

(<https://www.actforchildren.org/champion/join-movement/e-advocate>)

## This Issue: Census Myths and Facts



It's not too early to talk about the Census! Our November eAdvocate focuses on Myths vs. Facts for this important survey that happens once every ten years. Approximately one million children under the age of five were missed in the last Census—Illinois Action for Children is working to ensure that doesn't happen again.

IAFC program directors, owners, teachers, and other advocates are trusted sources of Census information. We will keep you updated on ways to get involved in promoting 2020 Census participation—stay tuned!

## Young Children are Frequently Undercounted in the Census



The Census has, historically, undercounted young children at a higher rate than any other age group. Since 2010, Illinois' children have missed out on \$340 million dollars in federal assistance because approximately 36,000 children were not counted. That's twice the number of children enrolled in Chicago Public Schools (CPS) preschool in 2018.

Critically-important programs such as WIC, Head Start, CCAP, and Medicaid all rely on accurate data from the Census. An undercount means that they will be underfunded, and as a result fewer children and families will have access to the services they provide.

This brings us to our next topic: what is—and is not—true about the Census.

## Census Myths and Facts About the 2020 Census

Our goal is to encourage participation in the 2020 Census so that there is an accurate count of our state’s population. To do that, we all must be clear about what the Census is...and what it is not.



To learn more, visit <https://2020census.gov/en.html> (<https://2020census.gov/en.html>) and <http://ilcountmein2020.org/> (<http://ilcountmein2020.org/>). The following are 20 myths about the Census, along with the facts that dispel them.

**MYTH**

**FACT**

There is a citizenship question on the Census.

There is NO citizenship question on the Census.

By law, your responses to the Census cannot be shared with anyone outside the Census. No one can use your Census answers to reduce your benefits, evict you, deport you, fine you, or take your children.

I can't fill out the Census because I am not in the country legally.

By law, the Census cannot report your answers to any immigration authorities, law enforcement, or people in charge of government benefits.

Disclosing any individual's information can result in spending up to 5 years in jail or paying a fine as large as \$250,000.

The Census does not count babies or children.

Everyone counts in the Census no matter how old they are.

The Census undercounts young children at a higher rate than any other age group. When we do not count young children, our state and communities lose out on funds for 10 years that children depend on such as child care, schools, children's health insurance, housing, and public transportation. Ten years is most of their childhood.

I do not count children in my house if they aren't mine.

You should count every child who lives at your address, even if it is only temporary.

My child splits his or her time between two homes, so I shouldn't count my child.

Count your child where he or she will be on April 1, 2020.

My child is away at college and living on campus, but I still need to count them as living in my household in my Census response.

College students should be counted in dormitories if that is where they live most of the time as of April 1, 2020.

**MYTH****FACT**

My grandparents live in a nursing home, but I should still count them in my Census response.

Do NOT include people who live in group facilities in your Census response.

Individuals who spend most of their time in group facilities (this includes nursing homes) will be counted where they are present on April 1, 2020.

I should include active military personnel from my family in my Census response even if they are stationed in the U.S. or abroad.

Do NOT include active members of the military in your Census response.

Military personnel stationed in the U.S. will be counted at their usual residence either on- base or off- base. Those stationed overseas will be counted as part of a federally- affiliated overseas population by the U.S. Department of Defense.

I am not required to respond to the Census.

The Census count is mandated by the United States Constitution and is conducted every ten years by the U.S. Census Bureau.

My community doesn't get federal dollars from the Census.

All communities receive federal dollars that support our schools, hospitals, roads, and much more.

Being counted in the Census ensures that your community will get its fair share of resources and government services. It is important that you be counted.

The Census is only for redistricting.

While the Census *does* determine how many seats in the House of Representatives each state gets, the Census also helps the federal government determine funding for resources such as highway planning and construction, local school funding, housing grants, fire and emergency services, and much more.

Illinois won't be impacted if I don't respond to the 2020 Census.

As a result of the 2010 Census, Illinois lost one Congressional seat (<http://www.ncsl.org/research/redistricting/spotlight-census-2010.aspx>). This means that Illinois has had one less representative in Congress for the last ten years.

Ten states lost at least one seat because of the results of our last Census, and eight states gained seats. Texas gained the most seats due to the last Census with four additional seats.

I can't fill out the Census because I rent my home.

All people living in your household on April 1, 2020 should be counted no matter if they own the home, are renting, or staying in the home temporarily.

The Census won't count my relationship because it is same- sex.

The 2020 Census is introducing a differentiation between opposite-sex and same-sex couples in order to improve the Bureau's data about same-sex couples.

The Census will take a long time to complete.

The Census is 10 questions and should take about 10 minutes.

**MYTH****FACT**

I can skip questions on the Census.

The best way to avoid a home visit or a phone call by a Census worker is to complete all questions truthfully.

It doesn't matter if I'm not counted.

Over 300 federal programs rely on data from the Census in order to distribute money. These programs include: WIC, SNAP, Head Start, CCAP, CHIP, and Medicaid.

Black and Latinx young children are most at-risk of being undercounted, and it is estimated that in the 2010 Census one million children were not counted.

Be sure to count everyone in your household to ensure your community receives its fair share of resources.

The Census is only available in printed format through the mail.

You can fill out the Census online (available by mid- March), by regular mail, or over the phone.

The Census is only available in English.

While paper forms will only be available in English and Spanish, you can respond online or by phone in Spanish, Arabic, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Tagalog and Vietnamese. The Bureau is also providing video and printed guides in 59 non-English languages ([https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018\\_06.pdf](https://www2.census.gov/programs-surveys/decennial/2020/program-management/memo-series/2020-memo-2018_06.pdf)), as well as a video in American Sign Language.

Only government employees can be Census Takers.

The Census Bureau is hiring Census Takers in every state. Visit this (<https://recruitment.2020census.gov/ats/careersite/census.aspx?site=1&c=census>) site to apply to be one in your community. Census Takers in Illinois can receive \$18- \$22.50/ hour.

## Fall into Action

There is still time to sign up for one of our upcoming Fall into Action workshops happening around the state. We recently held these workshops in Chicago, Addison, and Peoria, with one more happening in the coming weeks. Sign up today ([https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/lt-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK\\_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO](https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/lt-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO)) to reserve your spot for the following session:

fbclid=IwAR2dK\_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO)to reserve your spot for the following session:

- Fall Into Action: Early Child Care Policy Workshop (Springfield) ([https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/lt-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK\\_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO](https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/lt-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO))
  - Dec. 10, 2019
  - Memorial Center for Learning and Innovation  
228 W. Miller St.  
Springfield, Illinois 62702

As Illinois Action for Children's Public Policy and Advocacy team prepares for the upcoming legislation session that will begin in January, we have important information to share and would like your opinions on a number of topics, including the 2020 Census and much more.

- Learn about state and federal policies, Census 2020, Fair Tax Act and Early Childhood Cost Reform and how it will affect each community;
- Consider the future landscape of early care and education
- Weigh in as a group and brainstorm policy issues to prioritize next year; and
- Share the policy issues that matter to you to help shape Illinois Action for Children's policy agenda for FY2020.

Plus, these regional Fall Into Action workshops are a great way to network with other early childhood professionals. We hope to see you there ([https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/It-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK\\_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO](https://events-actforchildren.force.com/s/It-event?fbclid=IwAR2dK_OB3AKBeCIDQp7Tq9WyL1nRUQB3KiNZ2n3MckSUyjpS0F3QNymEdgl&id=a4911000000USTxQAO))!