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Let's Talk 2020 Census: Counting North Carolina's Kids

We All Need to be Counted in the 2020 Census – Including Children

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Document Source: ncchild.org

In the last decennial Census, more than 25,000 young children in North Carolina were missed. The majority of those were children from Black, Latinx and immigrant households. Children living in foster care were also often missed. This caused a decade of huge losses for North Carolina communities, from childcare funding to new business openings. Every one of us has a role to play to make sure young children are counted in the 2020 Census. **Provided below are four easy steps that you or your organization can take to help ensure North Carolina children are counted for the 2020 Census.**

1. Use posters and handouts in your facility

If you serve families with young children in your community, start spreading the word now! The Census Bureau has created great posters and postcards to help folks understand that babies and young children need to be counted in the Census. You can download and print your own copies. If you can't print your own, [contact NC Child](#) and we'll send you a stack of postcards to hand out.

- Parent Reminder Postcards – [English](#) or [Spanish](#)
- Count Young Children Posters – [English](#) or [Spanish](#)

2. Use social media

Use your social media channels to make sure your followers know about the Census. NC Child has created a [social media toolkit](#) to help our Child Advocacy Network partners reach parents of young children with effective messaging. **To make a big impact, post at least one Census message on your Facebook page every week, starting today through October 31, 2020** – and be sure to tag all your friends who care for and work with young children! Does a weekly post seem intimidating? There are many resources available to readily share on your social media or websites:

- [NC Child video](#)
- [NC Complete Count Commission social media pre-written posts](#)
- [Young Children and the 2020 Census Fact Sheet](#)
- [The Cost of a Census Undercount](#)
- [NC Child's Census Campaign page](#)

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3. Get young children involved

There are great early childhood resources to teach kids about the Census and ensure they bring the message home to their parents.

- [Census Toolkit from Sesame Street](#) – Includes videos, posters, and social media graphics for parents and young children.
- [Pre-K Census Activities from the US Census Bureau](#) – Includes a full Pre-K curriculum with a song, coloring pages, activities for 2- 3- and 4-year-olds, and more.
- [Parent Toolkits](#) from the [US Census Stats in Schools](#) - The U.S. Census Bureau Statistics in Schools program offers over 200 free learning activities and resources for children in pre-K through 12th grade that can easily be used at home.

4. Be an informed advocate

Use the following information to help educate others.

- **The Scope of the Problem** - The net undercount of young children – the difference between the actual census count of children ages 0-4 and Census Bureau population estimates – has steadily worsened over the past 40 years. In the 2010 Decennial Census, children under 5 were missed at a higher rate than any other age group, and an estimated 25,000 young children in North Carolina were not counted.
- **A Higher Undercount Means Less Federal Support** - Missing young children in the census can have a big impact on North Carolina's federal funding for family support as well as the fairness of our local resource allocation, representation in Congress, and redistricting efforts.
- **Hundreds of Federal Programs Rely on Census Data to Guide Funding to States and Local Areas** - for just the 10 largest child-serving programs, North Carolina receives more than \$5 billion in federal support. If children are not counted, federal programs like Head Start, the National School Lunch Program, and the Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC) will funnel fewer dollars to North Carolina, making it difficult to meet the needs of all our children. In addition, an undercount will undermine local efforts to estimate the need for community resources like schools and childcare providers.
- **We Have to Reach the Hard-to-Count** - Children are overrepresented in populations considered "hard-to-count" by the U.S. Census Bureau. An estimated 73,000 children under 5 in North Carolina are part of these groups, which include low income households, homes with complex family structures, and racial and ethnic minorities. If missed in the count, these children also stand to suffer the most from reductions in funding to vital programs. The good news is that it's not too late to address this problem! Legislators can allocate additional funds to support census

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outreach and strategies to inform the families of young children in hard-to-count census tracts. We can and should do more to ensure a fair and accurate count of all North Carolina residents.

Want to learn more? Check out [NC Child's Census Campaign page](#) for trainings, FAQ's, and more. You are a critical voice. As a "trusted messenger," you can help spread the word that the Census is incredibly important for our communities, and that participation is safe and easy.

Thank you for helping to make every child count in North Carolina!

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