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Our Kids Count

In our community, we believe every person counts. And we believe every person should get their fair share — especially little kids.

A big way our community gets money for child and family programs is by participating in the U.S. Census. The state and federal government uses census information to fund programs like child care, free and low-cost school lunches, healthcare, and more

Here are just a few reasons why your participation in the census matters:



When you and your kids are part of the census count, the community receives its fair share of money for important programs like WIC, Head Start, the National School Lunch Program, CHIP, and child care.



Cambridge receives more than \$2,000 per person every year based on census data. We must count everyone so we don't lose these resources.



The number of people Massachusetts has in Congress is based on the census count.

Here is how it works:

- (1) In March 2020, you will get a census reminder in the mail.
- (2) Complete the census form online, or over the phone.
- (3) Request a paper form, or wait to receive a paper form in the mail, if you prefer to respond that way. Please complete by end of April to avoid a home visit from a census official.

About one million kids under age 5 in the United States were not counted in the last census.

Please be counted so our community gets the funding and services it deserves.

For more information, visit www.cambridgema.gov/2020Census

Common Questions about the US Census



Are my answers confidential? YES.

By law, your response to the US census CANNOT BE SHARED with anyone outside the census. This includes ICE (immigration), police, CPS (Child Protective Services), the IRS, the FBI, your landlord, or anyone else. No one can use your census answers to reduce your benefits, evict you, deport you, fine you, or take your children.

Will there be a question on the census asking if I am a citizen? NO.

Can I skip questions? The best way to avoid a phone call or visit from a census worker is to complete all the questions truthfully. And please make sure everyone in your household is counted — every adult, child, and baby.

How can I complete the census? You have options. You can fill out the census on a computer (at home or at a library), over the phone, or on paper.

What if my child is a baby — do I list him or her on the census? YES. Please list your baby no matter how old — even if you are still in the hospital!

I am pregnant — how should I fill out the census? Every child born on or before April 1, 2020 should be counted.

I have kids living with me who aren't mine — do I list them? YES. You should count every child who is living at your address, even if only temporarily, on April 1, 2020.

I have more people living with me than my landlord knows. I shouldn't list them, should I? Everyone must be listed, according to the U.S. Constitution. The census will not report your answers to your landlord or anyone else. Please make sure all people living in your household, or property, on April 1st, 2020 are counted.

I am not in the country legally. Should I take the census? YES. By law, the census cannot report your answers to any immigration authorities, law enforcement, or people in charge of government benefits. Everyone living in the U.S. at the time of the census should be counted, no matter their citizenship or immigration status.

My child doesn't live with me all the time — do I list him or her? It depends. Whomever your child lives with most of the time should count your child. If time is split evenly, the adult who has the child on April 1, 2020 should count the child.

How long does it take? About 10 minutes.

Your answers to the US census are 100% confidential and are not shared with anyone. Please fill out your census form in 2020!

Shape our children's future. Start with the 2020 Census.



What is the census and when does it happen?

Every 10 years, everyone living in the United States is asked to complete a simple but very important constitutional task: respond to the census. The 2020 Census is a questionnaire that asks a few basic questions, like the age, sex and number of people who live or stay in your home, including young children and newborn babies. The next decennial census starts in March of 2020 and responding is easy, safe, and important.



Why is counting young children important?

Newborn babies and young children under five are often missed in the census. The 2020 Census helps determine which areas qualify for the critical resources that children and families depend on for the next 10 years—basically, an entire childhood! Examples of resources that could be impacted include food assistance, Head Start, childcare, housing support, public schools, early intervention services for children with special needs, children's health insurance, and more. Knowing how many children there are and where they live is essential to getting those services and programs to them. That's why it's so important that every child be counted, even newborn babies.

Learn more at
2020CENSUS.GOV.

Shape
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Why are young children missed in the census?

There are many reasons why young children can be missed in the census. Young children who are missed in the census tend to live with large, extended families or with multiple families living under one roof. These children may stay in more than one home and may not be related to the person filling out the questionnaire or answering questions from a census worker.

It is important to remember that everyone living in a household, temporarily or permanently, relative or friend, needs to be included in the 2020 Census.



How does the Census Bureau count people without a permanent residence?

Census Bureau workers take in-person counts of people living in group quarters, such as college dormitories, military barracks, nursing homes and shelters, as well as those experiencing homelessness or who have been displaced by natural disasters. Children and families without a permanent residence who are staying temporarily with a friend or family on April 1, 2020 should be counted at that address.



Are census responses kept confidential?

The law requires that the Census Bureau keep all information confidential and use responses only to produce statistics. Your responses are protected and cannot be used against you. Census Bureau employees are sworn to protect your personal information for life and any violation comes with a penalty of up to \$250,000 and/or up to five years in prison.



How can I help?

There are many ways you can help. Encourage adults with young children and newborn babies in their household to respond to the 2020 Census. Partner with the Census Bureau to help ensure all children are counted. Explain to others that an accurate count can bring helpful resources and programs to their community, particularly services that support children. Completing the 2020 Census is an easy, safe, and important way we can all help shape the future for children.

Learn more at
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The 2020 Census: Why We Need Specific Strategies to Count Young Children

- The 2010 Census missed more than 10 percent of all children under age 5 in the U.S.
- When we miss young children in the census, it has serious consequences for them, their families, their communities and our nation – with many of those consequences lasting for at least 10 years.
- Many children aren't counted because their parents or guardians are confused over whether to include them on the census form – our research shows 10 percent of families would leave their own young children off the forms, and 8 percent are unsure whether to count them.
- The problem is even worse for children living in certain types of households: kids living with grandparents, other relatives, or people they are not related to, kids who split their time between parents, or kids who are temporarily in one household but have no permanent home.
- Here's a crucial fact: Because people filling out the form are unsure about including children, we could count every adult in a community and still miss many children.
- There are, however, several tools that can help us ensure that more children are counted.
 1. The Hard To Count Map website will soon have information on specific tracts with lots of children at risk of being missed and why – we know young kids in communities of color are more likely to be missed, as are children in neighborhoods with lots of families who do not speak English, kids living with grandparents, or kids living with unrelated adults or more distant relatives. The website's URL is <https://www.censushardtocompmaps2020.us/>
 2. We know from the [message research](#) we've conducted that certain messages make it more likely that parents or others will fill out the census form and include the children living in their households. Here are five examples of messages that work:

Knowing "you can fill out the census on your own schedule and that it only takes about 10 minutes to complete" makes people much more likely to fill out the census and include everyone living in the household.

Highlighting the privacy guarantee makes a majority of parents or others more likely to fill out the form. It's important to say what the privacy guarantee is: Any current or former Census employee that releases individual data can go to prison for up to 5 years or pay a fine of up to \$250,000.

Counting your young children in the census means your local schools will get more funding for your children: that's one of the most persuasive messages, with 82 percent of those surveyed saying it's important.

The census happens only once every ten years, so if we don't count a two year-old, your community will have less funding for education, child care, and other services children need for a decade, most of their childhood.

Census data will help local government plan for the future and determine where \$800 billion a year in federal funding goes, including medical services, WIC, child care, public schools, public transit, and low-income housing.