



## The Importance of an Accurate Count

The census provides data critical to research and practice. Unfortunately, researchers believe up to 2 million children under age 5 could be missed in the count, for a variety of reasons. That's about how many were missed last time around, and the problem has worsened with every census since 1980.

The stakes are high: Communities where children are missed in the count risk reductions in federal funding for schools, hospitals, libraries and other resources. An inaccurate census is a mistake we'd have to live with for 10 years.

## What You Can Do

### For researchers

- Join your community's Complete Count Committee.
- Educate fellow researchers by describing the repercussions of undercounts.
  - Wheeling, K. (2018, March 28) "Why a Census Undercount Spells Trouble For Social Scientists," *Pacific Standard* magazine, <https://psmag.com/news/why-a-census-undercount-spells-trouble-for-social-scientists>
  - *Administrative records in the 2020 U.S. Census*. Fact sheet from censuscounts.org <https://censuscounts.org/race-and-ethnicity/administrative-records-in-the-2020-us-census/>
- Make sure university students understand the importance of completing the census.
- Enlist university students to help get out the count.

### For practitioners

- Join your community's Complete Count Committee.
- As trusted partners, share information on Census 2020 through email, text messages and social media, emphasizing the importance of being counted in the census and providing information about how to safely and securely submit information to the U.S. Census Bureau.
- Hold community events and provide services at schools, child care centers, health clinics, etc. to raise awareness of why being counted matters.
- Answer questions, provide translation services, and make internet resources available.
- Identify and engage with hard-to-count communities in your area.

## Learn more

- The Leadership Conference Education Fund. (2018). *Why a fair and accurate census matters to thriving private and public sectors*. Washington, D.C.: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Census-Matters-Private-Public-Sectors.pdf>
- Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality. (2018). *Citizenship question nonresponse: A demographic profile of people who do not answer the American Community Survey citizenship question*. Washington, D.C.: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GCPI-ESOI-Demographic-Profile-of-People-Who-Do-Not-Respond-to-the-Citizenship-Question-20180906.pdf>
- Asian-Americans Advancing Justice and NALEO Educational Fund. *Debunking the Myths about the Citizenship Question on the 2020 Census Form*. Retrieved May 16, 2019, from <https://www.advancingjustice-aaajc.org/sites/default/files/2018-06/AAJC%20NALEO%20Debunking%20the%20Myths%20re%20Citizenship%20Question%20Final%206.6.2018.pdf>
- Georgetown Center on Poverty and Inequality. (2018). Brief: *Counting people experiencing homelessness: A guide to 2020 census operations*. Washington, D.C.: Author. Retrieved from <http://www.georgetownpoverty.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/GCPI-ESOI-Counting-People-Experiencing-Homelessness-20180904.pdf>
- GW Institute of Public Policy. (2019). *Counting for dollars 2020: The role of the decennial census in the geographic distribution of federal funds*. Retrieved from <https://gwipp.gwu.edu/counting-dollars-2020-role-decennial-census-geographic-distribution-federal-funds>