

# Young Children and the United State Census - Missing In Action Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Can Help



The Decennial Census is the most important data collection activity conducted by the Federal Government. The results of the census are used to establish funding formulas for a multitude of programs including many of the programs provided by Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies. The census data is used as the basis for distributing more than \$400 billion in federal funds each year. That said, children, especially children under age five are more likely than any other group to be undercounted.

According to the Census Bureau's analysis, young children are missed at a higher rate than any other age group. In the 2000 census, more than one million children under the age of 10 were not counted including more than three-quarters of a million children under the age of 5. This amounts to 4 percent of this population group.

Minority children and children in hard-to-count neighborhoods are most frequently undercounted. Because approximately 20 percent of children live in hard-to-count areas, this results in reduced funding for needy families. Program funds for Head Start, State Children's Health Insurance Programs, Special Education Grants and more than 140 other programs are allocated based on census data – including the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG).

Trend data suggest that the count of young children will be even more of an issue in 2010 than it was in 2000 because the number of children between birth and age four has risen from 41 percent in 2000 to 47 percent in 2008 and more children than ever live in families with one or more undocumented immigrants. The number of children with at least one unauthorized immigrant parent increased from 3.9 million in 2003 to 5.5 million in 2008. In addition, the current housing crisis is causing more families to double up in one house or live in temporary housing situations. An estimated 2 million children are affected making it even more difficult to get an accurate population count.



## What Can Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies Do? – **GET THE WORD OUT!**

- As CCR&R agencies, you can get the word out to child care providers who in turn can share the importance of the census to families, especially those with children under age 5.
- Include information on the census in your newsletter, training sessions, on your web site and during parent referral calls. Stress the importance of participating in the census.
- Reach out to immigrant communities and stress the need to respond to the census survey.
- Work with your local media and the business community to stress the importance of ensuring an accurate count of young children. Federal funding depends on an accurate count!