The Changing Young Child Population of the United States: First Data From the 2020 Census

April 2024

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Preface

This study seeks to provide foundational research on the demographics of young children in the U.S. The population total of young children has trended downwards over the past few decades, but within it, there has been a vast increase in racial and ethnic diversity.

This study shows a demographic future that will be quite different from the past. Children under age 5 are more diverse racially and ethnically than any other age group. The 2020 Census shows that 53 percent of the population under age 5 are children of color. This is particularly relevant given the announcement of new race and ethnicity standards by the U.S. Office of Management and Budget last week (April 2024). These new standards are the first step in helping us get more detailed and more accurate population data. At the same time, this study reminds us that as we continue to diversify as a nation, we will have to be mindful of how we collect and report these data to truly capture our evolving population.

We hope readers will find this report useful in thinking about how to make policy decisions related to young children that will support our country's future success.

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Executive Summary

This report provides an overview of demographic changes in the young child population in the U.S., based on the first data released from the 2020 census on this age group. Young children are defined here as those from birth to age 4.

This publication focuses on three kinds of demographic patterns and changes. These are: 1) changes in the total number of young children in the country; 2) geographic dimensions of the changing young child population, examined at the state, county, and city levels, and 3) changes and patterns in the racial and ethnic composition of the young child population.[3] The report concludes by examining some implications of these changes. We also offer a brief analysis of the undercount of young children in the census and material on how race and ethnicity is measured in the census in Box 1 and Appendix A.

Results of the 2020 census underscore several key points regarding shifts in the number, and location of young children, and characteristics by race and Hispanic origin.

Overall changes in the young child population include:

- The change in the total population between 2010 and 2020 masks important differences between young children and adults. Between 2010 and 2020, the young child population fell by 8.9 percent, while the adult population increased by 10.1 percent.

- The young child population as a share of the total population fell from 12.1 percent in 1900 to 5.6 percent in 2020. Most of the decline came in the

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[3] Although in federal statistical language Hispanic origin is considered an "ethnicity," in this report the term Hispanic origin rather than ethnicity is used for clarity.

second half of the 20th century. The 1960 census indicated roughly 11 percent of the nation's population was under age 5.

- At 18.4 million, the number of young children recorded in the 2020 census was 1.8 million smaller than the 20.2 million counted in the 2010 census. This stands in contrast to the 2000 to 2010 period when the nation's young child population grew by 1.2 million, and the 1990 to 2000 period when the young child population grew by 700,000.

- New data from the Census Bureau indicate the pace of loss in the young child population increased between 2020 and 2022. At the current rate, the young child population is likely to be almost 3 million smaller in 2030 than it was in 2020.

Changes in Where Young Children Live

<u>State Level Changes</u>

A comparison of census data from 2010 and 2020 indicates that young child populations at the state level changed as follows:

- The number of young children declined in 49 states. Only North Dakota showed an increase between 2010 and 2020 (the District of Columbia also experienced an increase in young children).

- Young child population changes between 2010 and 2020 ranged from an increase of 17.5 percent in North Dakota to a decrease of 20.8 percent in New Mexico.

- California lost the largest number of young children (393,894), Illinois lost 129,961, and Texas lost 109,213.

- 24 states and Puerto Rico each lost more than 25,000 young children between 2010 and 2020.

<u>County Level Changes</u>

Young child populations changed between 2010 and 2020 at the county level as follows:

● At the county level losses were widespread. About 86 percent of the more than 3100 counties in the U.S. experienced a decrease in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020.

● Many of the changes were large. Three-quarters of the counties experienced a decrease of 5 percent or more over the decade.

● The number of young children fell in every county size grouping. The percent change ranges from a low of 6.8 percent for counties between 100,000 and 499,999, to a high of 12.9 percent for the smallest counties (less than 25,000).

● Using the USDA's urban-rural classification to view population size by county type, urban counties had higher average numeric decreases than rural counties. The most urban counties lost an average of 2,066 young children over the decade compared to an average of 46 young children in the most rural counties.

● Using the USDA's urban-rural classification, the most urban counties had the smallest average percent change (-8.0 percent). The most rural counties had the third highest average percent change (-12.7 percent), and counties with a population of 2,500 to 19,999 both adjacent and not adjacent to a metro area had the highest average percent change (urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metro area: -14.1 percent, urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metro area: -13.1 percent).

City Level Changes

Comparing census data from 2010 and 2020 for the top 100 cities with the largest young child population reveals that:

- The collective number of young children in the top 100 cities decreased from 4.2 million to 3.7 million in 2020.

- 12 cities experienced an increase in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020, while 87 cities experienced a decrease.

Changes by Race and Hispanic Origin

There has been an increase in racial diversity across the nation. Recent changes in race and ethnicity of young children in Census Bureau data should be viewed cautiously due to methodological changes in the 2020 Census. Additional caution should be considered as a nontrivial number of individuals may change racial identity from census to census.[4]

- Young children of color[5] as a share of the total young child population more than doubled between 1980 and 2020 (from 23 percent to 53 percent).

- The share of all young children of color among the total population of young children increased by 4 percentage points (from 49 percent to 53 percent) from 2010 to 2020.

- The number of non-Hispanic White alone young children fell by 1.6 million between 2010 and 2020 (from 10.2 million to 8.6 million or a decline of 15.7 percent), and the population of young children of color decreased by 200,000 (from 9.9 million to 9.7 million or by 2.0 percent).

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[4] A 2014 study by the Pew Research Center found that more than 10 million Americans checked a different race or ethnicity in the 2020 Census from their selection in the 2010 Census (in an analysis of 168 million Census forms). Cohn, D. (2014, May 5). *Millions of Americans changed their racial or ethnic identity from one census to the next*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2014/05/05/millions-of-americans-changed-their-racial-or-ethnic-identity-from-one-census-to-the-next/

[5] Children of color are anyone who is not Non-Hispanic White Alone.

- People of color account for a significantly larger share of the young child population than the adult population in 2020 — 53 percent for young children compared to 39 percent for adults.

- There were many states where young children of color were the majority of all young children in the 2020 Census. Young children of color represent the majority of all young children in 20 states, Puerto Rico, and the District of Columbia, according to 2020 census data. On the other hand, non-Hispanic young white children make up over 80 percent of the young child population in three states (Maine, Vermont, and West Virginia).

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Introduction

It may be an overstatement to say that "demography is destiny," but it is fair to say that population trends have strongly influenced the social, economic, and demographic fabric of the United States. Today, the country is going through two demographic transformations.

First, the birth dearth experienced in the U.S. since 2007 has produced a very different age structure than what has been experienced in the past. A smaller number of children being born affects institutions like childcare and school systems and how we currently think about the labor force.

Second, according to demographer William Frey, "The first release of race-ethnic statistics from the 2020 census makes plain that America's 'diversity explosion' is continuing."[6] This explosion is seen more prominently in the young child population. Today, young children of color make up the majority of the total young child population and are growing steadily in terms of their share among all children (ages 0 to 17).

Patterns and shifts in the racial and ethnic makeup of the population are having profound effects on the country. These changes have raised important questions about racial identity and how the government categorizes people by race and Hispanic origin.[7] They also feed the ongoing discussions related to the pursuit of racial equity.

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[6] Frey, W. H. (2021, August). *New 2020 census results show increased diversity countering decade-long decline in America's White and youth populations.* Washington, DC: The Brookings Institution. Retrieved from www.brookings.edu/research/new-2020-census-results-show-increased-diversity-countering-decade-long-declines-in-americas-white-and-youth-populations

[7] Prewitt, K. (2013). *What is your race? The census and our flawed efforts to classify Americans.* Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

This publication focuses on three kinds of demographic patterns and changes. These are: 1) changes in the total number of young children in the country; 2) geographic dimensions of the changing young child population, examined at the state, county, and city levels and 3) changes and patterns in the racial and ethnic composition of the young child population. The report concludes by considering some implications of these changes. We also offer a brief analysis of the undercount of young children in the census and material on how race and ethnicity is measured in the Census in Box 1 and Appendix A.

Data Used in This Study

The Census Bureau released the first detailed data from the 2020 census on May 25, 2023, and that file is called the Demographic and Housing Characteristics (DHC) file. This dataset provides the first look at the number of young children counted in the 2020 census. By comparing data from the 2010 and 2020 Censuses, we can assess demographic change over the second decade of the 21st century and perhaps gain a clearer understanding of what lies ahead.

The 2020 Decennial Census only collected data on a few key demographic characteristics (age, sex, race/Hispanic origin, and relationship to the householder) along with housing tenure. Information on some socioeconomic topics — such as income, poverty, education, and employment — formerly collected in the decennial census is now collected in the Census Bureau's American Community Survey (ACS).[8]

This report draws on several tables from the 2020 Census which reveal detailed location and racial/ethnic data for the U.S. young child population The DHC provides data for very detailed geographic areas such as Census blocks, but we will only be looking at a few larger kinds of geographic units in this study.

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[8] Information on the ACS is available at www.census.gov/programs-surveys/acs

The analysis relies on data from the 2020 Census, but it is important to note that these data lack precision for young children. In the 2020 Census, young children (birth to age 4) had a higher net undercount rate (5.4 percent) than any other age group. Preliminary analysis suggests young Black and Hispanic children were missed at a higher rate than non-Hispanic young white children. (See Appendix A). Analysis also shows the net undercount of young children varies by states.[9]

The Big Picture: Changes Since 1900

Demographically speaking, our nation is less of a young child-centered society than it was 120 years ago. While the number of young children under age 5 doubled since 1900 — from 9.2 million in 1900 to 18.4 million in 2020 — the number of adults grew much faster, increasing 470 percent between 1900 and 2020 (see Table 1). The result is a country where young children now represent a much smaller share of the total population.

Table 1 shows young children accounted for 12.1 percent of the population in 1900 but only account for 5.6 percent in 2020. Much of the decline in the relative size of the population under age 5 occurred during the second half of the 20th century. In 1960, near the height of the "baby boom," 11.3 percent of the population was under age 5. Just 60 years later, the young children's share of the U.S. population dropped by almost 6 percentage points.

This decline stems from a couple of demographic trends.[10] First, the movement toward smaller families over the 20th century meant relatively fewer young children were being born late in the century compared to early in the 20th century. Second, the adult population grew more quickly than the young child

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[9] O'Hare 2023.

[10] For more information on the role that the three demographic factors (fertility, mortality, and migration) can have on young child populations in the United States or other countries, see Mayol-Garcia Y. H., & O'Hare, W. P. (2019). 7 Demography of childhood. In Poston Jr., D. L. (Ed.), *Handbook of population* (pp. 209–232). Handbooks of Sociology and Social Research. Switzerland: Springer, Cham. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-3-030-10910-3_8

population due to increases in life expectancy, which allow more Americans to survive to older ages, and immigration, which largely involves adults.[11]

Table 1. Number and Percent of Young Children in the U.S. Population: 1900 to 2020					
		Population Under Age 5		Change Over Previous Decade	
Year	Total population (in thousands)	Number (in thousands)	Percent of Total Population	Number (in thousands)	Percent Over Decade
1900[a]	76,094	9,170	12.1%	--	--
1910[b]	92,407	10,631	11.5%	1,461	15.9%
1920[c]	106,461	11,573	10.9%	942	8.9%
1930[d]	123,077	11,444	9.3%	-129	**-1.1%**
1940[e]	132,122	10,542	8.0%	-902	**-7.9%**
1950[f]	151,684	16,410	10.8%	5,868	55.7%
1960[g]	180,671	20,340	11.3%	3,930	23.9%
1970[h]	204,879	17,148	8.4%	-3,192	**-15.7%**
1980[i]	226,546	16,017	7.1%	-1,131	**-6.6%**
1990[j]	248,710	18,354	7.4%	2,337	14.6%
2000[k]	281,422	19,047	6.8%	693	3.8%
2010[l]	308,746	20,201	6.5%	1,154	6.1%
2020[m]	331,449	18,400	5.6%	-1,801	**-8.9%**
Source: 1900-2020 Census Bureau Data					

[11] For example, in 1960 and in 2018, a majority of the foreign-born population in the United States were adults as shown in the population pyramids of this Pew article: Budiman, A., Tamir, C., Mora, L., & Noe-Bustamante, L. (2020). *Facts on U.S. immigrants, 2018.* Pew Research Center. Retrieved from www.pewresearch.org/hispanic/2020/08/20/facts-on-u-s-immigrants

2010 to 2020 Trends in Young Child Population

Growth in the total U.S. resident population slowed noticeably in recent decades. The total population grew by 7.4 percent between 2010 and 2020, compared to 9.7 percent between 2000 and 2010 and 13.2 percent between 1990 to 2000. Data for 2022, recently released by the Census Bureau, shows that the country recorded very slow annual growth since 2020.[12]

The growth rate of the overall population, however, masks big differences between adults and young children. While the number of young children fell by 1.8 million (or 8.9 percent) from 2010 to 2020, the number of adults (ages 18 and older) grew by more than 23.8 million (or 10.1 percent).[13]

The decrease in the number of young children since 2010 stands in contrast to the 6.1 percent increase between 2000 and 2010 and the 3.8 percent increase seen between 1990 and 2000. However, recent changes in the number of young children pale in comparison to the 23.9 percent increase during the baby-boom decade of the 1950s.

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[12] U.S. Census Bureau. (2022, June). *Vintage 2022 Estimates of National, State, and County Population by Age, Sex, Race, and Hispanic Origin; and Estimates of Puerto Rico Commonwealth and Municipios Population by Age and Sex*. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2023/population-estimates-characteristics.html

[13] Bureau, U. C. (2021, August 12). *U.S. Adult Population Grew Faster Than Nation's Total Population From 2010 to 2020*. The United States Census Bureau. https://www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/united-states-adult-population-grew-faster-than-nations-total-population-from-2010-to-2020.html#:~:text=In%202020%2C%20the%20U.S.%20Census

Post-2020 Changes

Table 2 provides data based on post-2020 Census population estimates from the Census Bureau and shows the trend from 2010 and 2020 continued.

Table 2. Annual Estimates of the Total Population and Population Ages 0 to 4 for the United States: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022						
Age	April 1, 2020 Estimates Base (in thousands)	Population Estimate (as of July 1) (in thousands)			Changes from April 1 2020 to July 1, 2022	
		2020	2021	2022	Number (in thousands)	Percent
Total	331,450	331,512	332,032	333,288	1,838	0.6
Ages 0 to 4[14]	19,166	19,070	18,676	18,538	-628	-3.3
Source: Annual Estimates of the Resident Population for Selected Age Groups by Sex for the United States: April 1, 2020 to July 1, 2022 (NC-EST2022-AGESEX), Population Division, Release Date June 2023.						

Between April 1, 2020 and July 1, 2022, there was an increase of about 1.8 million people for the total population but there was a decrease of about 628,000 for young children in the same period. That translates to an increase of 0.6 percent for the total population, but a decrease of 3.3. percent for the young child population. In other words, since 2020, the number of young children has continued to decrease as seen between 2010 and 2020. Comparing the pace of changes between 2010 and 2020, to the pace of change from 2020 to 2022, it appears the pace of decline for young children is accelerating. If the decline seen between 2020 and 2022 continues, the number of young children in 2030 is likely to be almost 3 million children lower than the number counted in the 2020 Census.

[14] The number for young children on April 1, 2020, shown in Table 2 does not match the number for young children on that date as shown in Table 1 because Table 1 uses only 2020 census data and Table 2 is drawn from the Census Bureau Blended Base Population Estimates. Because of the problems with the 2020 Census, the Bureau has developed a new "blended base" approach to developing annual population estimates that draw on both the 2020 census data and various sets of administrative data. For population estimates methodology statements, see https://www.census.gov/programs-surveys/popest/technical-documentation/methodology.html In order to be able to compare 2020 data with years 2021 and 2022, we use the blended base population estimates for all three years here.

Changes in the Number of Young Children between 2010 and 2020 by Location

When the Census Bureau released data from the 2020 Census Demographic and Housing Characteristics (DHC) file on May 25, 2023, it allowed researchers to compare data for detailed populations from the 2010 and 2020 Censuses. This section focuses on the state, county, and city-level changes in the population ages 0 to 4.

As noted earlier in this report, nationwide there was a decrease of 1.8 million young children between 2010 and 2020 based on census counts, amounting to an 8.9 percent decline. The number of young children fell from 20,201,362 in the 2010 Census to 18,400,235 in the 2020 Census. To put this in context, the total U.S. population grew by 22.7 million, or 7.4 percent, between 2010 and 2020.

Analysis of state, county, and city-level changes in this paper show the decrease in the young child population was geographically pervasive. Data examined in this report shows the number of young children decreased in almost every state between 2010 and 2020, with 86 percent of counties experiencing a decrease in the population ages 0 to 4. Data also shows three-quarters of all counties experienced a large decrease (5 percent or more) in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020, while the vast majority of large cities also experienced a decrease in the young child population.

Changes in State Population

Nationwide the number of young children decreased by 1.8 million between 2010 and 2020 (8.9 percent decrease). But the decline in young children varied greatly by state.

Table 3 shows the states[15] ranked by the numeric decrease in the population ages 0 to 4 between 2010 and 2020. The state with the largest decrease was California, which lost 393,894 young children over the decade. Second was Illinois with a loss of 129,961. These two states account for almost a third (31.2 percent) of the nationwide decrease in young children between 2010 and 2020.

Even fast-growing states like Texas had a decrease in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020. Between 2010 and 2020, the population of Texas increased from 25,145,561 to 29,145,505, but the number of young children decreased by 109,213.

The state with the biggest numeric increase was North Dakota, gaining 7,771 young children. DC was the only other state that experienced an increase in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020 (4,455).

In contrast to the demographic changes in the young child population, every state except three (Illinois, West Virginia, and Mississippi) had an increase in total population between 2010 and 2020.

[Table 3 on next page]

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[15] In this paper, DC is treated as a state and a county

	Table 3. States ranked by Largest Numeric Decrease for ages 0–4 between 2010 and 2020				
Rank	State	2010 Census Population	2020 Census Population	Numeric Change 2010 to 2020	Percent Change 2010 to 2020
1	California	2531333	2137439	-393894	-15.56%
2	Illinois	835577	705616	-129961	-15.55%
3	Texas	1928473	1819260	-109213	-5.66%
4	New York	1155822	1060610	-95212	-8.24%
5	Georgia	686785	614218	-72567	-10.57%
6	Arizona	455715	392370	-63345	-13.90%
7	Pennsylvania	729538	667816	-61722	-8.46%
8	North Carolina	632040	574468	-57572	-9.11%
9	Ohio	720856	666434	-54422	-7.55%
10	Michigan	596286	548875	-47411	-7.95%
11	Florida	1073506	1030284	-43222	-4.03%
12	Mississippi	210956	171647	-39309	-18.63%
13	New Jersey	541020	502046	-38974	-7.20%
14	Wisconsin	358443	322285	-36158	-10.09%
15	Missouri	390237	355024	-35213	-9.02%
16	Louisiana	314260	281257	-33003	-10.50%
17	New Mexico	144981	114806	-30175	-20.81%
18	Colorado	343960	314580	-29380	-8.54%
19	Virginia	509625	481405	-28220	-5.54%
20	Massachusetts	367087	340020	-27067	-7.37%
21	Kansas	205492	179446	-26046	-12.67%
22	Connecticut	202106	176831	-25275	-12.51%
23	Indiana	434075	408828	-25247	-5.82%
24	South Carolina	302297	277144	-25153	-8.32%
25	Utah	263924	239780	-24144	-9.15%
26	Oklahoma	264126	241242	-22884	-8.66%
27	Oregon	237556	215252	-22304	-9.39%
28	Maryland	364488	345047	-19441	-5.33%
29	Alabama	304957	286529	-18428	-6.04%
30	Arkansas	197689	179575	-18114	-9.16%
31	Kentucky	282367	264254	-18113	-6.41%

32	Minnesota	355504	340357	-15147	-4.26%
33	West Virginia	104060	89207	-14853	-14.27%
34	Tennessee	407813	393767	-14046	-3.44%
35	Nevada	187478	174032	-13446	-7.17%
36	Iowa	202123	190064	-12059	-5.97%
37	Hawaii	87407	77352	-10055	-11.50%
38	New Hampshire	69806	61480	-8326	-11.93%
39	Maine	69520	61477	-8043	-11.57%
40	Idaho	121772	114128	-7644	-6.28%
41	Wyoming	40203	33955	-6248	-15.54%
42	Alaska	53996	48104	-5892	-10.91%
43	Rhode Island	57448	51903	-5545	-9.65%
44	Nebraska	131908	126605	-5303	-4.02%
45	Delaware	55886	51230	-4656	-8.33%
46	Vermont	31952	28555	-3397	-10.63%
47	Montana	62423	59224	-3199	-5.12%
48	Washington	439657	437231	-2426	-0.55%
49	South Dakota	59621	57742	-1879	-3.15%
50	District of Columbia	32613	37068	4455	13.66%
51	North Dakota	44595	52366	7771	17.43%
	TOTAL	**20,201,362**	**18,400,235**	**-1,801,127**	**-8.9%**

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau

Table 4 shows the states ranked by percent decrease in the population ages 0 to 4 between 2010 and 2020. The state with the biggest percent decrease in the number of young children over the decade was New Mexico which experienced a 20.8 percent decline. In addition to New Mexico, there were 16 other states that experienced a decrease of 10 percent or more. Interestingly, these 16 states are geographically dispersed.

On the other hand, the young child population increased by 17.4 percent in North Dakota and by 13.7 percent in the District of Columbia.

	Table 4. States ranked by Largest Percent Decrease for ages 0–4 between 2010 and 2020				
Rank	State	2010 Census Population	2020 Census Population	Numeric Change 2010 to 2020	Percent Change 2010 to 2020
1	New Mexico	144981	114806	-30175	-0.2081307
2	Mississippi	210956	171647	-39309	-0.1863374
3	California	2531333	2137439	-393894	-0.1556073
4	Illinois	835577	705616	-129961	-0.1555344
5	Wyoming	40203	33955	-6248	-0.1554113
6	West Virginia	104060	89207	-14853	-0.142735
7	Arizona	455715	392370	-63345	-0.1390013
8	Kansas	205492	179446	-26046	-0.1267495
9	Connecticut	202106	176831	-25275	-0.1250581
10	New Hampshire	69806	61480	-8326	-0.1192734
11	Maine	69520	61477	-8043	-0.1156933
12	Hawaii	87407	77352	-10055	-0.1150366
13	Alaska	53996	48104	-5892	-0.1091192
14	Vermont	31952	28555	-3397	-0.1063157
15	Georgia	686785	614218	-72567	-0.1056619
16	Louisiana	314260	281257	-33003	-0.1050181
17	Wisconsin	358443	322285	-36158	-0.1008752
18	Rhode Island	57448	51903	-5545	-0.0965221
19	Oregon	237556	215252	-22304	-0.0938894
20	Arkansas	197689	179575	-18114	-0.0916288
21	Utah	263924	239780	-24144	-0.0914809
22	North Carolina	632040	574468	-57572	-0.0910892
23	Missouri	390237	355024	-35213	-0.0902349
24	Oklahoma	264126	241242	-22884	-0.0866405
25	Colorado	343960	314580	-29380	-0.0854169
26	Pennsylvania	729538	667816	-61722	-0.0846042
27	Delaware	55886	51230	-4656	-0.0833125
28	South Carolina	302297	277144	-25153	-0.0832063
29	New York	1155822	1060610	-95212	-0.082376
30	Michigan	596286	548875	-47411	-0.0795105
31	Ohio	720856	666434	-54422	-0.0754964

32	Massachusetts	367087	340020	-27067	-0.0737346
33	New Jersey	541020	502046	-38974	-0.072038
34	Nevada	187478	174032	-13446	-0.0717204
35	Kentucky	282367	264254	-18113	-0.064147
36	Idaho	121772	114128	-7644	-0.0627731
37	Alabama	304957	286529	-18428	-0.0604282
38	Iowa	202123	190064	-12059	-0.0596617
39	Indiana	434075	408828	-25247	-0.0581628
40	Texas	1928473	1819260	-109213	-0.0566319
41	Virginia	509625	481405	-28220	-0.055374
42	Maryland	364488	345047	-19441	-0.0533378
43	Montana	62423	59224	-3199	-0.0512471
44	Minnesota	355504	340357	-15147	-0.0426071
45	Florida	1073506	1030284	-43222	-0.0402625
46	Nebraska	131908	126605	-5303	-0.0402023
47	Tennessee	407813	393767	-14046	-0.0344423
48	South Dakota	59621	57742	-1879	-0.0315157
49	Washington	439657	437231	-2426	-0.0055179
50	District of Columbia	32613	37068	4455	0.13660197
51	North Dakota	44595	52366	7771	0.1742572
	TOTAL	**20,201,362**	**18,400,235**	**-1,801,127**	**-8.9%**

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau

[section continues on next page]
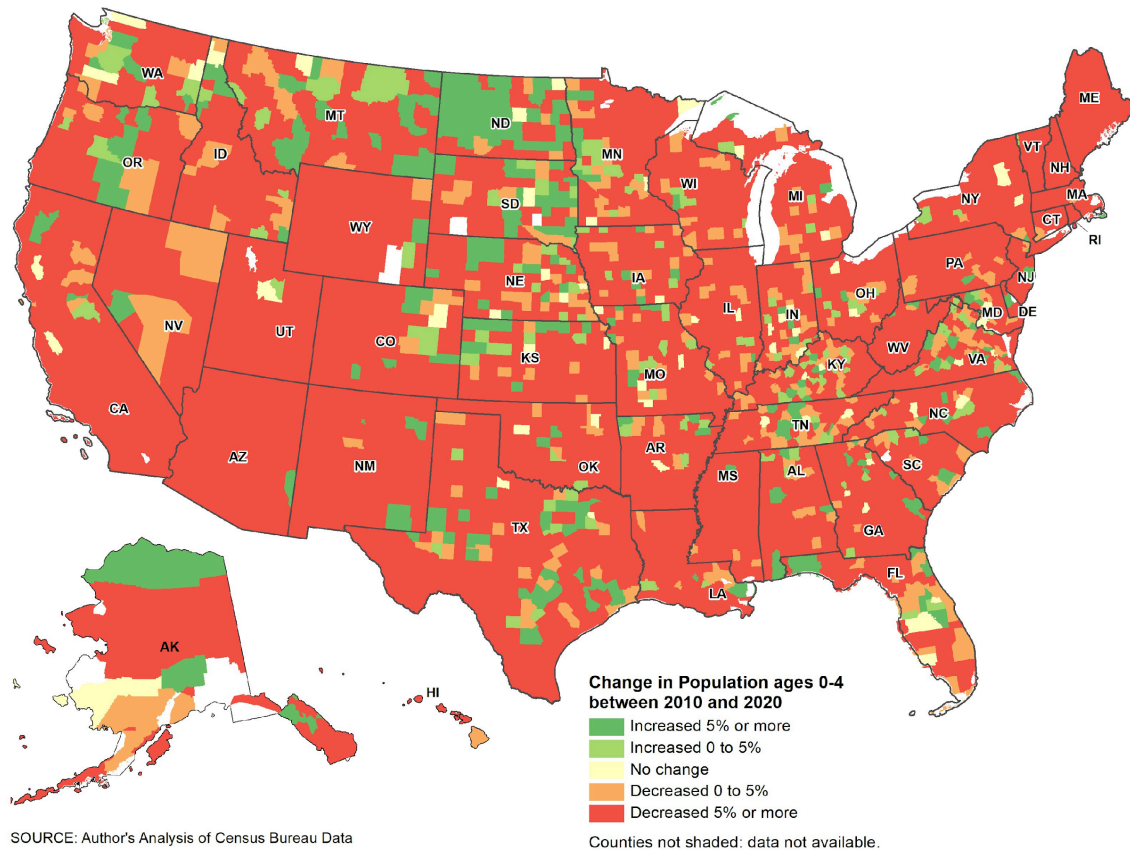
<u>Changes in County Population</u>

Data in Table 5 indicate the vast majority of counties (86.2 percent) experienced a decrease in the young child population between 2010 and 2020. Table 5 shows three-quarters of all counties (73.2 percent) experienced a decrease of at least 5 percent between 2010 and 2020 and another 13.0 percent declined by under 5 percent. On the other hand, only 7.7 percent of counties experienced an increase of 5 percent or more in the preschool population over the decade.

Table 5: Distribution of Counties by Change in the Population Ages 0-4 between 2010 and 2020		
	Number	**Percent**
Increase by 5% or more	241	7.7
Increase between 0 and 5%	184	5.9
No change	7	0.2
Decrease between 0 and 5%	409	13.0
Decrease by 5% of more	2298	73.2
Total	*3139*	*100.0*
Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau		

[section continues on next page]

Map 1. County level changes in the number of Children ages 0 to 4 between 2010 and 2020.

Change in Population ages 0-4 between 2010 and 2020

- Increased 5% or more
- Increased 0 to 5%
- No change
- Decreased 0 to 5%
- Decreased 5% or more

SOURCE: Author's Analysis of Census Bureau Data

Counties not shaded: data not available.

As Map 1 shows, the decreases were more widespread in some states than in others, particularly in the Northeast. All counties in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, New Hampshire, and Rhode Island experienced a decline in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020. Table 6 shows the states ranked by the percent of counties in the state that had a decrease in the young child population between 2010 and 2020. Only North Dakota had an increase in more than half of the counties.

Table 6. States Ranked by Percent of Counties Where the Population Ages 0 to 4 Decreased Between 2010 and 2020		
Rank*	State	Percent of Counties in State Where Population Ages 0 to 4 Decreased Between 2010 and 2020
1	Connecticut	100.0
1	Delaware	100.0
1	Maine	100.0
1	New Hampshire	100.0
1	Rhode Island	100.0
6	Mississippi	98.8
7	Pennsylvania	98.5
8	Illinois	96.1
9	California	94.8
10	West Virginia	94.5
11	Wisconsin	94.4
12	Nevada	94.1
13	Louisiana	93.8
14	New York	93.5
15	Arizona	93.3
16	Utah	93.1
17	Massachusetts	92.9
17	Vermont	92.9
19	Michigan	92.8
20	Oklahoma	92.2
21	Ohio	92.0
22	South Carolina	91.3
22	Wyoming	91.3
24	North Carolina	91.0
25	New Mexico	90.9
26	Arkansas	90.7
27	Colorado	90.6
28	Georgia	90.6
29	New Jersey	90.5
30	Alabama	89.6
31	Iowa	88.9
32	Missouri	87.0
33	Indiana	85.9
34	Alaska	85.2
35	Minnesota	85.1
36	Idaho	84.1

37	Maryland	83.3
38	Texas	82.7
39	Florida	82.1
40	Kansas	81.9
41	Kentucky	81.7
42	Tennessee	81.1
43	Oregon	80.6
44	Hawaii	80.0
45	Virginia	79.7
46	Nebraska	78.5
47	Washington	69.2
48	Montana	66.1
49	South Dakota	57.6
50	North Dakota	37.7
51	DC	0.0
	Total U.S.	**86.2**

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau
Note: Ranks are based on unrounded data

Changes by County Population Size and Type

Another way to look at demographic changes in the young child population between 2010 and 2020 is by county population size and type. Table 7 shows the change in the young child population between 2010 and 2020 by the population size of the county. The number of young children fell in every county size grouping. The percent change ranges from a low of 6.8 percent for counties between 100,000 and 499,999, to a high of 12.9 percent for the smallest counties (less than 25,000). About half of the numeric national change is accounted for by counties in the largest two categories (500,000 or more).

Table 7. Changes in the Population Ages 0 to 4 between 2010 and 2020 by County Population Size in 2010				
			Change from 2010 to 2020	
Size of County in Total population in 2010	Sum of 2010 Census Ages 0 to 4	Sum of 2020 Census Ages 0 to 4	Numeric	Percent
1,000,000 or more	5,477,261	4,879,769	-597,492	-10.9
500,000 to 999,999	4,252,129	3,940,365	-311,764	-7.3
250,000 to 499,999	3,027,675	2,823,112	-204,563	-6.8
100,000 to 249,999	3,150,422	2,935,220	-215,202	-6.8
50,000 to 99,999	1,756,750	1,598,484	-158,266	-9.0
25,000 to 49,999	1,420,913	1,251,388	-169,525	-11.9
less than 25,000	1,114,289	970,335	-143,954	-12.9
U.S. Total*	20,199,439	18,398,673	-1,800,766	-8.9

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau
*totals here do not match totals in other tables because a few counties did not report data in both years.

County population size can also be viewed through the lens of county type. One of the most widely used perspectives is the urban-rural continuum, sometimes referred to as "urbanicity." The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) uses nine categories to determine urban-rural classification, ranging from most urban to most rural.[16]

Figure 1 shows the average numeric change in the population ages 0 to 4 from 2010 to 2020 for each category in the USDA urban-rural code. The pattern is pretty clear, and consistent with what one might anticipate: more urban counties (typically larger) had higher average decreases than more rural counties. For example, the most urban counties lost an average of 2,066 young children over the decade compared to an average of 46 young children in the most rural counties. Counties in metropolitan areas, the three "most urban"

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[16] These codes were originally published in 2013 and updated in 2020. Only counties that had data for both 2010 and 2020 and had an urban-rural code are included in this analysis.

categories, account for 79.5 percent (1,433,031 out of 1,800,766) of the loss between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 1. Average Numeric Change for Population Ages 0 to 4 by County Type

Value	County Type
-46	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to a metro area (Most Rural)
-48	Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, adjacent to a metro area
-156	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metro area
-219	Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metro area
-459	Urban population of 20,000 or more, not adjacent to a metro area
-459	Urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metro area
-478	Metro areas of fewer than 250,000 population
-981	Metro areas of 250,000 to 1 million population
-2,066	Metro areas of 1 million population or more (Most Urban)

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau
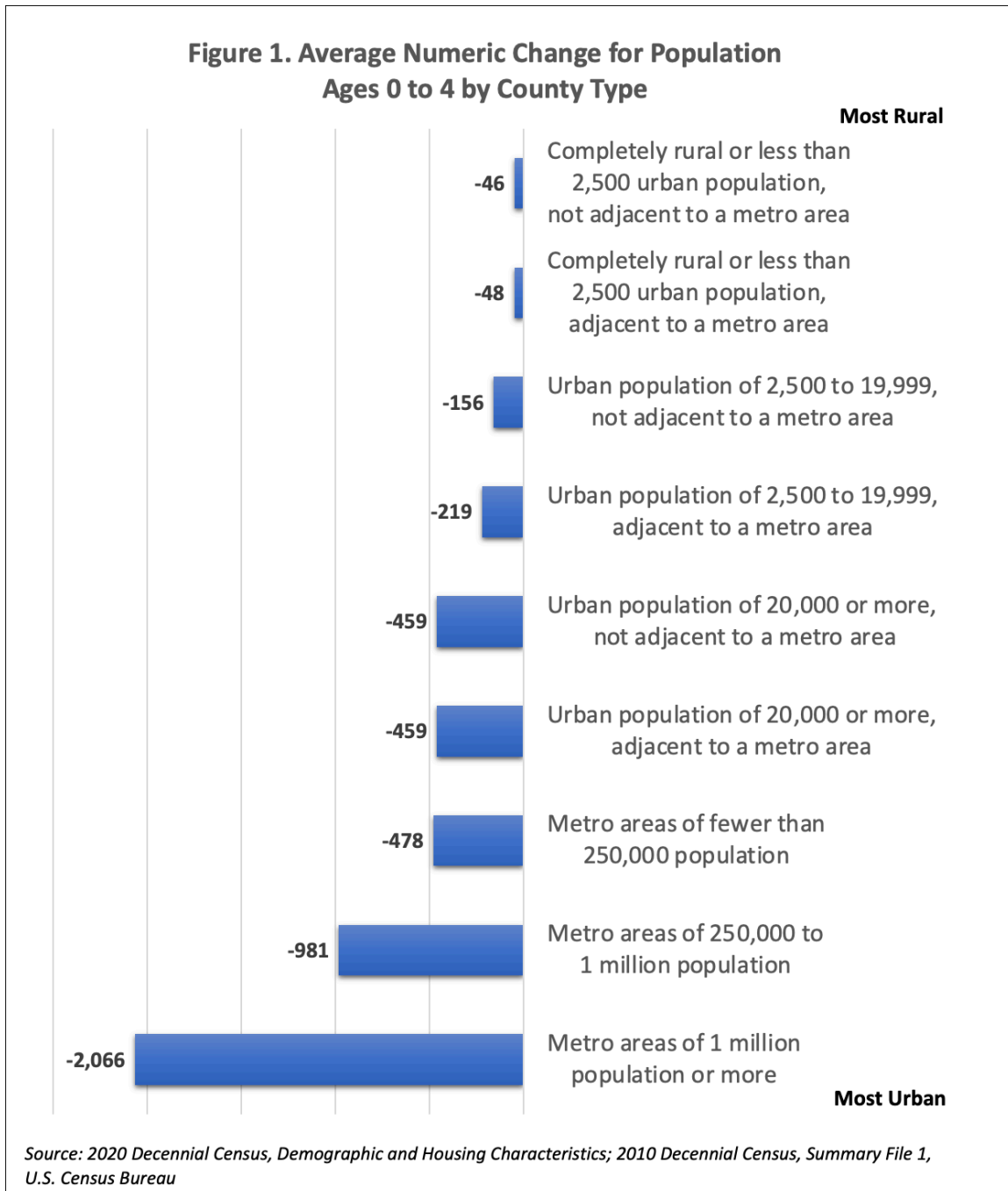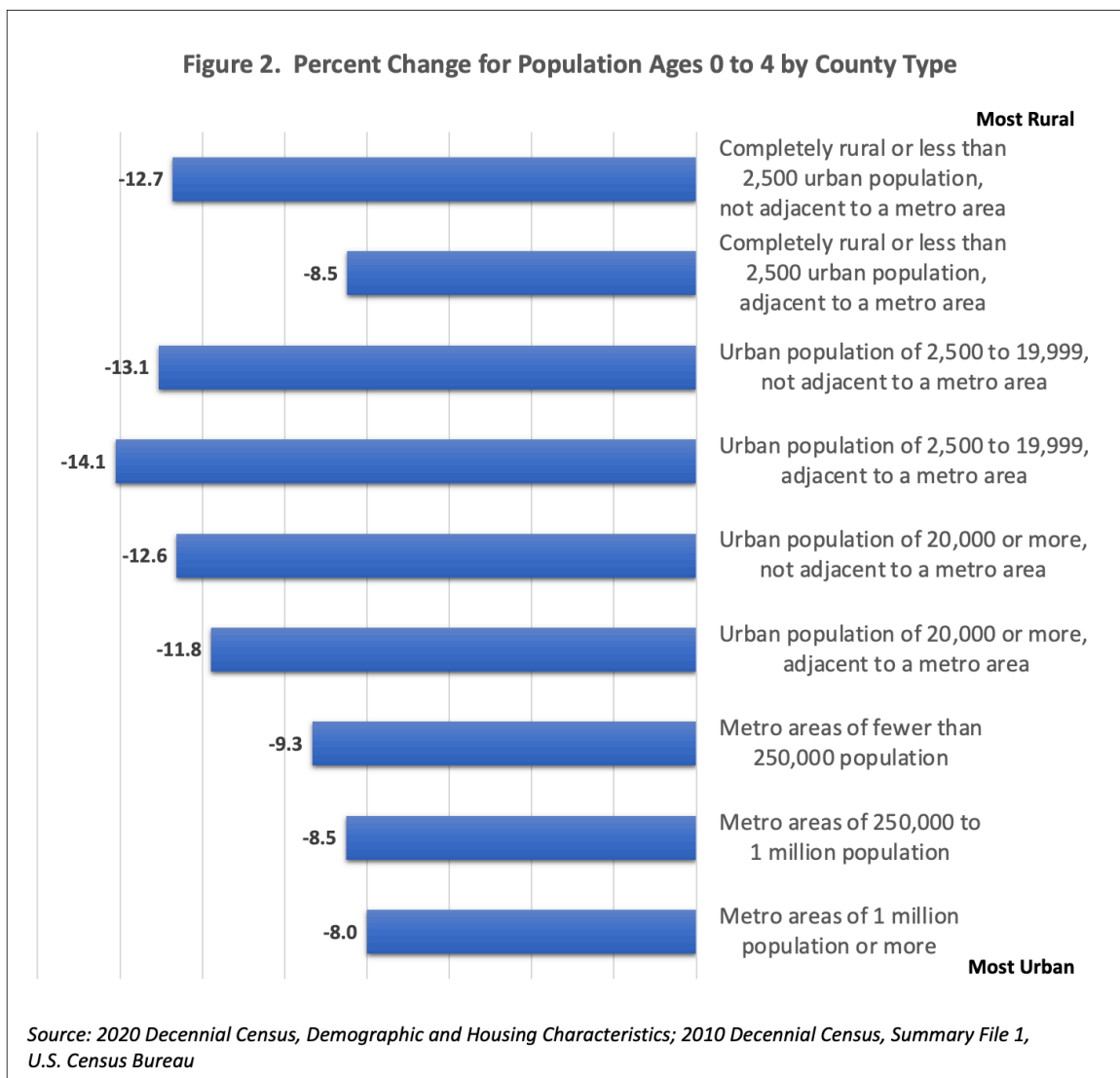
Figure 2 shows the average percent change in the population ages 0 to 4 between 2010 and 2020 using the same category types. The pattern seen in Figure 2 is different from the pattern for numerical change. In Figure 1, the largest counties had the largest numeric change, but on a percentage basis, the most urban counties had the smallest average percent change (-8.0 percent). The most rural counties had the third highest average percent change (-12.7 percent), and counties with a population of 2,500 to 19,999 both adjacent and not adjacent to a metro area had the highest average percent change (urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metro area: -14.1 percent, urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metro area: -13.1 percent).

Figure 2. Percent Change for Population Ages 0 to 4 by County Type

Most Rural
- Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, not adjacent to a metro area: -12.7
- Completely rural or less than 2,500 urban population, adjacent to a metro area: -8.5
- Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, not adjacent to a metro area: -13.1
- Urban population of 2,500 to 19,999, adjacent to a metro area: -14.1
- Urban population of 20,000 or more, not adjacent to a metro area: -12.6
- Urban population of 20,000 or more, adjacent to a metro area: -11.8
- Metro areas of fewer than 250,000 population: -9.3
- Metro areas of 250,000 to 1 million population: -8.5
- Metro areas of 1 million population or more: -8.0
Most Urban

Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau

<u>Changes in Cities with the Largest Young Child Population</u>

The decennial census is important mostly because it provides comparable data for every community in the country. State changes can mask important differences at the sub-state level. This section provides a brief examination of data for the 100 cities with the largest young child populations in 2020.[17]

Collectively, the number of young children living in the 100 largest cities by young child population decreased from 4.2 million in 2010 to 3.7 million in 2020 (roughly 500,000 young children or 11.9 percent). This figure is consistent with the decrease in the number of young children nationwide between 2010 and 2020.

Of these 100 cities, only 12 experienced an increase in the number of young children between 2010 and 2020.[18] Table 8 shows the 12 cities with the largest increase in the young child population, both numerically and percentage wise.

Irvine, California, gained the largest number of young children between 2010 and 2020 (3,606 young children), followed by Jersey City, New Jersey (1,729 young children), and Omaha City, Nebraska (1,607 young children).

[Table 8 on next page]

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[17] In this report we use the term "city" for simplicity, although the official Census Bureau term for this geographic level is "place," which refers to most cities, some towns, villages, and boroughs.
[18] This excludes Washington City, DC, as it is the only city in DC, and is considered a state and county in this paper. The count for Washington City is the same count for DC.

Table 8. Cities that experienced an increase of young children in the U.S. Population between 2010 and 2020 (among the 100 cities with the largest 2020 young child population)*							
Decrease by Numerical Change				Decrease by Percent Change			
City	State	Numerical Change	Percentage Change	City	State	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
Irvine City	California	3606	30.04%	Irvine City	California	3606	30.04%
Jersey City	New Jersey	1729	9.88%	Sioux Falls City	South Dakota	1232	9.99%
Omaha City	Nebraska	1607	5.27%	Jersey City	New Jersey	1729	9.88%
Sioux Falls City	South Dakota	1232	9.99%	Clarksville City	Tennessee	1148	9.01%
Clarksville City	Tennessee	1148	9.01%	Omaha City	Nebraska	1607	5.27%
Orlando City	Florida	649	3.84%	Orlando City	Florida	649	3.84%
Seattle City	Washington	431	1.35%	Chesapeake City	Virginia	281	1.95%
Chesapeake City	Virginia	281	1.95%	Seattle City	Washington	431	1.35%
Buffalo City	New York	119	0.68%	Buffalo City	New York	119	0.68%
Columbus City	Ohio	59	0.10%	Columbus City	Ohio	59	0.10%
Madison City	Wisconsin	5	0.04%	Madison City	Wisconsin	5	0.04%
Henderson City	Nevada	4	0.03%	Henderson City	Nevada	4	0.03%

*Note: This excludes Washington City, DC, as it is the only city in DC, and is considered a state and county in this paper. The count for Washington City is the same count for DC.
Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau

Among the 100 cities with the largest young child population in 2020, 87 experienced a decrease between 2010 and 2020. Table 9 identifies the 10 cities that reported the largest decreases, both numerically and percentage wise, in their young child population between 2010 and 2020. Los Angeles, California, lost the largest number of young children (59,682), followed by New York City, New York (42,087), and Chicago, Illinois. (36,083).

Table 9. 10 Cities with the biggest decrease of young children in the U.S. Population between 2010 and 2020 (among the 100 cities with the largest 2020 young child population)							
Decrease by Numerical Change				Decrease by Percent Change			
City	State	Numerical Change	Percentage Change	City	State	Numerical Change	Percentage Change
Los Angeles City	California	-59682	-23.77%	Louisville/Jefferson City	Kentucky	-17536	-43.57%
New York City	New York	-42087	-8.13%	Santa Ana City	California	-11065	-38.41%
Chicago City	Illinois	-36083	-19.41%	Long Beach City	California	-8632	-26.58%
Dallas City	Texas	-18703	-18.16%	Anaheim City	California	-6680	-25.94%
Phoenix City	Arizona	-18373	-15.32%	St. Louis City	Missouri	-5018	-23.79%
Houston City	Texas	-18224	-10.66%	Los Angeles City	California	-59682	-23.77%
Louisville/Jefferson City	Kentucky	-17536	-43.57%	Albuquerque City	New Mexico	-8952	-23.56%
San Jose City	California	-15259	-22.24%	San Jose City	California	-15259	-22.24%
San Antonio City	Texas	-13146	-13.08%	Baltimore City	Maryland	-9094	-22.10%
Philadelphia City	Pennsylvania	-12086	-11.96%	El Paso City	Texas	-10973	-21.53%
Source: 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic and Housing Characteristics; 2010 Decennial Census, Summary File 1, U.S. Census Bureau							

Race and Hispanic Origin of the Young Child Population

This section first examines the racial and ethnic composition of the young child population in the 2020 Census. In the 2020 Census (consistent with past practice), racial categories and Hispanic origin status are separate questions, as shown in Figure 1A in Box 1. Box 1 also provides detailed information about how the census categorizes people by race and Hispanic origin.

One of the biggest stories of the 2020 Census is the extent to which it documents growing racial and ethnic diversity in the United States.[19] This growth — which is more pronounced among young children than adults[20] — has involved adding more young children who identify as a race/ethnicity other than non-Hispanic white, including a growing number who identify as multi-racial.

Figure 3 shows young children are more racially and ethnically diverse than any other age group. More than half (53 percent) of young children are people of color; meaning someone other than non-Hispanic white alone, compared to less than a quarter of the population in the oldest age groups.

Table 10 provides data based on one of the most commonly used sets of racial and Hispanic origin categories. These categories are mutually exclusive and collectively exhaustive. This means that each young child fits into one and only one racial category. These categories are the ones used in the rest of this report, and are used widely because of their clarity, popular use and comparability to recent censuses. However, there are many different ways in which young children can be categorized and tabulated by race and Hispanic origin.
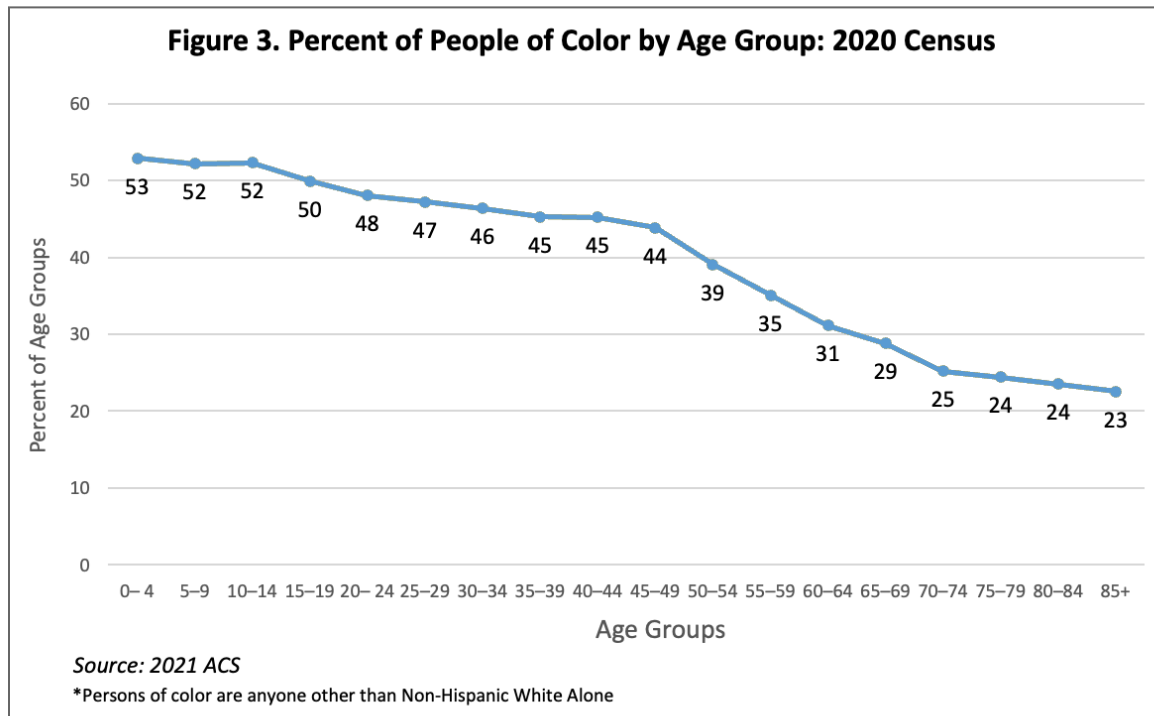
One shortcoming of the racial and Hispanic origin scheme used in Table 10 is that it does not fully capture people who identify with multiple racial groups.

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[19] Frey, W. H. (2021, August).

[20] Frey, W. H. (2021, September). *America's shrinking White population needs to value youthful diversity* (Blog post). Retrieved from www.brookings.edu/blog/the-avenue/2021/09/09/americas-shrinking-White-population-needs-to-value-youthful-diversity

Limiting race selections to one option results in underestimating the size of some groups (categories are explained in Box 1).

Figure 3. Percent of People of Color by Age Group: 2020 Census

Source: 2021 ACS
*Persons of color are anyone other than Non-Hispanic White Alone

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Box 1: Understanding Racial and Hispanic Origin Categories
Used in the Census

Data on race and Hispanic origin can be confusing for those unfamiliar with the Census Bureau's approach to this issue. There are four important points to make regarding the measurement of race and Hispanic origin in U.S. census data. First, it should be noted that race and Hispanic origin are based on self-identification — they are not assigned by the Census Bureau.[21]

Second, in the 2020 Census (consistent with past practice) racial and Hispanic origin were separate questions (see Figure A1 for the exact questions).

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[21] There is one exception to this rule. If a respondent leaves the racial question blank, the Census Bureau will assign a racial value using a statistical imputation algorithm. A similar process is applied to missing responses to the Hispanic origin question.

Therefore, all respondents — Hispanic and non-Hispanic — are instructed to select one or more racial categories. On the census questionnaire, Hispanic origin status is asked before the question on race.

This situation is sometimes confusing for the Hispanic population who feel they already answered this query in the previous question regarding Hispanic origin status and leads many Hispanic people to choose the "some other race" category." In the 2020 Census, the "some other race" category was the second largest race group after White.

The Census Bureau, following the guidance of the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB), considers Hispanic origin an ethnicity that is made up of two categories: Hispanic and not Hispanic. The Hispanic category includes people who may self-identify as Mexican, Cuban, Puerto Rican or another origin from Latin America, the Caribbean or Spain.

Third, respondents can mark as many racial categories as they feel apply. Since 1997, the federal government has allowed respondents to select more than one racial category in the census.[22] Prior to 1997, people could only select one race. The 2000 Census was the first to allow respondents to select more than one race. The census question on race shown in Figure A1 allows people to select among the following race categories:

- White.
- Black or African American.
- American Indian or Alaska Native.
- Asian.
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander; and
- some other race.

These categories are broadly associated with world regions of origin. The Census Bureau acknowledges that these racial categories "generally reflect a social

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[22] U.S. Office of Management and Budget. (1997). Revisions to the standards for the classification of federal data on race and ethnicity. *Federal Register*, *62*(210), 58782–58790. Retrieved from https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/omb/fedreg_1997standards

definition of race recognized in this country and [are] not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically."[23]

Fourth, it is important to understand that the U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) is the government agency that sets standards for collecting and reporting data by race and Hispanic origin. The Census Bureau simply follows the regulations provided by that office. The categories used for race and Hispanic origin are dictated by Statistical Policy Directive 15. This directive was implemented in the late 1970s, updated in 1997, and was recently updated in March 2024. The Bureau has not yet announced how these new updates will be implemented.[24]

There are three main ways race is reported in census data. First, in some Census products, such as the PL 94-171 file used for redistricting, the Census Bureau provides data for very detailed categories, namely, all possible combinations of race and race by Hispanic origin. A second way of reporting racial data is using a race alone approach, which means people in each separate racial category only marked one race. In this approach, people who marked more than one race are grouped in the category "two or more races". The third way data are commonly reported is to show racial data using race alone or in combination, which means that people show up in each racial category they selected in the census. The main difference from race alone is those who picked multiple races are counted in each race they reported. For example, someone who only selected Black would be included in the Black alone category as well as the Black alone or in combination category. Someone who selected Black and White would not be in the Black alone category but would be in both the Black alone or in combination category and the White alone or in combination category.

Categorizing people in the race alone or in combination style is the most inclusive definition of a racial group. But it also results in counting some people more

[23] U.S. Census Bureau. (2021, December). *About the topic of race*. Retrieved from www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

[24] Marks, R. (2024). What updates to OMB's race/ethnicity standards mean for the Census Bureau. Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2024/04/updates-race-ethnicity-standards.html

than once, which makes calculating percentages awkward. Commonly, racial categories also are shown by Hispanic origin.

Here are four major ways to show the counts for each racial group:
1) Race Alone by Hispanic origin
2) Race Alone or in Combination by Hispanic origin
3) Race Alone (regardless of Hispanic origin status); and
4) Race Alone or in Combination (regardless of Hispanic origin status)

Keeping up With Increased Diversity in the U.S.

As the diversity of the U.S. population has increased, collecting, tabulating, and reporting data by race has become more complex. Accordingly, current categories are not strictly comparable with data from earlier censuses. Reporting more racial categories provides a more accurate, detailed, and precise picture of the nation's population but it complicates analyzing trends over time.

Several changes in how race and ethnicity data was collected, coded and reports were implemented in the 2020 Census.[25] These changes improved the detail available on race, but they make data from 2020 inconsistent with 2010 and earlier Censuses.

Six key changes in the method used to categorize people by race and ethnicity in the 2020 Census (compared to the 2010 Census) are explained by the Census Bureau.[26]

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[25] O'Hare, W.P. (2023). "Potential Problems in Measuring Change Among Young Children Using Data from the American Community Survey." January, Posted on the Count All Kids website https://countallkids.org/potential-problems-in-measuring-racial-change-among-young-children-using-data-from-the-american-community-survey/

[26] U.S. Census Bureau (2021a).. "About the topic of race" https://www.census.gov/topics/population/race/about.html

1. In response to community feedback over the past decade, we added dedicated write-in response areas and examples for the "White" and the "Black or African Am." racial categories.

2. We provided six example groups for each of the "White," "Black or African American," and "American Indian or Alaska Native" racial categories. These examples represent the largest population groups within each of the geographically diverse population groups of each race category, as defined by the 1997 OMB standards.

3. Based on successful previous testing, the term "Negro" was removed from the 2020 Census by updating the category "Black, African Am., or Negro" to "Black or African Am." on paper questionnaires and "Black or African American" on electronic instruments.

4. We reordered detailed Asian and Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander checkboxes by population size.

5. We changed the checkbox category "Guamanian or Chamorro" to "Chamorro" based on research and positive stakeholder feedback.

6. We updated the write-in instructions for the "Some Other Race" category to better solicit detailed reporting. The 2010 Census form included the instruction to "Print race," but we updated the 2020 Census instruction to read "Print race or origin" to correspond with the overall question instruction to "*Mark ☒ one or more boxes **AND** print origins*.

One of the biggest changes is how write-in responses are managed. Before 2020 only the first 30 characters of write-in responses were analyzed. In 2020, the Census Bureau started analyzing the first 200 characters. This led to a lot more people being recognized as having more than one race…thus there was a big increase in the number of people with two or more races or three or more races in the 2020 Census compared to the 2010 Census.

Post 2020 Developments in Measuring Race and Ethnicity

      Following the 2010 census, the Census Bureau invested considerable time testing ways to get better data for race and Hispanic origin. This effort also included a lot of feedback from stakeholder groups.

      In fall 2017, the Census Bureau sent OMB a memo outlining new and better ways to collect data on race and Hispanic origin. It suggested two main changes. First, the Hispanic origin category should be offered along with the racial choices. This is known as the single-question format as opposed to the two-question format shown in Figure A1. Second, it proposed adding a category for people from the Middle East and North Africa, also known as MENA.

      Unfortunately, OMB did not act on the Census Bureau's recommendations at that time (these recommendations are both included in the new standards released in March 2024). Thus, the Census Bureau had to use the old racial and Hispanic origin questions — the two-question format — in the 2020 census.

Note the race and ethnicity questions have changed after every census since 1790. No two U.S. Censuses have asked the exact same question(s). Thus, the updating of race and ethnicity categories just undertaken by OMB is consistent with history.

[Figure 1A on next page]

Figure 1A. Questions used to measure race and Hispanic Origin in the 2020 Census

Figure 1.
2020 Census Hispanic Origin Question

→ NOTE: Please answer BOTH Question 6 about Hispanic origin and Question 7 about race. For this census, Hispanic origins are not races.

6. Is this person of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin?

☐ **No**, not of Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin

☐ Yes, Mexican, Mexican Am., Chicano

☐ Yes, Puerto Rican

☐ Yes, Cuban

☐ Yes, another Hispanic, Latino, or Spanish origin – *Print, for example, Salvadoran, Dominican, Colombian, Guatemalan, Spaniard, Ecuadorian, etc.*

Source: Marks, R. & Rios-Vargas, M. (2021, August). Improvements to the 2020 Census Race and Hispanic Origin Question Designs, Data Processing, and Coding Procedures. *U.S. Census Bureau.* Retrieved from https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2021/08/improvements-to-2020-census-race-hispanic-origin-question-designs.html

Figure 2.
2020 Census Race Question

7. **What is this person's race?**
Mark ☒ one or more boxes **AND** print origins.

☐ White – *Print, for example, German, Irish, English, Italian, Lebanese, Egyptian, etc.*

☐ Black or African Am. – *Print, for example, African American, Jamaican, Haitian, Nigerian, Ethiopian, Somali, etc.*

☐ American Indian or Alaska Native – *Print name of enrolled or principal tribe(s), for example, Navajo Nation, Blackfeet Tribe, Mayan, Aztec, Native Village of Barrow Inupiat Traditional Government, Nome Eskimo Community, etc.*

☐ Chinese   ☐ Vietnamese   ☐ Native Hawaiian

☐ Filipino   ☐ Korean   ☐ Samoan

☐ Asian Indian   ☐ Japanese   ☐ Chamorro

☐ Other Asian – *Print, for example, Pakistani, Cambodian, Hmong, etc.*   ☐ Other Pacific Islander – *Print, for example, Tongan, Fijian, Marshallese, etc.*

☐ Some other race – *Print race or origin.*

[Table 10 on next page]

Table 10. Distribution of Young Children (population under age 5) by Race and Hispanic Origin Using Race Alone: 2020 Census				
	Not Hispanic or Latino		Hispanic or Latino	
	Number	Percent of Total Young Child Population	Number	Percent of Total Young Child Population
Total Young Child Population	13,764,537	74.8%	4,635,698	25.2%
Totals by Race Alone:				
White	8,641,422	47.0%	1,045,147	5.7%
Black or African American	2,440,282	13.3%	136,090	0.7%
American Indian and Alaska Native	144,312	0.8%	93,323	0.5%
Asian	986,118	5.4%	29,035	0.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander	45,701	0.2%	6,494	0.0%
Some Other Race	148,271	0.8%	1,790,518	9.7%
Two or More Races	1,358,431	7.4%	1,535,091	8.3%

Source: 2020 DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics
*does not include data for Puerto Rico

In the 2020 Census, no single racial or Hispanic origin group is a majority (representing more than 50 percent) of the young child population. This impacts the meaning of "minority" status.[27]

Non-Hispanic young white children (alone) made up just under half of all young children (47.0 percent) in 2020, but remain the largest racial and ethnic population group among young children (8.6 million). All young children who are not in the non-Hispanic white category are considered young children of color and collectively account for 9.8 million young children, making up 53.1 percent of the young children counted in the 2020 Census.

Hispanic young children, at 4.6 million, represented 25.2 percent of all young children counted in the 2020 Census and are the second largest racial and ethnic group after non-Hispanic white.

[27] The new OMB standards eliminate the use of majority and minority except when statistically accurate and used for statistical descriptions or when legal requirements call for use of the terms..https://www.federalregister.gov/documents/2024/03/29/2024-06469/revisions-to-ombs-statistical-policy-directive-no-15-standards-for-maintaining-collecting-and

Race and Hispanic Origin of Young Children by State

Table 11 shows the distribution of young children by race and Hispanic origin in each state according to 2020 Census results. States are ranked according to the share that young children of color represent within the total young child population.

In 2020, young children of color made up the majority of the total young child population in 20 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico. These results have changed since 2010, when young children of color were the majority in just 15 states, the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

Table 11. States Ranked by Percent of the Young Child Population that is in a group other than Non-Hispanic White Alone: 2020 (including DC and Puerto Rico)						
Rank	State	Total Population Ages 0 to 4	Non-Hispanic White Alone* (n)	Non-Hispanic White Alone* (%)	Young Children of Color** (n)	Young Children of Color** (%)
1	Puerto Rico	115106	717	1%	114389	99%
2	Hawaii	77352	10990	14%	66362	86%
3	New Mexico	114806	26333	23%	88473	77%
4	California	2137439	509639	24%	1627800	76%
5	Texas	1819260	539073	30%	1280187	70%
6	District of Columbia	37068	11184	30%	25884	70%
7	Nevada	174032	54410	31%	119622	69%
8	Arizona	392370	142697	36%	249673	64%
9	Maryland	345047	128115	37%	216932	63%
10	Florida	1030284	398292	39%	631992	61%
11	Georgia	614218	249347	41%	364871	59%
12	New Jersey	502046	208336	41%	293710	59%
13	Delaware	51230	22094	43%	29136	57%
14	Alaska	48104	21301	44%	26803	56%
15	New York	1060610	475764	45%	584846	55%
16	Oklahoma	241242	108604	45%	132638	55%
17	Louisiana	281257	130709	46%	150548	54%
18	Mississippi	171647	80219	47%	91428	53%
19	Connecticut	176831	84565	48%	92266	52%
20	Illinois	705616	338715	48%	366901	52%
21	Virginia	481405	232140	48%	249265	52%
22	North Carolina	574468	279194	49%	295274	51%
23	Washington	437231	219546	50%	217685	50%
24	Rhode Island	51903	26434	51%	25469	49%

25	South Carolina	277144	143919	52%	133225	48%
26	Colorado	314580	164899	52%	149681	48%
27	Massachusetts	340020	182618	54%	157402	46%
28	Alabama	286529	154076	54%	132453	46%
29	Arkansas	179575	102901	57%	76674	43%
30	Oregon	215252	125623	58%	89629	42%
31	Tennessee	393767	239265	61%	154502	39%
32	Kansas	179446	109756	61%	69690	39%
33	Michigan	548875	338787	62%	210088	38%
34	Pennsylvania	667816	414648	62%	253168	38%
35	Minnesota	340357	212525	62%	127832	38%
36	Nebraska	126605	80736	64%	45869	36%
37	Ohio	666434	435522	65%	230912	35%
38	Indiana	408828	267243	65%	141585	35%
39	Wisconsin	322285	212247	66%	110038	34%
40	South Dakota	57742	38874	67%	18868	33%
41	Missouri	355024	240189	68%	114835	32%
42	Utah	239780	166152	69%	73628	31%
43	Idaho	114128	80202	70%	33926	30%
44	North Dakota	52366	37071	71%	15295	29%
45	Iowa	190064	136819	72%	53245	28%
46	Wyoming	33955	24743	73%	9212	27%
47	Kentucky	264254	193671	73%	70583	27%
48	Montana	59224	43561	74%	15663	26%
49	New Hampshire	61480	48211	78%	13269	22%
50	Maine	61477	50926	83%	10551	17%
51	Vermont	28555	23694	83%	4861	17%
52	West Virginia	89207	74843	84%	14364	16%

Source: 2020 DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics

*Only persons who marked just one race are included in these categories. Those who marked more than one race are in the "Two or More Races" category.

**Anyone other than someone who is Non-Hispanic White Alone

Many racial and Hispanic origin groups are highly concentrated in just a few states. One way to show this concentration is by reporting what percentage of a given population resides in the top five states (states with the highest number of children in that population) for each racial and Hispanic origin young child group. This analysis also includes young children residing in the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

For every racial and Hispanic origin group, more than a quarter of the population was in just five states (as shown in Table 12). For example, the top five states with non-Hispanic young white children comprised 27 percent of the
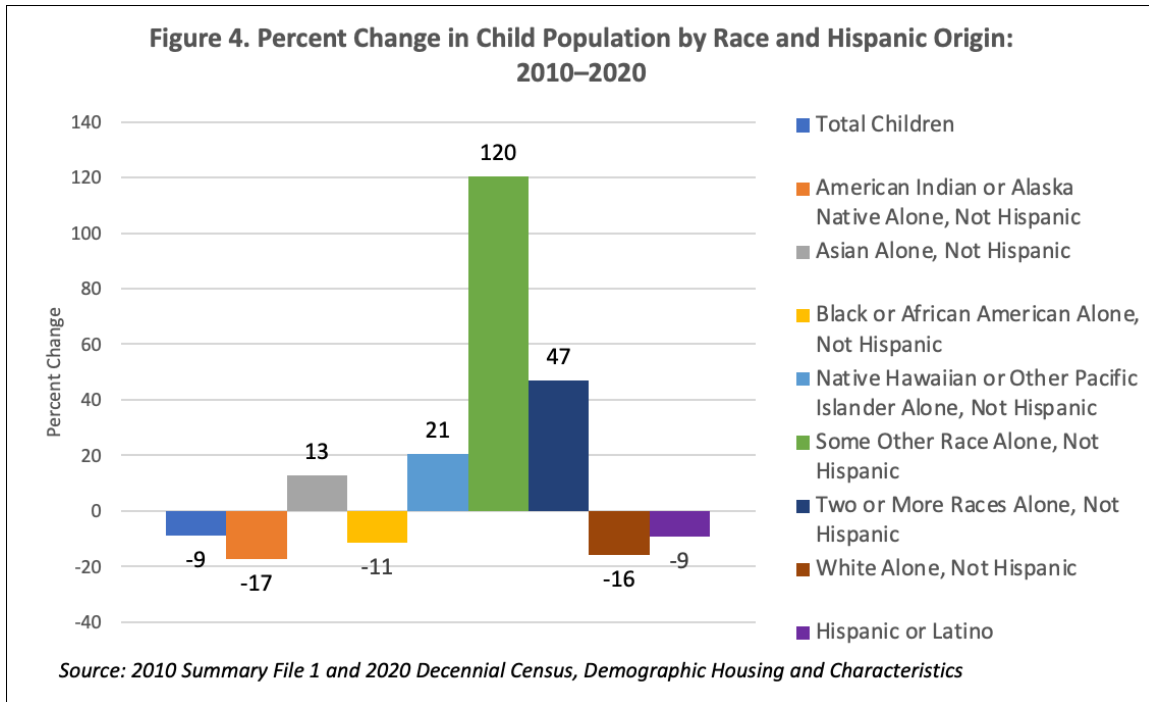
total non-Hispanic young White child population. For other groups, the percentage in the top five states was much higher, reflecting higher levels of geographic concentration.

In 2020, 57 percent of Hispanic young children were in just five states. This figure was 48 percent for non-Hispanic American Indian and Alaska Native young children, 55 percent of non-Hispanic Asian and 64 percent for Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander young children.

Table 12. Percentage of Child Population in Top 5 States (including DC and Puerto Rico) by Race/Ethnicity: 2020	
Race and Hispanic Origin	**% of Population**
Total Population Under Age 5	37%
Non-Hispanic White Alone	27%
Children of Color*	45%
Non-Hispanic Black Alone	36%
Non-Hispanic Asian Alone	55%
Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan Native Alone	48%
Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Alone	64%
Non-Hispanic Some Other Race Alone	44%
Non-Hispanic Two or More Races	31%
Hispanic	57%
Source: 2020 DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics	
*Children of Color are those who are marked a race/ethnicity other than Non-Hispanic White Alone	

Changes From 2010 to 2020 by Race and Hispanic Origin

Figure 4 shows the percent changes in the young child population by race and ethnicity between 2010 and 2020.

Figure 4. Percent Change in Child Population by Race and Hispanic Origin: 2010–2020

Source: 2010 Summary File 1 and 2020 Decennial Census, Demographic Housing and Characteristics

Changes across racial and ethnic groups varied nationally. Decreases were seen in the non-Hispanic populations for the American Indian or Alaska Native Alone (-17 percent), Black or African American (-11 percent), and White Alone (-16 percent) racial groups, in addition to the Hispanic origin group (-9 percent). Increases were seen in the non-Hispanic Asian Alone (13 percent), Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Alone (21 percent), Some Other Race Alone (120 percent), and Two or More Races Alone (47 percent).

Table 13 shows the number of states where the young children population increased by race and ethnicity. Increases in young children of color were widespread for certain groups, whereas the number of non-Hispanic young White children increased in only two states, and in just one state for non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan Native young children. The number of young children of color increased in 37 states (as well as the District of Columbia), with increases in 51 states and Puerto Rico (including DC) for non-Hispanic young children of some other race, all 50 states (including DC) for non-Hispanic young children of two or more races, 41 states (including DC) for non-Hispanic Asian

children, 29 states (including DC) for Hispanic young children, and 42 states for non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander young children. Only 16 states saw an increase of non-Hispanic Black young children.

Table 13. Number of States (including DC and Puerto Rico) where Young Child Population Increased Between 2010 and 2020	
Race and Hispanic Origin	Number of States
Total Population Under Age 5	2
Non-Hispanic White Alone	2
Children of Color*	37
Non-Hispanic Black Alone	16
Non-Hispanic Asian Alone	41
Non-Hispanic American Indian or Alaskan Native Alone	1
Non-Hispanic Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander Alone	42
Non-Hispanic Some Other Race Alone	52
Non-Hispanic Two or More Races	50
Hispanic	29
Source: 2020 DEC Demographic and Housing Characteristics and 2010 Summary File 1	
*Children of Color are those who are marked a race/ethnicity other than Non-Hispanic White Alone	

Some of the shifts between 2010 and 2020 may be due to changes in data collection and coding in the 2020 census.[28] The Census Bureau states:

It is important to note that these data comparisons between the 2020 census and the 2010 census race data should be made with caution

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[28] Marks, R., & Rios-Vargas, M. (2021, August). *Improvements to the 2020 census race and Hispanic origin question designs, data processing, and coding procedures* (Blog post). Retrieved from www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2021/08/improvements-to-2020-census-race-hispanic-origin-question-designs.html

because changes between 2010 and 2020 are greatly affected by the way race and ethnicity data were collected and coded in the 2020 Census.[29]

O'Hare documents the big impact the new method of collecting, coding, and reporting data on race and ethnicity on the statistical results, using ACS data from 2019 and 2021.[30]

1980 to 2020 Major Trends by Race and Hispanic Origin

As mentioned earlier, how people can identify themselves in the census has changed significantly between each census. Therefore, more detailed racial categories are not strictly comparable. The new methodology introduced in the 2020 Census further complicates comparisons over time.

In this section, we look at longer-term changes for young children of color and non-Hispanic young White children — two groups that have been defined relatively consistently since 1980.

[section continues on next page]

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[29] Jones, N., Marks, R., Ramirez, R., & Rios-Vargas, M. (2021, August). 2020 census illuminates racial and ethnic composition of the country. *America Counts: Stories Behind the Numbers.* Washington, DC: U.S. Census Bureau. Retrieved from www.census.gov/library/stories/2021/08/improved-race-ethnicity-measures-reveal-united-states-population-much-more-multiracial.html

[30] O'Hare, W.P. (2023). "Potential Problems in Measuring Change Among Young Children Using Data from the American Community Survey." January, Posted on the Count All Kids website https://countallkids.org/potential-problems-in-measuring-racial-change-among-young-children-using-data-from-the-american-community-survey/

Every decade since 1980, the number of young children of color has grown more rapidly than the number of non-Hispanic young White children.

Figure 5. Percent of Young Child Population by Race and Ethnicity: 1980 - 2020

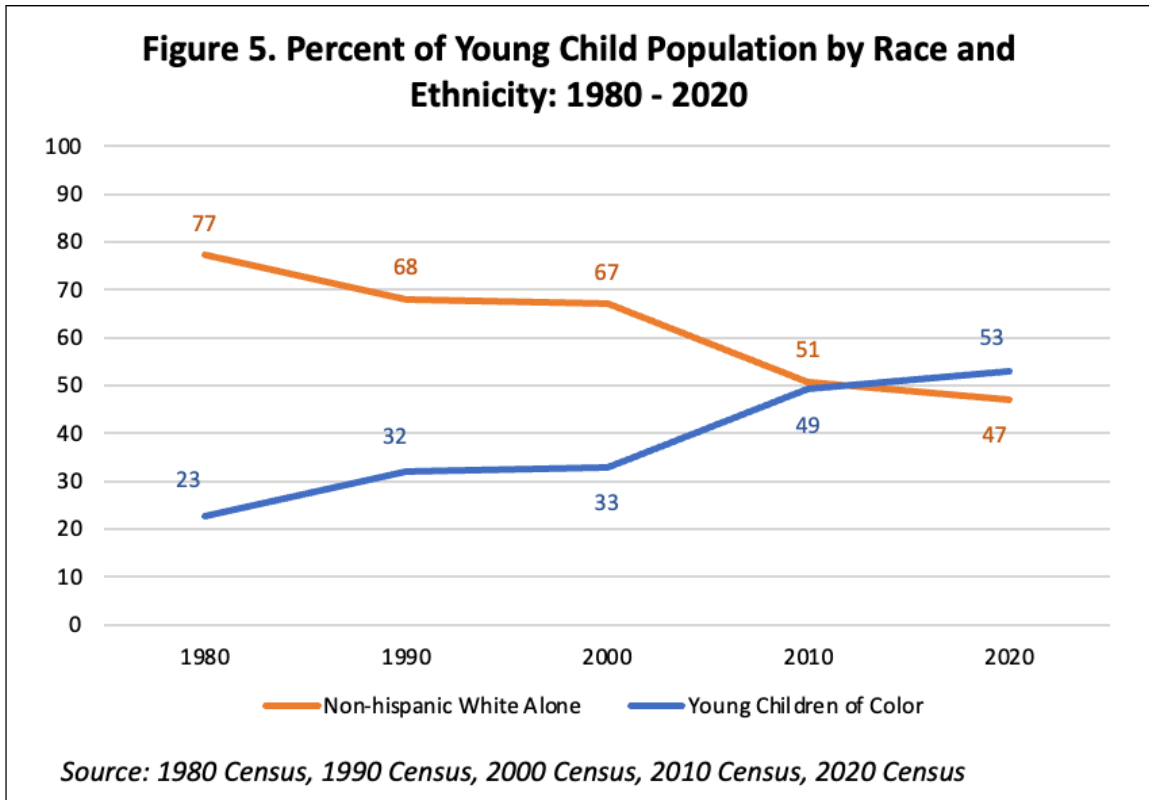Source: 1980 Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2020 Census

Figure 5 shows that young children of color grew from 23 percent of all young children in 1980 to 53 percent in 2020. Numerically, young children of color grew from 3.7 million in 1980, to 9.8 million in 2020, more than doubling in size. While the Census Bureau appropriately recommends making cautious comparisons of race and ethnicity over time given the changes in methodology, the size and consistency of this trend over 40 years is seemingly reliable.

Meanwhile, the percentage of non-Hispanic young white children fell from more than three-quarters (77 percent) of the young child population in 1980 to less than half (47 percent) in 2020. The total number of non-Hispanic young white children also decreased — going from 12.6 million to 8.6 million during this same time period.

Table 14: Young Children by Ethnicity, 1980–2020									
Year	TOTAL Under 5	Non-Hispanic White Alone	%	Young Children of Color	%	Hispanic Young Children	%	Non-Hispanic Young Children of Color	%
1980	16,348,254	12,634,075	77.3%	3,714,179	22.7%	1,663,173	10.2%	2,051,006	12.5%
1990	18,354,443	12,488,719	68.0%	5,865,724	32.0%	2,387,524	13.0%	3,478,200	19.0%
2000	19,175,978	12,859,892	67.1%	6,316,086	32.9%	3,717,974	19.4%	2,598,112	13.5%
2010	20,201,362	10,254,079	50.8%	9,947,283	49.2%	5,114,488	25.3%	4,832,795	23.9%
2020	18,400,235	8,641,422	47.0%	9,758,813	53.0%	4,635,698	25.2%	5,123,115	27.8%
Source: 1980 Census, 1990 Census, 2000 Census, 2010 Census, 2020 Census									

Young children of color are further divided into Hispanic and non-Hispanic groups. The percentage of Hispanic young children increased from 10.2 percent of the young child population in 1980 to 25.2 percent in 2020, while the share of non-Hispanic young children of color grew from 12.5 percent in 1980 to 27.8 percent in 2020 (Table 14). In terms of numbers within these groups, both Hispanic and non-Hispanic young children of color increased by roughly 3 million.

Summary

What is clear from the analyses covered in this report is that the U.S. young child population is decreasing in size, changing substantially at the state, county, and city levels, and increasing in racial and ethnic diversity. Some of these changes offer challenges, but they also provide opportunities.

As the population of young children grows in its racial diversity, it's important to note that census counts have historically undercounted populations of color – particularly Black, American Indian and Alaska Natives living on reservations, and Hispanic or Latino populations.[31] The 2020 Census, despite achieving an accurate count for the overall population, had a record undercount of the Hispanic population. Roughly 3 million Hispanic people were left out– about 4 times more than were missed in 2010.[32] Black populations and American Indian and Alaska Natives living on reservations continued to be undercounted at statistically significant rates. The recent trends of higher undercounts of young children (see Appendix A for more details) and historical undercounts of communities of color makes a case for how these two issues are intertwined. In order to best support an accurate count of young children, it is essential to improve and correct the count of people of color.

The importance of the Census count of young children was emphasized by a recent report from the Census Bureau showing that Census Bureau data was used in the distribution of $2.8 trillion in Fiscal Year 2021. The Census Bureau notes that one of the 20 largest federal programs that use Census Bureau data to distribute money to states and localities is the Child Care and

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[31] Stempowski, D. (2023, November 14). *Counting every voice: Understanding hard-to-count and historically undercounted populations*. Census.gov. https://www.census.gov/newsroom/blogs/random-samplings/2023/10/understanding-undercounted-populations.html#:~:text=For%20example%2C%20according%20to%20the,Native%20population%20living%20on%20reservations.

[32] Cohn, D., & Passel, J. S. (2022, June 8). *Key facts about the quality of the 2020 census*. Pew Research Center. https://www.pewresearch.org/short-reads/2022/06/08/key-facts-about-the-quality-of-the-2020-census/

Development Block Grant, which distributed $50.9 billion in Fiscal Year 2021[33]. This is an increase from $15 billion in fiscal year 2015. The increase in funds amidst the decrease in young children underscores the extent to which there is a growing bipartisan recognition that providing high quality experiences for young children is a good investment in our country's future. Other large programs such as Medicaid ($568 billion), Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program ($136 billion), Children's Health Insurance Program ($18 billion), and Temporary Assistance to Need Family ($18 billion) provide valuable assistance to low-income families with young children, and should receive funding that reflects similar priorities.

While the decline in the number of young children reinforces the overall trend of the "graying of America," it's pertinent to understand the underlying causes. Potential factors for future research are increasing costs of living, high cost of childcare, billowing housing costs, and growing income and wealth inequality.

The statement that young children are the future may sound trite, but it is accurate. How we invest in young children today is vital to the nation's success.

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[33] U.S. Census Bureau (2023). " Uses of Decennial Census Programs Data in Federal Funds Distribution: Fiscal Year 2021," By Ceci Villa Ross., Released June 2023, https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2023/decennial-census-federal-funds-distribution.html

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Appendix A: The Undercount of Young Children in the Census

Despite the Census Bureau's best efforts to count everyone once, only once, and in the right place in every decennial census, some people are missed, and young children have been missed more than any other age group[34].

Data from the Census Bureau's Demographic Analysis (DA) show that the 2020 census continued the historical pattern of undercounting young children. Here are three key data points based on analysis of the 2020 Census. First, in the 2020 Census, the net undercount for young children (birth to age 4) was 5.4 percent, which was higher than the undercount rate for this age group in the 1950 Census. Young children are the only demographic group which has experienced a deterioration in census accuracy over this time period. Second, the net undercount rate for young children in the 2020 Census was the highest of any age group. Thus, the net undercount rate for young children is high and growing. Third, the coverage experience of young children is quite different from the experience of older children.
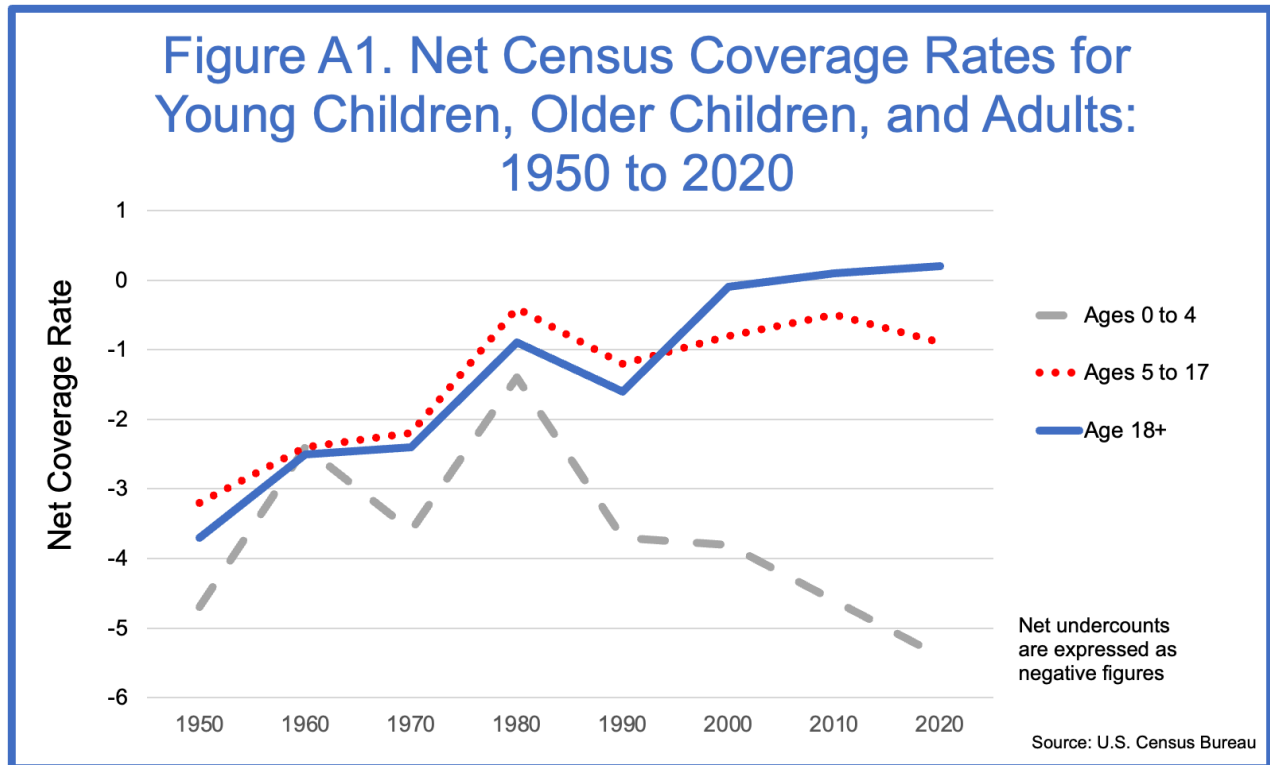
The high net undercount for young children in the 2020 census was not an isolated incident. Net undercount rates for all children (birth to age 17), young children (birth to age 4) and adults (ages 18 and older) in the U.S. decennial censuses from 1950 to 2020 are shown in Figure B1.

From 1950 to 1980, the coverage rates for young children and adults were pretty similar and both were improving. However, in each census since 1980, the net undercount for young children was much higher than the net undercount for adults, and the gap is growing. The net undercount rate for young children tripled between 1980 and 2020 and the net undercount rate for young children increased from 4.6 percent in 2010 to 5.4 percent in 2020. Despite efforts from

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[34] The nomenclature can be confusing in this arena. When people are missed, this is often referred to as an undercount. But the term "net undercount" which is what is most often reported, involves a tradeoff between the number of people missed and the number of people double counted or included in the Census erroneously. Thus, a net overcount does not mean no one was missed, it means the number of people doubled counted were larger than the number of people missed. (See O'Hare 2019 for more information on this issue).

the Census Bureau and the child advocacy community — the net undercount of young children continued to worsen.

Figure A1. Net Census Coverage Rates for Young Children, Older Children, and Adults: 1950 to 2020

Net undercounts are expressed as negative figures

Source: U.S. Census Bureau

Several factors had a negative effect on the data quality of the 2020 Census. A global pandemic, a political environment hostile to immigrants, and attempted politicization of the census all contributed to increased mistrust with the government and low survey response rates. Therefore, it is not surprising that the net undercount rate for all young children (birth to age 4) was 5.4 percent in the 2020 census, compared to 4.6 percent for 2010.

The problematic aspects of the 2020 Census may explain why the net undercount of young children increased between 2010 and 2020, but they do not explain why the net undercount of young children is 5.4 percent while there is a slight overcount of adults in the 2020 Census.

Historically, the census has undercounted Black and Hispanic populations, so it is not surprising that the net undercount of Black and Hispanic young

children has been much higher than the total undercount for young children.[35] In the 2020 Census, the net undercount for the overall population was 0.24 percent. However, the net undercount for the Hispanic population tripled from the 2010 Census– jumping from 1.54 percent to nearly 5 percent in 2020. Similarly, the net undercount for young Hispanic children (8.6 percent) was much higher than the overall net undercount for young children, and the 2020 rate was higher than the 2010 rate.

The net undercount for young Hispanic children in 2020 is based on a census count of 4,635,698, and a middle series DA estimate of 5,072,000. The difference is 436,302 or 8.6 percent.

Data from the 2010 Census indicate the net undercount for young Black alone or in combination children was 6.3 percent, which is about 50 percent higher than the overall net undercount rate for this age group. The net undercount rate in the 2020 Census for young Black children (alone or in combination) cannot be calculated until the Census Bureau released their 2020 Census modified race file. However, one estimate of the undercount rate for Black alone or in combination for the population ages 0 to 17 was 4.2 percent and for Black alone it was 5.8 percent. Both of these figures for Black children are more than twice the overall net undercount for this age group.[36] Yet again, we find similar trends for the Black adult population. In the 2010 Census, the net undercount for the Black population was 2.06 percent, compared to 0.01% overall. In the 2020 Census, the net undercount was 3.3 percent.

Another recent report also shows young Asian children were undercounted at a high rate in the 2010 Census.[37]

[35] O'Hare, W.P. (2015). *The Undercount of Young Children in the U.S. Decennial Census. Springer Publishers.,* https://www.springer.com/gp/book/9783319189161#

[36] O'Hare, W. P. and Mayol-Garcia ,Y. (2023). *The Changing Child Population of the United States: First Data from the 2020 Census,* The Annie E. Casey Foundation, Baltimore MD, Figure 8., https://www.aecf.org/resources/the-changing-child-population-of-the-united-states

[37] Asian Americans Advancing Justice(2023). "Quality of the Decennial Census for Asian American and Native Hawaiian and Pacific Islanders,: An Expanded Approach, https://www.advancingjustice-aajc.org/publication/quality-decennial-census-asian-american-and-native-hawaiian-and-pacific-islander

The high net undercount of young children has important implications, for example, on equitable distribution of federal funds. A recent report from the Census Bureau found 353 federal funding programs that use Census Bureau data for distribution of federal funds. And these programs distributed $2.7 trillion in FY 2021.[38] In addition to informing the distribution of federal dollars, census-derived data are used to inform the distribution of state funds.[39] Communities that are undercounted do not get their fair share of these funds.

Census data on children are used extensively for a wide range of purposes, such as school planning, business investment decisions, and government emergency preparations. Inaccurate data may lead private foundations and nonprofits to make mistaken decisions about where to focus resources, governments to struggle to serve their communities, and members of the private sector to miss business opportunities.

Given the past undercount of young children in the census, it is important to recognize that the 2020 Census data examined in this report do not contain adjustments for any young children missed in the censuses analyzed.

It is encouraging that the Census Bureau has started to focus more attention on the undercount of young children. They have created a cross-directorate team to improve data on this population and to focus on reducing the undercount of young children in the 2030 Census. It was also encouraging to see a deep mobilization of the child advocacy community related to the 2020 Census. One of the lessons from the 2020 Census is the need to start work on this issue earlier in the decade.

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[38] U.S. Census Bureau (2023). "Uses of Decennial Census Programs Data in Federal Funds Distribution: Fiscal Year 2021**,"** By Ceci Villa Ross., Released June 2023, https://www.census.gov/newsroom/press-kits/2023/decennial-census-federal-funds-distribution.html

[39] O'Hare, W. P. (2020, January). *Many states use decennial census data to distribute state money*. Washington, DC: The Census Project. Retrieved from https://thecensusproject.org/2020/01/09/many-states-use-decennial-census-data-to-distribute-state-money

The high net undercount of young children is not only a large problem but, unfortunately, a growing problem. As young children become more diverse, it is important to also focus on the high net undercounts of communities of color.

The gap between young children and adults also indicates that the issues of counting young children accurately in the census are different from issues for other age groups. For example, a large share of adults do not believe they are supposed to include young children in the census.[40] Given the high and growing net undercount of young children they deserve special attention in the census planning.

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[40] Griffin, D. And O'Hare, W.P. (2020) "Are Census Omissions of Young Children Due to Respondent Misconceptions about the Census?" International Journal of Social Science Studies, Vol 8. No. 6 November pp 59-72.
http://redfame.com/journal/index.php/ijsss/article/view/4994/5223