

About the Census

Counting Children

Based on the December 2009 Kids Count Working Paper
of the Annie E. Casey Foundation

Young children are most likely to be missed in the Census

Children under age five are missed more than any other age group

Why young children are undercounted

- Large households: Young children are more likely to live in large households. Because census forms only have space for detailed demographics on six household members, children are often left off of the forms
- Mobile or temporary households: Children are more likely to live in households that change addresses, or in temporary situations such as foster care
- Complex families: Children under 12 are more likely to be living in harder to count households, with an adult other than their parents, than are their teen counterparts.

How does an undercount of America's children impact our communities?

An undercount of children in the United States means:

- **Reduced funding** for federal programs that help children and their families, such as Special Education, Head Start, State Children's Health Insurance Program, Foster Care and Improving Teacher Quality grants and other health, education, housing and jobs programs.
- **Inaccurate information** on where to locate new schools or health facilities
- **Reduced political representation** for the communities that are undercounted

How are children counted?

Children, like others, are counted where they live and sleep most of the time.

What about children with a new home or in transition?

Children are counted at their new home or where they are living on April 1st.

How about children in joint custody?

They are counted at the residence where they live the majority of time. If time is split evenly, they're counted where they're staying on Census Day.

Resources

- "Why Are Young Children Missed So Often in the Census?"; available on the website of the Annie E. Casey Foundation, www.aecf.org
- "Why KIDS COUNT - <http://www.aecf.org/MajorInitiatives/KIDSCOUNT.aspx>
- Census in the Schools - <http://www.census.gov/schools/>