

Webinar and Paper Focused on the High Net Undercount of Young Black Children in
the Census Are Now Available

By

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March 23 to 29 has been selected as Black Census week by the NAACP (<https://naacp.org/2020-census/>) and a different segment of the Black population is the focus for each day. March 23rd was selected as the day to focus on counting young Black children in the 2020 Census. In response to that announcement, a webinar and a paper released this week provide vital information on counting young Black children in the 2020 Census.

On March 23rd, a webinar sponsored by the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law provided a lot of excellent information about the undercount of young Black children and the efforts underway to try and address this problem. The webinar was moderated by Fred McBride from the Lawyers Committee for Civil Rights Under Law. The first speaker in the webinar was Dr. William O'Hare who recounted the evidence about the high net undercount of young Black children in the Census. Among other things, Dr. O'Hare noted that the net undercount for Black children age 0 to 4 in the 2010 Census was 6.3 percent which is about twice the rate of Non-Hispanic White young children. The next speaker was Cemeré James, head of the National Black Child Development Institute, who addressed the issue of why the Census data is particularly important for Black children including the observation that many federal programs use census-related data to distribute \$1.5 trillion in federal funds each year. She also covered many of the recommendations about Census outreach her organization is

making to people in their network. The final speaker was Jasmine Jones with the Partnership for America's Children and the Count All Kids National 2020 Census Complete Count Committee for young children. Her presentation focused on the many resources that are available, through the Count All Kids website (<https://countallkids.org/>), as well as other organizations, to promote a complete and accurate count of young children the 2020 Census. A substantial share of the presentations focused on what people and organizations could do to adapt to the new landscape given the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic. A recording of webinar is available here (<https://zoom.us/rec/share/5-d1EZKsxjtOH6OSzkeYXJ87T7W1X6a8gXUarPoLxBnnbsDhACFFZvwNE81XtX0P>).

Also, this week a new paper on the Undercount of Young Black Children in the U.S. Census was posted on the Count All Kids website (<https://countallkids.org/resources/the-undercount-of-young-black-children-in-the-u-s-census/>). This paper focuses on several aspects of counting young Black children in the Census including the high net undercount in the 2010 Census, trends over time, geographic distribution of vulnerable young Black children, and a discussion of some of the reasons for the high net undercount of this population. The paper also includes a short section on the under-reporting of young Black children in major Census Bureau surveys such as the American Community Survey, the Current Population Survey, and the Survey of Income and Program Participation.

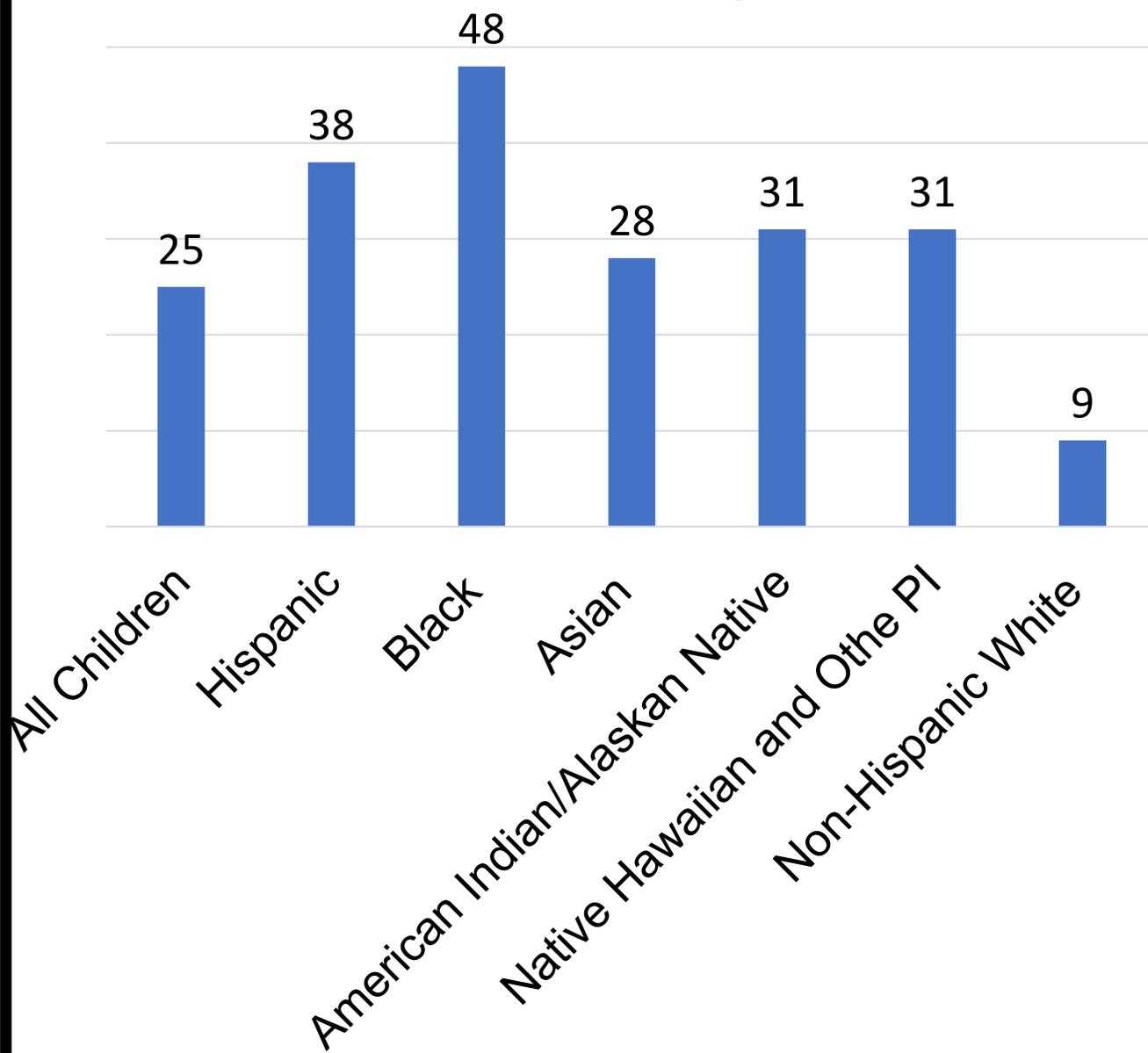
Among other things, the paper shows that almost one-quarter of low-income parents of young Black children are not sure young children are supposed to be included in the Census. This evidence may help explain why young Black children have

such a high net undercount in the Census. This finding also indicates the need for an expansive, robust, and focused education and outreach campaign to correct this widespread misunderstanding about who to include in the Census.

Also, recently released data from the Population Reference Bureau show young Black children are highly concentrated in census tracts where there is a very high risk of undercounting young children in the 2020 Census, based on the most recent data available. Data from that database, presented in Figure 1 below, show that almost half (48 percent) of young Black children residing in the 689 large counties included in the database live in census tracts with a very high risk of undercounting young children. This is a much higher percentage than any other race or Hispanic group. The PRB database is available at (<https://www.prb.org/new-strategies-to-reduce-undercount-of-young-children-in-2020-census/>).

The information in the webinar and paper underscore why communities with large numbers of young Black children should be a very high priority in the 2020 Census. If young Black children are again undercounted at a very high rate, it will mean ten more years where the communities with large numbers of young Black children do not get their fair share of political power and federal funding.

Figure 1. Percent of Children Under Age 5 Living in Census Tracts with a Very High Risk of Undercounting Young Children by Race and Hispanic Origin



Source: Analysis of Population Reference Bureau census tract database