Young Children And the 2020 Census

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Overview

● The number of young children missed in the Decennial census is large, growing, and the consequences are serious
● Many young children are missed even when adults in the household are counted; we need strategies for counting kids
● Funding for many services for young children and families are allocated using census data
● Service providers in contact with moms, dads, and moms-to-be can play a significant role in helping count young children
Understanding What Is At Stake

- **Stronger political representation**: federal, state, county and school Board districts
- **More funding for key kids programs**:
  - Medicaid, CHIP, Maternal and Child Health grants to states, home visiting, Healthy Start, foster care, adoption assistance, child care
  - states lost more than a half billion a year from just five programs
- **More equitable distribution of funds**:
  - Title 5 (MCH), Special Ed, CCDBG, Head Start expansion funds
- **Better planning**: health facilities, schools, private enterprise
- **Better information on child well being**: Census data provides 10 of 16 indicators used in yearly KIDS COUNT report
- **Affects all Census data for a decade**: Most of a young child’s childhood
How Big is the Undercount of Young Children:

One in 10 Young Children were Missed in the 2010 Census

Net Undercounts and Omissions Population Numbers for Age 0 to 4
- Net Undercount: 970,000
- Omissions: 2,200,000

Net Undercounts and Omissions Rates for Age 0 to 4
- Net Undercount: 4.6%
- Omissions: 10.3%

Source: Hogan and Griffin 2016
Young Children Had aHigher Net Undercount (by far) Than Any Other Age Group in the 2010 Census

Source: U.S. Census Bureau, May 2012
2010 Census Net Undercount Rates for Children Age 0 to 4 by Race and Hispanic Origin

- Total: -4.6
- Black Alone or in Combination: -6.3
- Hispanic: -7.5
- Proxy for Non-Hispanic White: -2.7

Source: U.S. Census Bureau,
Characteristics of the Undercount of Young Children

- Most missed kids lived in enumerated (counted) households
  - Young children are usually missed when they are left off the form
- Two-thirds of children missed lived in complex households
  - Multi-generation households
  - Extended families
  - Multi-family households
- Net undercount rates for children 0-4 in the 2010 Census were worse in higher population counties
- Mail Return Rates are not good predictor of net undercounts for young children
- Factors closely associated with net undercount
  - Many children of color,
  - Many linguistically isolated households,
  - Many grandparent householders, or
  - Many children not related to the householder
- They are wrongly convinced they should NOT count temporary residents
Counting Young Children Requires a Different Strategy

- No young child (0-4) fills out their own census form. The messaging needs to be directed at older members of the household.
- Young children are usually missed (4 out of 5!) when they are left off the form

From opinion research:
- 10% would not count their young child; another 8% are uncertain
- More likely to be missed in complex households, especially when non-parent fills out the form
  - Multi-generation or extended family
  - Unrelated families sharing a residence
  - Linguistically isolated households
- In higher population counties
- Left off because of fear of landlords
- Historically immigration not a big factor, likely to be one this time
  - 1.8 million children age 0-4 are living with at least one undocumented parent
- They are wrongly convinced they should NOT count temporary residents
  - Schools will be aware of these changes when even the Census Bureau isn’t.
How To Count All Kids?

Nationwide Efforts:

- Working with the Census Bureau to improve their strategies and connect them with key partners
- Coordinating with national awareness efforts
- Engaging national networks that work with families of young children

State & Local Efforts:

- Work with Complete Count Committees, make counting young children a high priority, and build plans specifically targeting young children, and use message tested outreach materials
- Engage trusted messengers such as health care, child care & Head Start providers, religious leaders, etc.
- Encourage messengers to use tested outreach materials with families with young children
Messaging:

Why they don’t respond to the Census or leave off young children if they do respond.

- Don’t understand how data is used
  - Assume any funding decisions using the data are political
- Think government already has the data
- Privacy
- Busy
- Fear (too many people in home, immigrant status)

What messages work:

- Resources your community needs depend on counting everyone
  - School, child care, housing, transportation
- Only Census data can be used for funding decisions
- Formula
- Effect lasts for a decade
- Most of their childhood
Top Messages on Kids

- Counting children means more funding for schools 82%
- Helps government plan for the future and determines the level of funding from federal government for program services children use including schools, child care, housing, transportation, medical care 82%
- Census happens once every 10 years so if we don’t count a two-year old, your community will lose funding for education, child care, and other services they will need for 10 years, most of their childhood 81%
Messaging Deeper Dive

- Counting your children in the census means your local schools will get more funding for your children 65% (only “very important”)

- The census helps local government plan for the future and determines the level of funding programs and services young children receive from the federal government, including our schools, child care, housing, public transportation, and medical care 62%

- Census data will help local government plan for the future and determine where more than $800 billion a year in federal funding goes, including medical services, WIC, child care, funding for public schools, public transit, low-income housing, and special and adult education 59%
What Can MCH Service Providers Do In 2020?

- Use Count All Kids materials for outreach to families: flyers, posters, videos in offices, emails, social media
- Host or co-sponsor community events explaining how the Census brings federal funds to their community, and answering questions (toolkits available)
- Address language differences and low literacy
  - Translation services at community events
  - Identify volunteers who speak languages other than English and Spanish to help answer parent questions
  - Suggest they fill out census by phone
- Provide internet access for parents in March-June 2020
Count All Kids Timeline to the 2020 Census

● Between now and the end of the year:
  ○ Educate your colleagues and other organizations/institutions in your area. Special emphasis on recruiting trusted voices.
    ■ Check out resources that are on countallkids.org
    ● **Sign up for email** and check back often as new resources will be posted continually.
  ○ Get in touch with your state and local complete count committee.
    ■ Make sure they are making counting young children a priority
● Starting in January 2020:
  ○ Get started educating the public
    ■ Distribute flyers, put up posters, etc
    ■ Get trusted voices in the community to tell people how important getting counted is
**Resources You Can Use**

**Census Bureau: 2020census.gov**

Outreach materials:  

Complete Count Committees:  

Videos:  

**Count All Kids: countallkids.org**

One-pager on strategies to count young children:  

Get latest news/resources: sign up at bottom of homepage ([countallkids.org](http://countallkids.org))
Thank you!

Sign up for campaign materials at countallkids.org

For more information please contact:

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