

EVERYONE WINS WHEN **EVERYONE IS COUNTED**



## YOUNG CHILDREN COUNT!



**Young children tend to live in homes that are disproportionately more complex, including children of color, children living in low income and immigrant households and many other characteristics that are considered “hard to count” by the U.S. Census Bureau.<sup>1</sup>**

It is estimated that:

### **2.2 million children under age five were undercounted in the 2010 Census<sup>2</sup>**

The populations of children who benefit from vital social programs, healthcare investments and education opportunities are those most at risk for being undercounted.

California is home to 13% of the nation’s child population which reflects a total of over 9.1 million children—with over 3 million of that total population between the ages of zero to five.<sup>3</sup> In California, the most populous and diverse state in the country and the sixth largest economy in the world, 62% of babies are born into low-income families each year.<sup>4</sup> The state also has arguably the most diverse child population in the nation, including nearly half of all children living in immigrant families and the highest number of Dual Language Learners/English Language Learners in the country.<sup>5</sup> Given the state’s demographics, if families with children and those with young children in particular are under-counted, this would disadvantage the state’s ability to apply for the appropriate funding needed to serve this high-need population. Federal dollars comprise a vital source of funding for programs and services aimed at young children and families in particular, including food and nutrition program, support services and therapies for children with developmental delays, child care and home visiting programs.

Additionally, some states with a lesser proportion of hard-to-count populations have at times, over-counted<sup>6</sup> their child population, skewing resources away from states like California that may benefit from them the most.

Finally, local government, agencies, and social service providers use census data to plan for local initiatives and services as well and an undercount would compound the miscalculation of need versus available services.

# FEDERAL DOLLARS ARE CRUCIAL TO SERVICES FOR OUR YOUNGEST CALIFORNIANS

**Census data are used to assess and plan for federal investments that are vital to families with young children. Unlike funding for K-12 education, which is primarily funded through state budgets, services for young children and families rely heavily on federal dollars.**

**This includes funding for important programs such as:**

- Temporary Assistance for Needy Families
- Title I grants for education
- State's Children's Health Insurance Program (SCHIP)
- Special education
- Women, Infants, and Children
- Early Head Start and Head Start
- Title IV-E Foster Care
- Child Care & Development Block Grant
- Medicaid subsidies

**It will be vital for all outreach efforts focused on “hard to count” communities to consider extra consideration of the importance of reaching families with young children.**

Families may not understand that they should count every child, including infants when filling out the census. In prior years, the forms themselves only left space for a certain number of people and often people fill them out from oldest to youngest. Families living under additional stress (by definition having young children adds stress to a household), who live in complex living arrangements or are mobile (it is very common for younger families and those with younger children to rent and move more frequently) add additional challenges for this population.

**In addition, all materials, outreach messages, advertisements, and census staff training should address the importance of counting young children including infants.**

## ENDNOTES

- 1 <http://www.aecf.org/m/resourcedoc/aecf-WhyareYoungChildrenMissedInCensus-2009.pdf>
- 2 <http://civilrightsdocs.info/pdf/census/Fact-Sheet-Undercount-of-Young-Children.pdf>
- 3 <http://pub.childrennow.org/2016/california/>
- 4 [https://www.childrennow.org/files/2215/0402/7686/07\\_18\\_17-P3-Agenda-booklet.pdf](https://www.childrennow.org/files/2215/0402/7686/07_18_17-P3-Agenda-booklet.pdf)
- 5 <https://www.npr.org/sections/ed/2017/02/23/512451228/5-million-english-language-learners-avast-pool-of-talent-at-risk>
- 6 <ftp://ftp.census.gov/cac/nac/meetings/2016-11/2016-04-latino-children.pdf>

For more information about the Census Policy Advocacy Network, please contact  
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