



# Mainers Need an Accurate Census:

## How the census affects funding for critical programs for children and families

The census is conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau every ten years. The data collected is then used to allocate federal funding to states and municipalities, as well as to determine congressional representation. For this reason, a complete and accurate census is critical for our country and for our state. **It will shape the lives of our youngest children at the most critical points in their development for ten years to come.**

*In 2016, \$4.1 billion in federal funds was allocated to Maine based on census data. Much of that went to programs critical for children.*

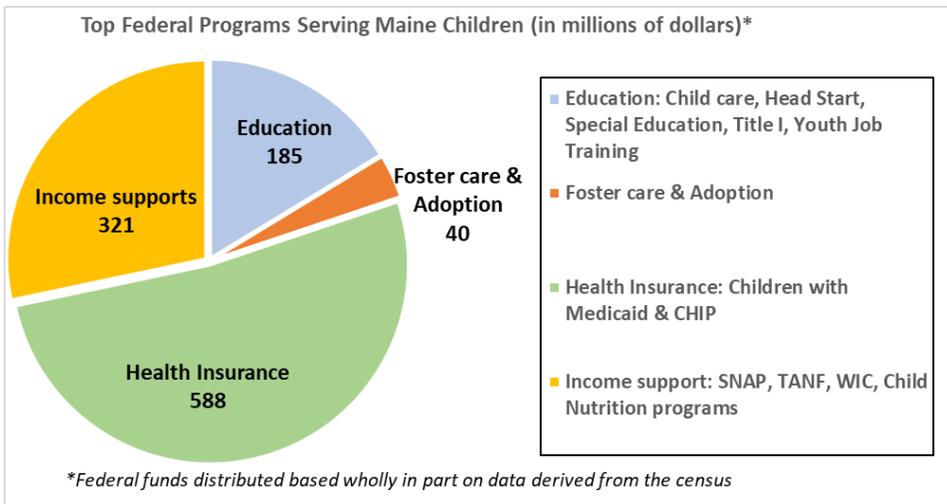
### THE UNDERCOUNT OF YOUNG KIDS

Despite the vital importance of the census, we face a potential undercount of young children in 2020. **Why does this matter?** The 2020 census will determine how much federal funding states and localities receive each year for the next decade. **When kids aren't counted, communities don't get their fair share** of federal dollars for Head Start, school lunch, public health insurance, housing, child care and various other programs and services that help young children.

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### THE SIGNIFICANCE OF FEDERAL FUNDING



About 315 programs rely wholly or in part on data derived from the census, including highways, schools, and publicly funded health care. In 2016, federal spending for these programs totaled roughly \$1.5 trillion dollars, with **\$270 billion for programs that serve children**. These include: Medicaid (MaineCare); Children's Health Insurance Program (CHIP); Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP); Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for

Women, Infants and Children (WIC); Transitional Assistance to Needy Families (TANF); Title I and special education funding; child nutrition programs; Head Start; foster care and adoption assistance; and the Child Care Development Fund. In that same year, **Maine received \$4.1 billion in federal funds informed by census data. Of that, \$1.1 billion went to programs directly serving children and families in Maine.**



# Mainers Need an Accurate Census:

## What an undercount could mean and how we can ensure an accurate count

### WHY DO SOME KIDS NOT GET COUNTED?

The census undercounts children younger than 5 at a much higher rate than any other group. **Most children missed are in families that do complete the census.** Families in complex living arrangements may omit young children, while some children live in traditionally harder to count neighborhoods, such as where poverty is high, or where multi-unit buildings and rental housing are more common. **Nearly 25 percent of kids under age 5 live in hard-to-count census tracts.** In Maine, the hard to count areas in 2010 included (*US Census data*):

- 15% of Washington County's current population (or 4,685 people)
- Maine Islands
- American Indian reservations
- High-density areas of Portland
- Downtown Lewiston

Additional communities at risk for an undercount in 2020 include: Augusta, Auburn, Biddeford, Greater Bangor, Presque Isle, Sanford, and Waterville.



See if you live in a hard to count area: [Hard to Count Map](#) (click and zoom in)

### HOW WE CAN MAKE EVERY KID COUNT IN THE 2020 CENSUS

We cannot risk an undercount of young children in the 2020 Census. **It is critical that Congress provides consistent, adequate funding in any final budget agreement for 2020**, so the Census Bureau can ensure a complete count. While the citizenship question was ultimately dropped from inclusion in the 2020 Census, it created uncertainty and distrust around completing the census, especially in immigrant communities. Outreach in these communities will be needed to ensure greater confidence in participation.

Whether it's children living in hard-to-count areas or immigrant communities, *we must do all we can to ensure an accurate count in 2020*, so everyone gets the resources and representation they deserve.

#### WHAT YOU CAN DO

\*Fill out the census – it's a legal mandate! Data collected is also **protected by law** and cannot be shared with other government agencies. This year, you can fill out the census [online](#), by telephone, or on paper.

\* [Find a Complete Count Committee](#) in your geographical region of Maine, or for your area of interest, such as seniors, children, and immigrants.

\*If you interact with parents and families in your work, you can provide [additional information](#) to them, and encourage them to complete the census and to **include every child**.

*Together, we can ensure we have the most accurate count for Census 2020!*