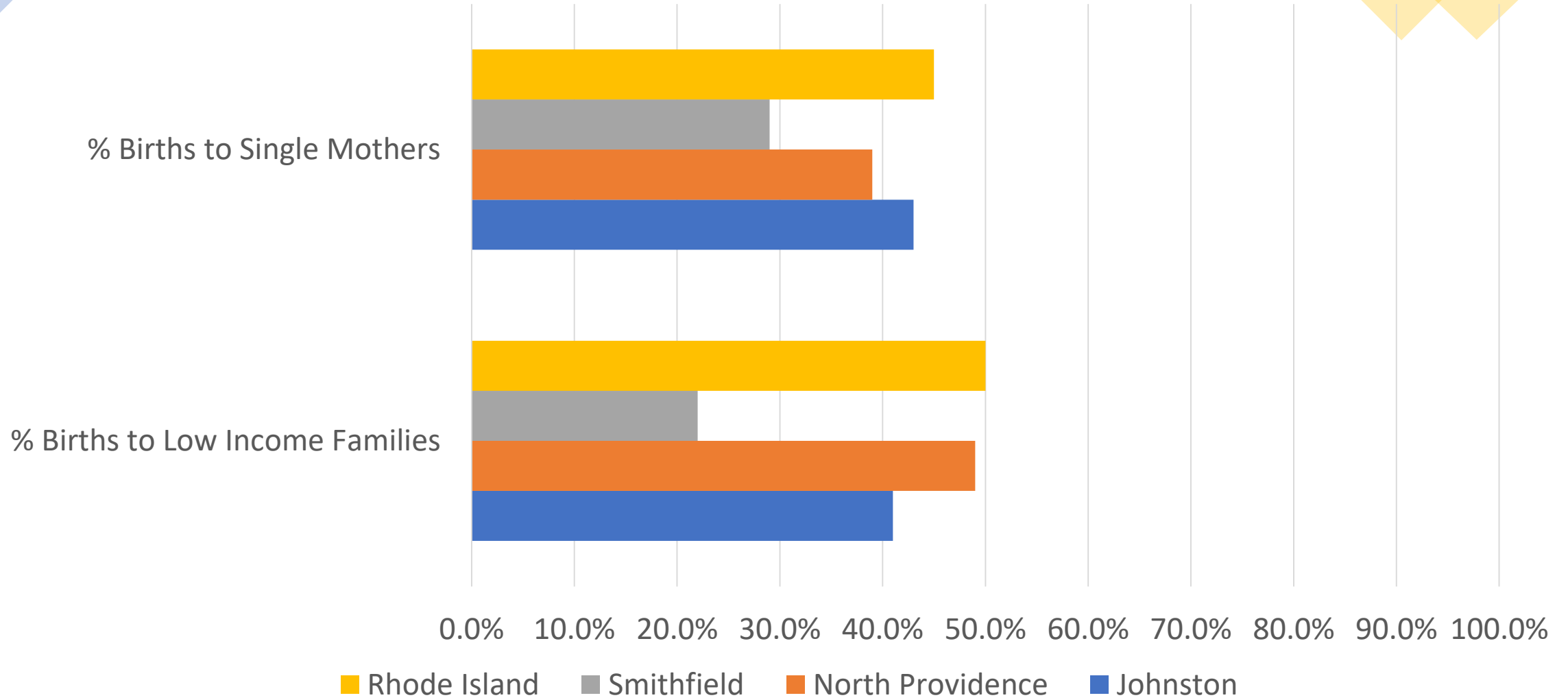
Visits to the ED for Asthma

ED Visits for Asthma (per 1,000 children)



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At Risk Families (2019)

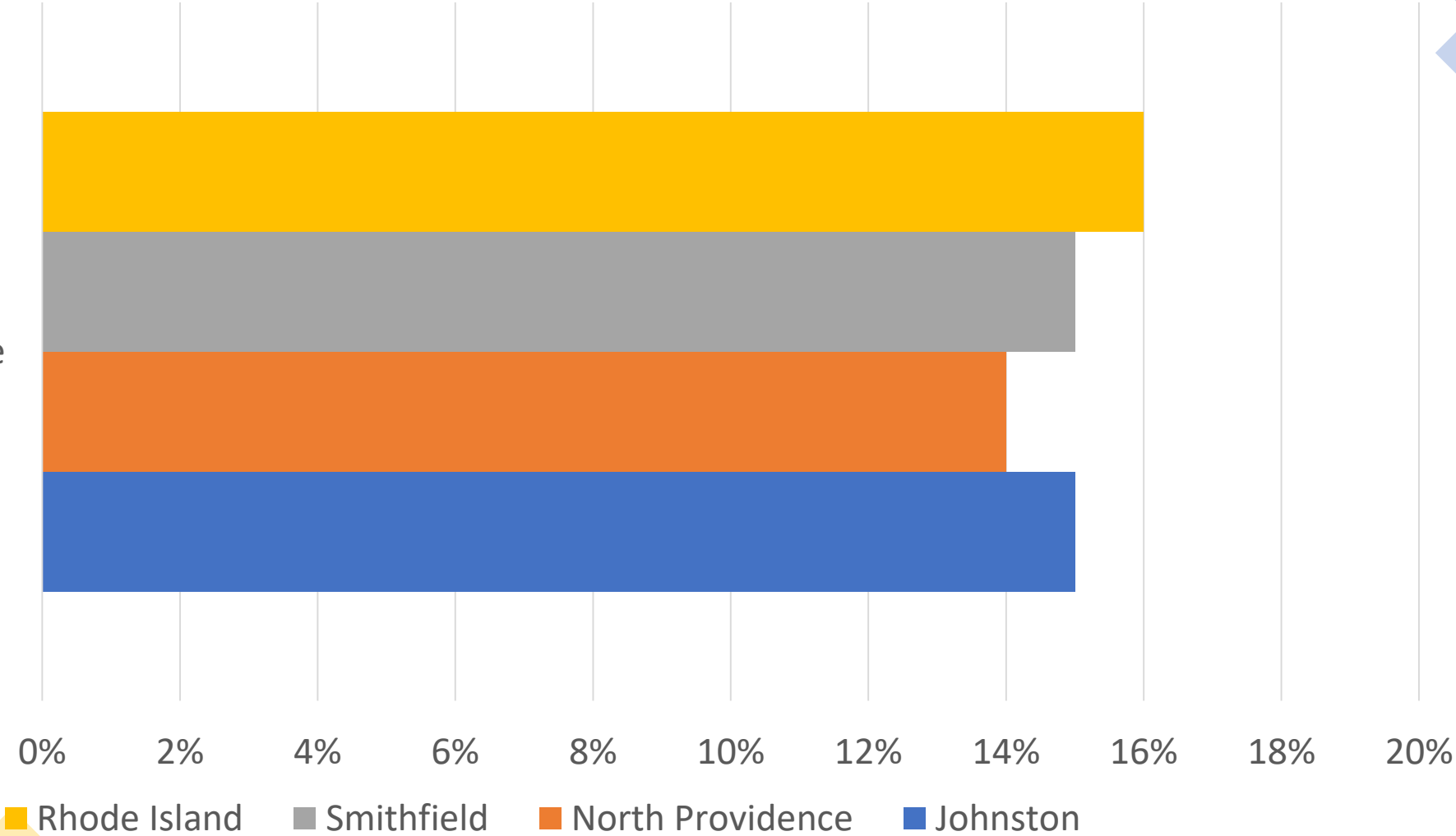




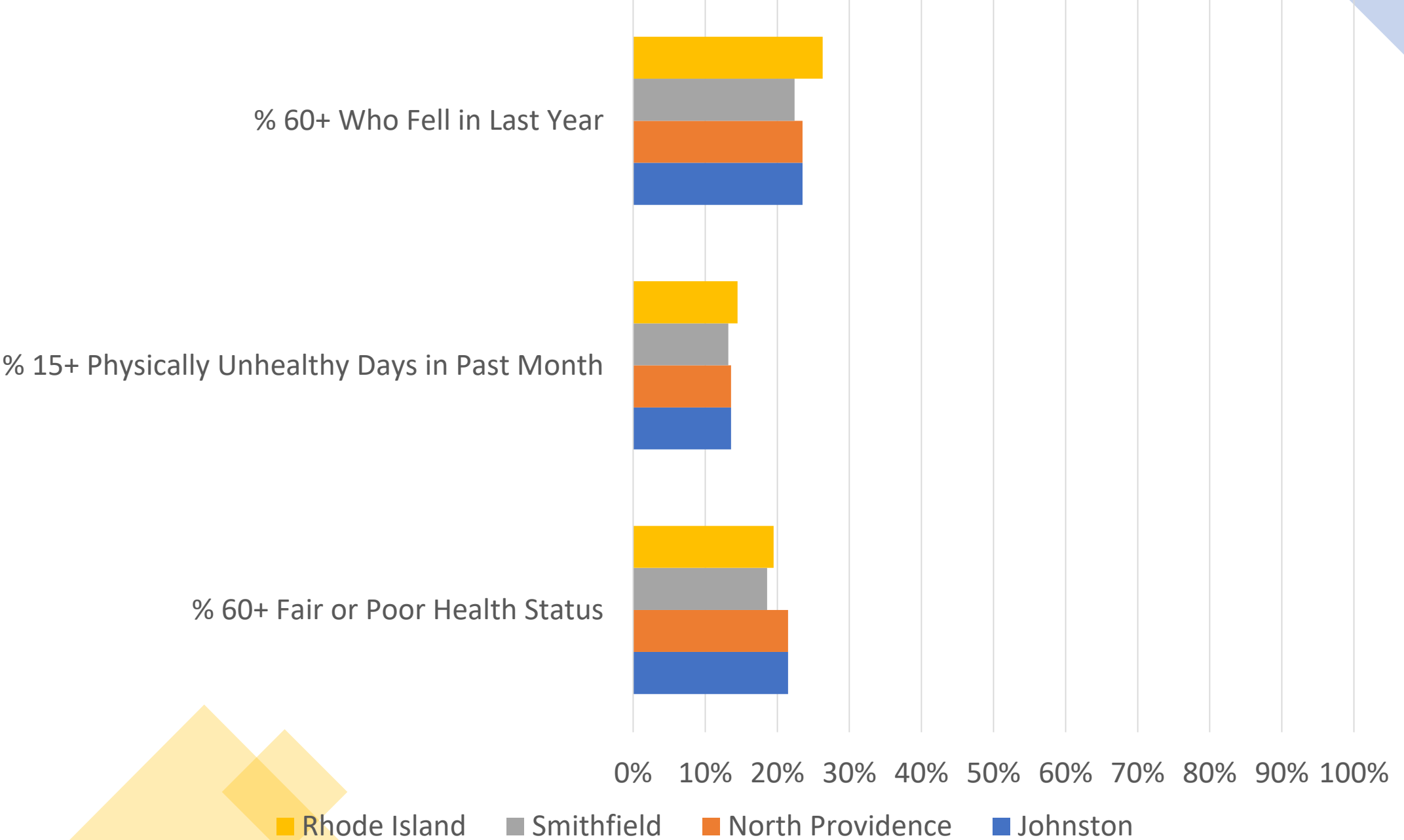
Health

COVID-19 Positive Test Rate (Through April 7, 2021)

COVID Positive Test Rate



Older Adults Falls and Health Status (2020)



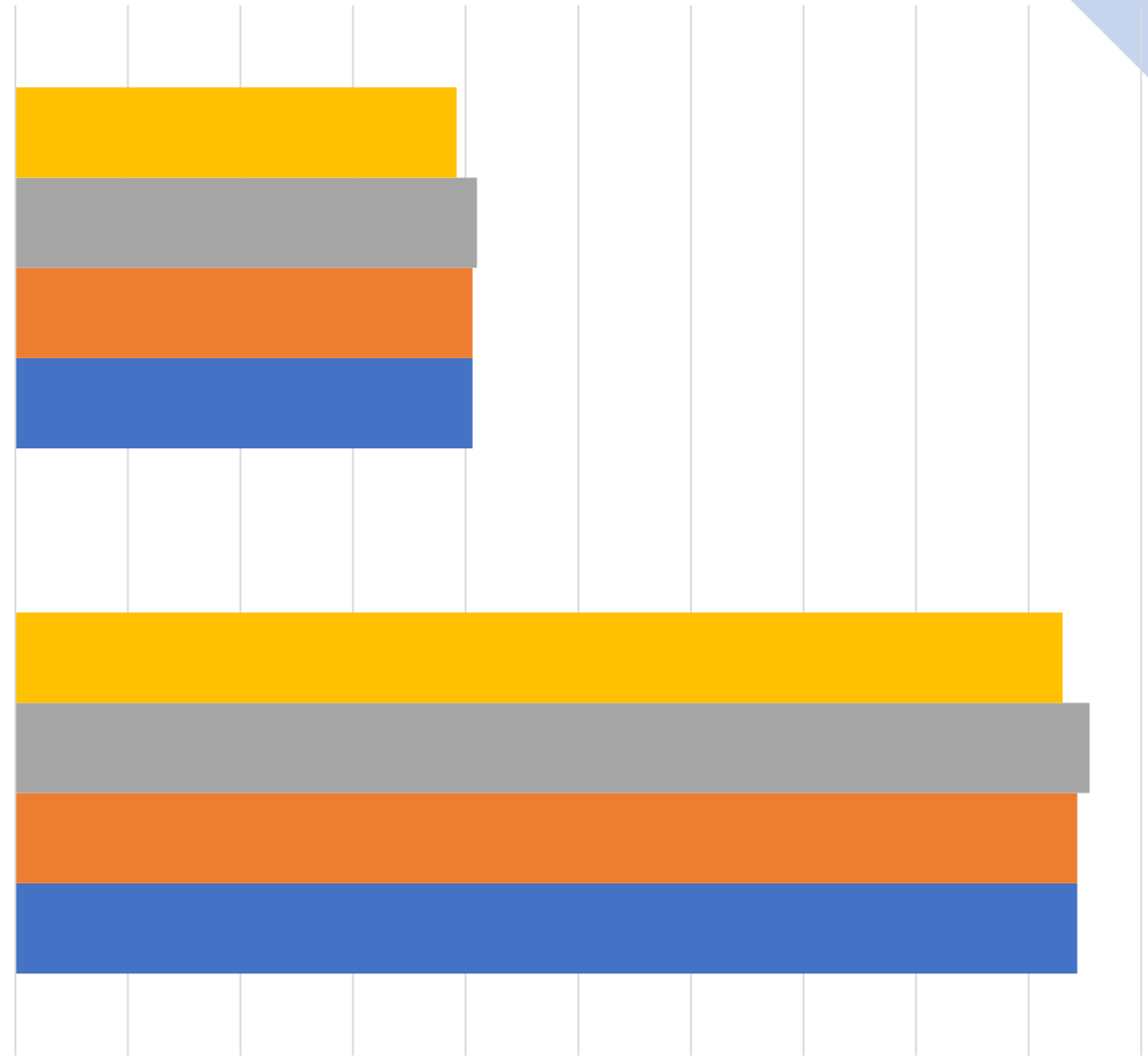
Older Adults Preventive Health (2020)

% 60+ Met CDC Preventive Health Screening Guidelines

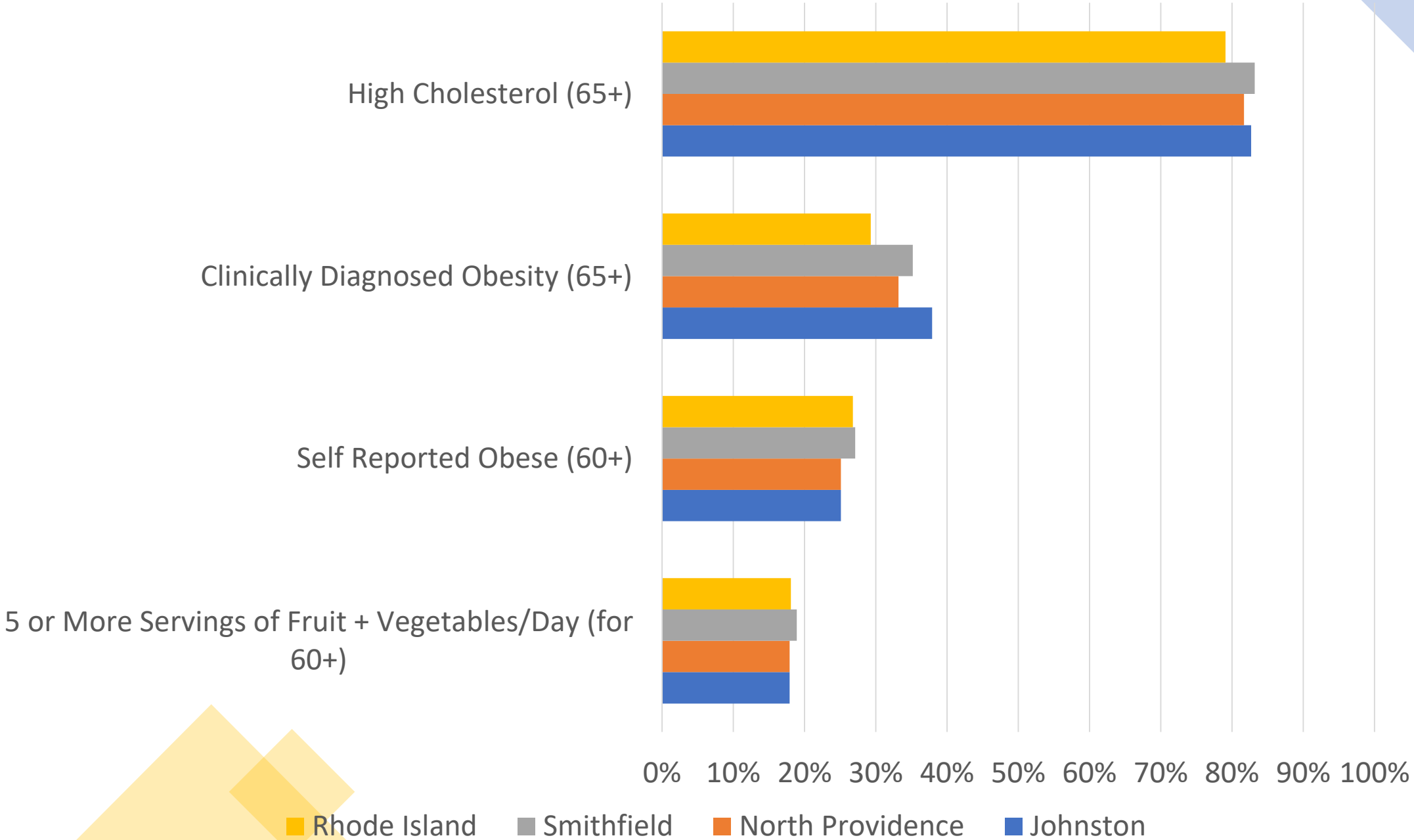
% 60+ w Physical Exam in Past Year

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

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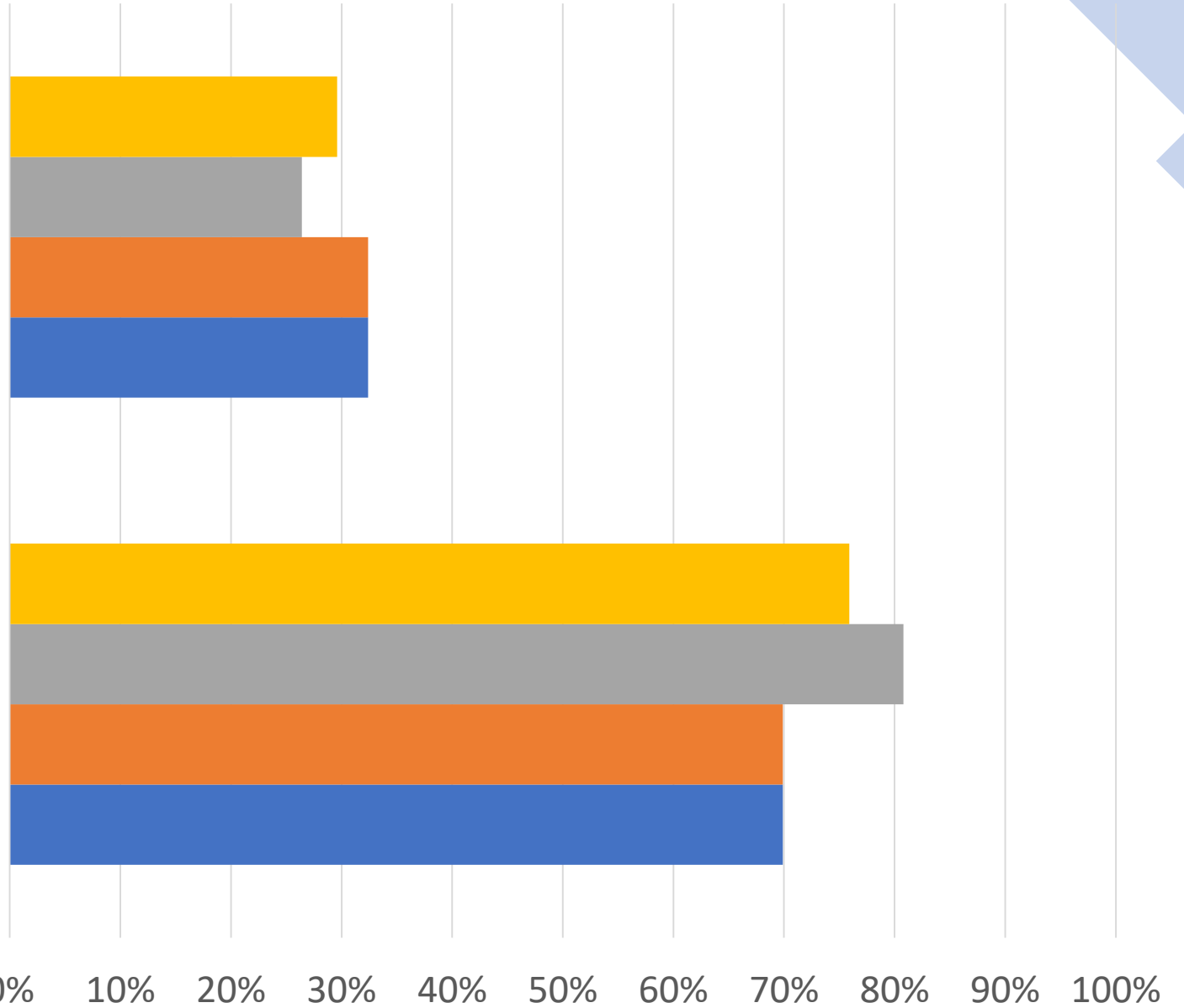


Older Adults Nutrition and Diet (2020)

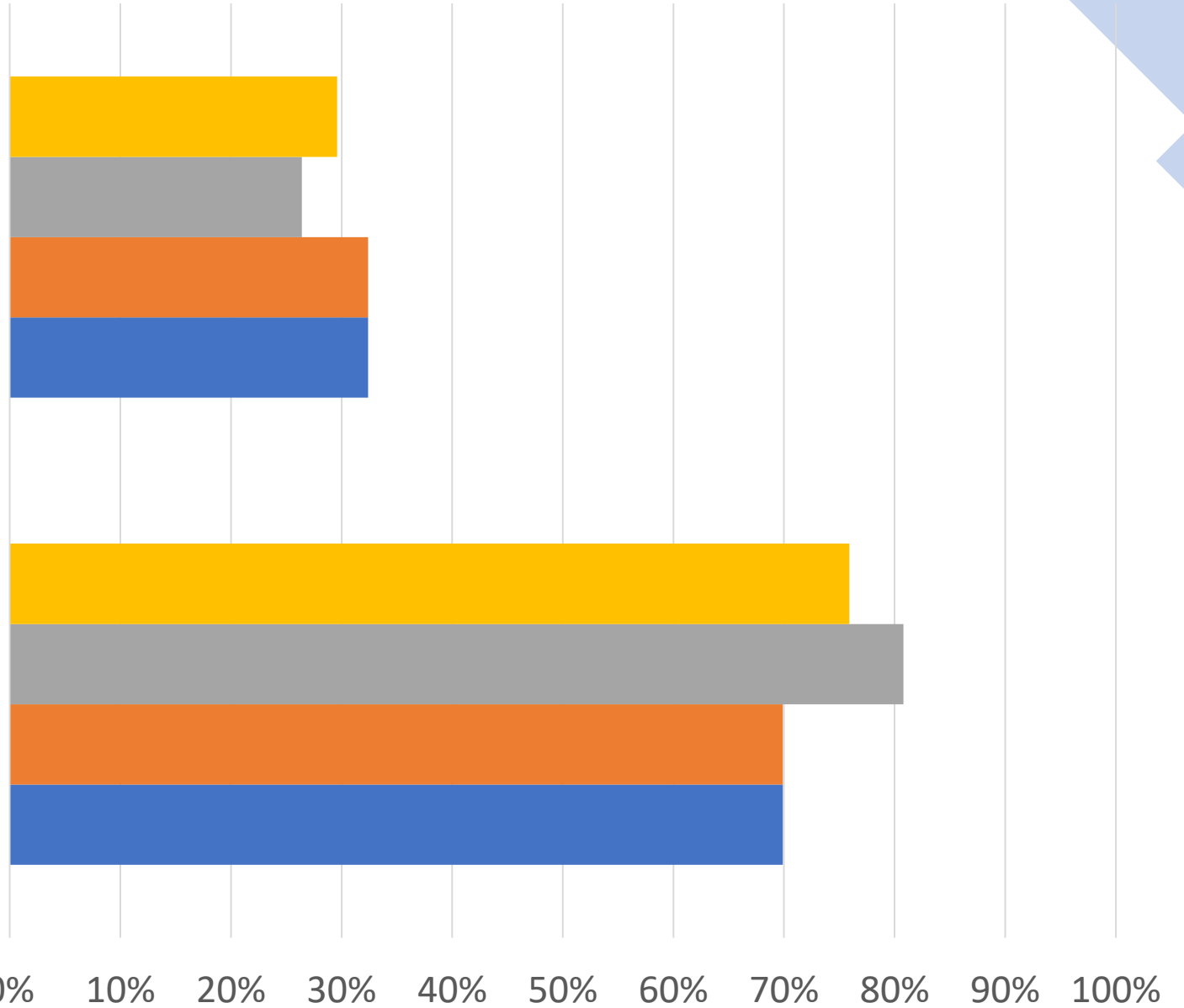


Older Adults Oral Health (2020)

% 60+ With Loss of 6 or More Teeth



% 60+ With Annual Dental Exam



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Older Adults Chronic Disease (2020)

% 65+ w 4+ (out of 15) Chronic Conditions

% 65+ w Hypertension

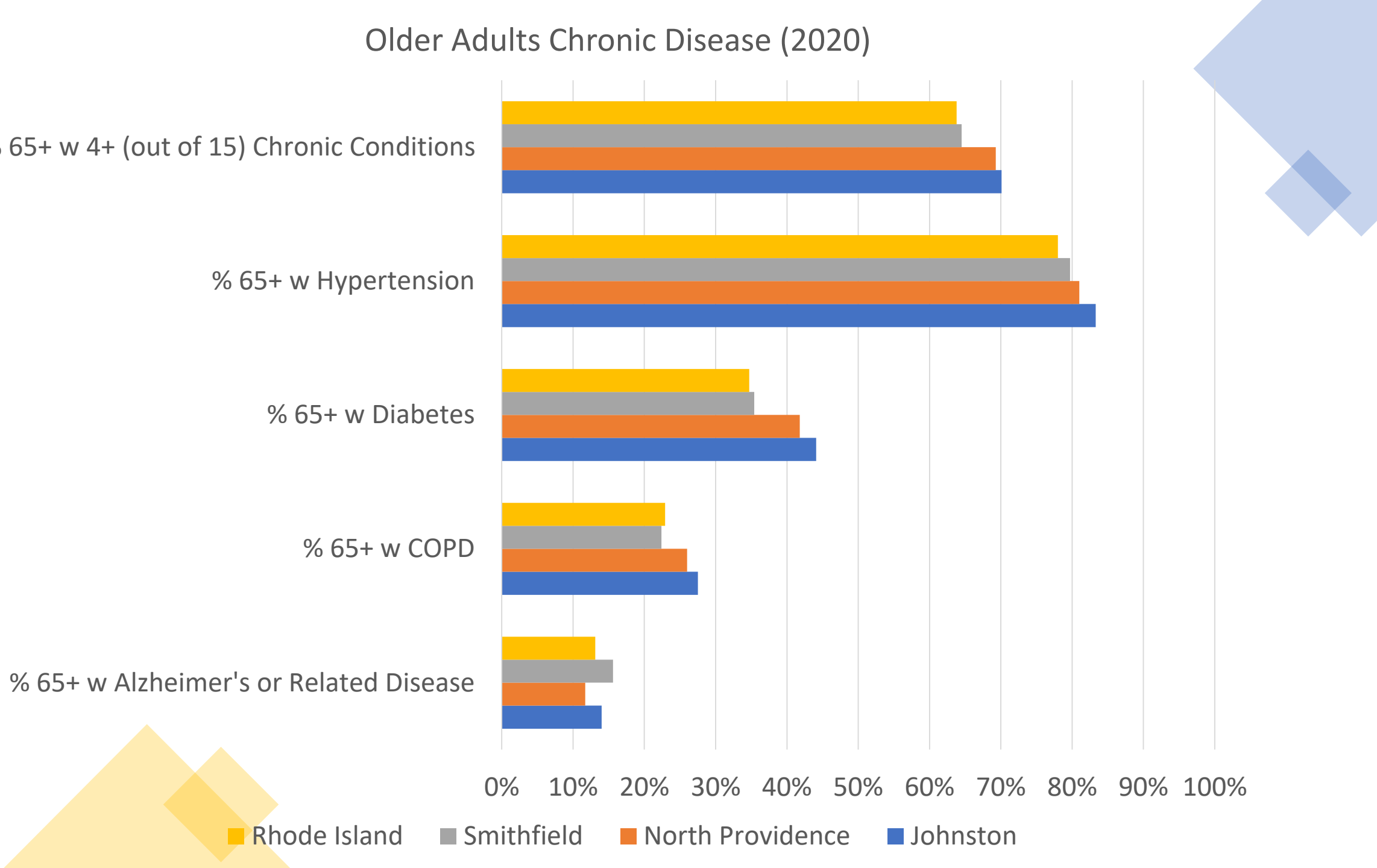
% 65+ w Diabetes

% 65+ w COPD

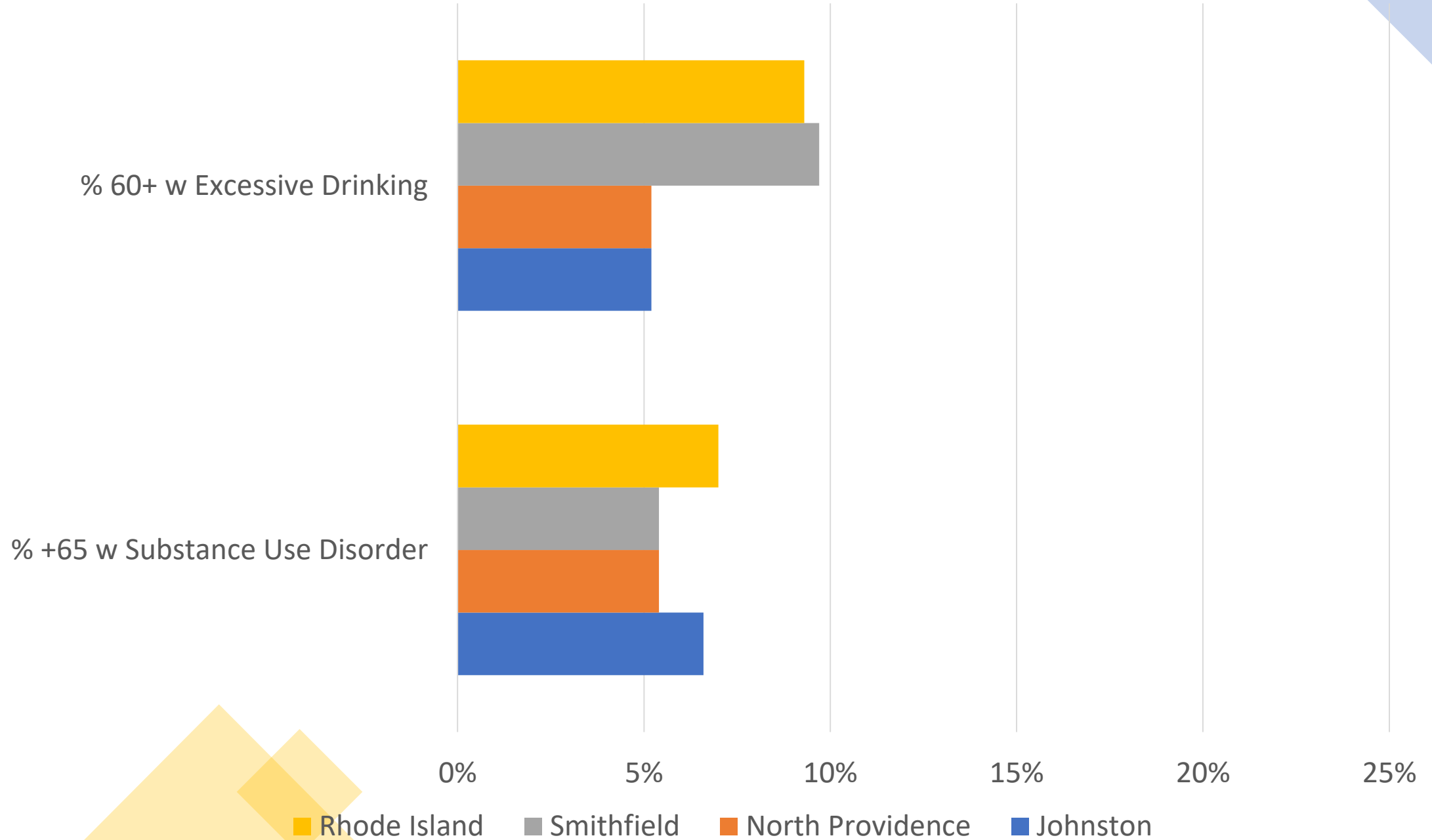
% 65+ w Alzheimer's or Related Disease

0% 10% 20% 30% 40% 50% 60% 70% 80% 90% 100%

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Older Adults Behavioral Health (2020)



Older Adults Mental Health (2020)

