



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

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One in Six Young Children in Delaware Likely to be Missed in 2020 Census

10,000 children from birth to age five live in “hard-to-count” areas in Delaware

Newark, Delaware — June 27, 2018 With 17 percent of Delaware kids at risk of being undercounted in the upcoming 2020 census, federally funded supports that have driven progress in the health and wellbeing of youth and their families are in jeopardy, according to the 2018 *KIDS COUNT® Data Book* released today by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In Delaware, more than \$500 million flows to the state each year from the 10 largest federal programs that serve children.

Research has shown that 1 million of America’s youngest residents were not counted in the last census — the worst undercount for any age group. In Delaware, children of color face a higher risk of being undercounted, compounding concerns. In Delaware, Hispanics are the most rapidly growing population, with this growth led by youth.

“Census data are used for so much — like representation, funding allocations and planning. Decisions for things like neighborhood improvements, public health, education and transportation are all made based on this kind of data. And since our census only happens once per decade, that means it’s important to get it right,” said Janice Barlow, director of KIDS COUNT in Delaware.

When kids aren’t counted, communities are in danger of receiving less than their fair share of federal dollars for programs like Head Start, school lunches, public health insurance and child care — programs and services that help young children in low-income families get a healthy start in life.

“Public investment has an impact on the wellbeing of Delaware’s kids. For example, state and federal investment in Medicaid and CHIP allow children in low-income families to access preventative medical care that helps them thrive,” said Barlow. “Continued

success in health and other domains is dependent on an accurate and complete count because federal funds that support essential programs are allocated based on census data.”

The Casey Foundation’s annual *KIDS COUNT Data Book* uses 16 indicators to rank each state across four domains — health, education, economic well-being and family and community — as an assessment of child well-being. Delaware ranks:

- **29 in economic well-being.** Delaware families have experienced significant progress in economic security with a 20 percent decrease since 2010 in the percentage of children living in households that spend more than 30 percent of their income on housing.
- **27 in education.** In Delaware, the percentage of high school students not graduating on time has decreased by 32 percent from 2010-11 to 2015-16. However, test scores from the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) continue to show a majority of fourth-grade students (64 percent) scoring below proficiency in reading and a majority of eighth-grade students (72 percent) scoring below proficiency in math in 2017.
- **25 in the family and community domain.** Teen birth rates in Delaware dropped significantly from 2010 to 2016 (31 births per 1,000 females ages 15-to-19 in 2010 and 19 births per 1,000 females ages 15-to-19 in 2016).
- **21 in health.** With only 3 percent of children still lacking health insurance in the state in 2016, health care coverage continues to be a bright spot in Delaware.

The 2018 *Data Book* shows that public investment and policy choices make a difference in the outcomes kids experience. An accurate census is essential for that. “If we don’t count children, we render their needs invisible and their futures uncertain,” said Casey Foundation President and CEO Patrick McCarthy. “A major census undercount will result in overcrowded classrooms, shuttered Head Start programs, understaffed hospital emergency rooms and more kids without health care.”

According to Janice Barlow, “While the census is ultimately a federal responsibility, states have a lot to gain or to lose based on response rates. Therefore, the state of Delaware has an incentive to ensure a successful local count.” KIDS COUNT in Delaware and the Annie E. Casey Foundation offer the following recommendations to achieve a more accurate census:

- **Maximize the Census Bureau’s capacity:** Federal legislators need to fully fund the census outreach effort, and the administration needs to appoint a qualified and permanent director to lead the agency, providing support for a more accurate census than in 2010.
- **Fund state and local outreach:** State and local governments and community organizations need to invest in educational outreach around the census to ensure that the most vulnerable communities are counted.
- **Expand the pool of trusted messengers:** Broaden the circle of people (from child care providers to members of the clergy) and organizations (from public

schools to libraries) who can provide outreach in their communities to reach hard-to-count households and encourage participation among people most likely to be missed.

- **Address the digital divide:** Provide online access for all families to participate in the census, either in local libraries or schools.
- **Address privacy and confidentiality concerns:** Given the growing distrust and fear of online data breaches, it is critical that government officials ensure the protection of respondents' data.

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 KIDS COUNT in Delaware

KIDS COUNT in Delaware is a collaborative effort of over 40 organizations and is housed within the Center for Community Research and Service at the University of Delaware. By providing policymakers and citizens with benchmarks of child well-being, KIDS COUNT in Delaware seeks to enrich local and state discussion concerning ways to secure better lives for all of Delaware's children. Please visit our website www.dekidscount.org to learn more about our important work. Follow KIDS COUNT in Delaware and the census issue at @dekidscount on Twitter, Instagram and Facebook.

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.