



Council on Children and Families

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UNDER EMBARGO until Wednesday, June 27 at 12:01 a.m. ET

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High Stakes: Census Undercount Could Impact Children's Well-being

Undercount could result in less funding and fewer opportunities for New York's children

ALBANY, New York—Inaccurately counting our youngest children could result in New York state losing funding that contributes to children's success. According to the 2018 KIDS COUNT® Data Book, released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, about half million children under five live in New York neighborhoods where there's a high risk they may not be counted in the 2020 Census. The impact of an undercount in the next census will be extremely detrimental to families. In fact, it will affect every resident of New York, since the census enumeration is used to determine the amount of resources and representation New York will have during the next decennial.

Robert Scardamalia, former chief demographer for the State of New York for nearly 20 years, noted, "The 2020 Census will determine the future of federally funded programs for the next decade, putting our state at risk of losing funding if children and others are not counted."

The high stakes associated with an accurate census cannot be understated. New York receives over \$10 billion annually in federal funds that support child-focused programs. Such programs include Head Start/Early Head Start, the National School Lunch Program, the State Children's Health Insurance Program, Title 1 grants to school districts, Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (children's portion) and Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC). The services and supports provided by these programs contribute substantially to children's well-being, particularly in the areas of health and education.

Trends in Child Well-Being in New York

The annual KIDS COUNT Data Book uses 16 indicators in four domains of well-being—economic well-being; education; family and community; and health—as an assessment of child well-being in each state.

- **Economic well-being.** The percent of disconnected teens in New York—those who are not in school and not working—saw a 25 percent decrease from 2010 to 2016. The percentage of families spending more than 30 percent of their income on housing and percent of households with parents that lack secure employment also fell over the same period—11 and 3 percent change respectively.
- **Education.** Most indicators in education remained the same, the exception being improvement in the percent of high school students not graduating in four years. In 2010/11, 23 percent of students did not graduate in four years; this dropped to 20 percent in school year 2015/16.
- **Family and community.** Teen birth rates are at an all-time low nationwide and New York is a strong leader in this area, with a 43 percent decrease from 2010 to 2016. New York has 13 births per 1,000 females ages 15 to 19.

- **Health.** New York ranks among the top five states in the nation with respect to the well-being of children's health. A contributing factor is that 98 in 100 children have access to health insurance.

Children's well-being is at stake with the next Census.

Rebecca Heberle, the Head Start and Early Head Start Director of P.E.A.C.E. Inc. in Syracuse, said, "Children can't vote or complete a census form. They rely on adults to ensure they are represented, make their futures a priority and fight for their well-being. P.E.A.C.E. Head Start is ready to partner with families to get an accurate count."

New York's children and families benefit considerably from the federal funds received as a result of census enumeration. It is important that every person be counted so our neighborhoods receive support that contributes to family sufficiency and children's success; New York has its proper representation in Washington; and we have the data needed to understand the social and economic progress of our communities, which will allow us to plan responsibly over the course of the next 10 years.

"The New York State Council on Children and Families is part of a comprehensive multi-agency state task force that has been working for more than a year to assure a full count of all residents of New York State with an intense focus on all hard to count populations particularly young children," stated Debbie Benson, Executive Director of the New York State Council on Children and Families.

"No one benefits from a failed census. When anyone in a community isn't counted in the census, the entire community suffers—in terms of less political representation and fewer public and private resources for the next decade. We must ensure a fully funded census that counts all communities equally well," said Terri Ann Lowenthal, a former House Census Subcommittee staff director and Leadership Conference Education Fund consultant.

Release Information

The 2018 KIDS COUNT® Data Book will be available June 27 at 12:01 a.m. EDT at www.aecf.org. Additional information is available at www.aecf.org/databook, which also contains the most recent national, state and local data on hundreds of indicators of child well-being. Journalists interested in creating maps, graphs and rankings in stories about the Data Book can use the KIDS COUNT Data Center at datacenter.kidscount.org.

About Council on Children and Families

The Council on Children and Families is authorized to coordinate the state health, education and human services systems to provide more effective systems of care for children and families. Follow the Council on Twitter @nysccf and bookmark our website, <http://www.ccf.ny.gov>.

About the Annie E. Casey Foundation

The Annie E. Casey Foundation creates a brighter future for the nation's children by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow. For more information, visit www.aecf.org. KIDS COUNT® is a registered trademark of the Annie E. Casey Foundation.