

2019-2020 LEGISLATIVE PRIORITY

GOAL: ENSURE THAT NEW YORK'S YOUNG CHILDREN ARE COUNTED IN THE **2020 CENSUS** IN ORDER TO PRESERVE FEDERAL FUNDING FOR CRITICAL PROGRAMS AND SERVICES



Why: Every year, more than \$53 billion in federal funds are allocated to New York and localities based on Census data either directly or through Census population estimates or surveys that in turn rely on the Decennial Census.¹ This includes \$6.7 billion for programs that benefit children, such as Medicaid, the Children's Health Insurance Program (Child Health Plus), education grants, Head Start, foster care and child care assistance.²

However, for many reasons, young children are historically undercounted in the Census. This trend of missing young children has been growing over the last several Decennial Censuses even as the count for other age groups has improved.³ In the 2010 Census, young children had by far the worst undercount of any age group, missing nearly 5% of children aged 0-4, or about 1 million children.⁴ Within that group, children of color, and immigrant children were the most likely to be undercounted. In 2010, New York had the third highest number of children ages 0-4 residing in areas at risk of being undercounted, and 43% of children in New York live in census blocks at risk of going undercounted again.⁵

This will also be the first Census that will be conducted online which may be difficult for people who do not have access to broadband or are not comfortable with computers. The Census might also contain a controversial question on immigration status. Both of these issues could lead to an even higher undercount than in 2010 among young children – and among the general population – if New York does not mount a concerted and well-resourced education, outreach and mobilization effort.

An undercount could lead to a significant cut in programs that New York children and families rely upon. It could also lead to a loss of representation for New Yorkers in Congress and beyond, and distorted, inaccurate data. The impacts of an undercount would haunt us for a decade.

Supporting Policies and Initiatives:

- **New York should invest \$40 million for community-based outreach for the 2020 Census.** The trusted voices of community groups is essential to maximize participation, particularly in the current environment of distrust and anxiety around government programs. Community-based program involvement will be of utmost importance should the proposed immigration status question remain among the census questions. It is imperative that New York make an investment in this budget cycle or it will be too late to undertake the concerted and widespread outreach efforts that will be needed to avoid another – potentially worse – undercount than in 2010.

¹ Counting for Dollars 2020 16 Large Federal Assistance Programs that Distribute Funds on Basis of Decennial Census-derived Statistics (Fiscal Year 2015) New York, George Washington University, Washington DC.
<https://gwipp.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2181/f/downloads/New%20York%20CFD%2008-18-17.pdf>

² Community Leaders Can Help New York Count! New York State Council on Children and Families. <https://www.ccf.ny.gov/index.php?CID=373>

³ The Undercount of Young Children, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economics, US Census. Feb 2014 <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2014/demo/2014-undercount-children.pdf>

⁴ The Undercount of Young Children, US Department of Commerce, Bureau of Economics, US Census. Feb 2014 <https://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/working-papers/2014/demo/2014-undercount-children.pdf>

⁵ Kids Count Data Center: A Project of The Annie E. Casey Foundation. Counting All Kids in 2020: 4.5 Million Kids Live in Hard-to-Count Census Tracts. (2018, Oct 18). <https://datacenter.kidscount.org/updates/show/221-counting-all-kids-in-2020>
