

# Make Kids Count: Wake County

**Nearly 7,000 Wake County children under age 5 are at risk of not being counted in the 2020 Census.**

## Young Children are the Hardest to Count

Children under 5 are more likely than older children to live in tracts the U.S. Census Bureau considers hard-to-count (HTC).<sup>1</sup> These areas are often urban, with high poverty, complex housing units, and a high proportion of renters. In 2010, the national undercount rate for children 0-4 was 4.6%, more than twice the rate of any other age group. In Wake County, the young child undercount rate was 4.1%.<sup>2</sup> Work must begin now to ensure all families – especially those in HTC areas – participate in the 2020 Census and include their young children in the count.

**1 in 10**

Children under 5 in Wake County lives in a HTC census tract, putting them at risk for being missed.

**1 in 5**

Children under 5 in Raleigh lives in a HTC tract.<sup>3</sup>

## A Lower Count Means Less Investment

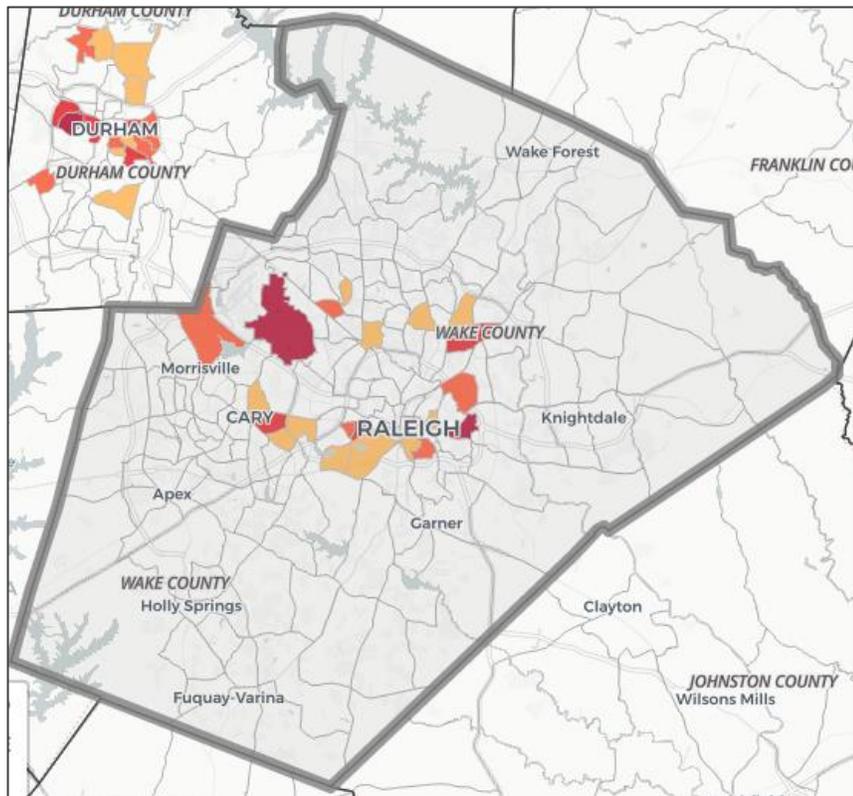
Each person missed in the Decennial Census forfeits a portion of the more than \$23 billion annually in federal investment to North Carolina. If young kids are not counted, fewer federal dollars will funnel to Wake County, making it difficult to meet the needs of a growing population.<sup>4</sup> Among the millions at stake to Wake County programs:

- \$6.8 million toward Child Care and Development,
- \$6.14 million toward the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP), and
- \$4.67 million toward Title IV-E Foster Care and Adoption Assistance.<sup>5</sup>

If missed in the count, young children also stand to suffer the most from reductions in funding to vital programs. Each person missed also represents a missed opportunity for fair political representation through Congressional apportionment and redistricting.

**Coordinated efforts must begin now to reach the families of young children, both within and outside of HTC census tracts, to ensure a successful count. The next decade of opportunity for Wake County children depends on it.**

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Tracts with 2010 mail return rates of 73% or less (in the bottom 20 percent of return rates nationwide) are shaded on the map (See "What is HTC?" for more info)

- 0 - 60% mail return rate
- 60 - 65%
- 65 - 70%
- 70 - 73%
- above 73% (no HTC tracts)

- Tracts counted using special Update/Enumerate method; they are hard-to-count but mail return rates not applicable

## Endnotes

<sup>1</sup> O'Hare, W.P. (2015). *The Undercount of Young Children in the U.S. Decennial Census*. Springer International Publishing.

<sup>2</sup> O'Hare, W.P. (2019). *Undercount of Young Children in the Census*. Presentation at NC Census Conference. Retrieved from [https://nmcndn.io/e186d21f8c7946a19faed23c3da2f0da/e33ebba15b7e45b7a7ca3024d892a391/files/Making-NC-Count-January-31-2019/Afternoon-Plenary/Bill\\_OHare\\_NC\\_young\\_child-FINAL.pdf](https://nmcndn.io/e186d21f8c7946a19faed23c3da2f0da/e33ebba15b7e45b7a7ca3024d892a391/files/Making-NC-Count-January-31-2019/Afternoon-Plenary/Bill_OHare_NC_young_child-FINAL.pdf).

<sup>3</sup> The estimated number of young children in Wake County's HTC census tracts is 6,926 of a total 65,687 children under 5 in Wake County. The estimated number of young children in Raleigh's HTC census tracts is 5,974 of a total 27,099 children under 5 in the city. Estimates produced by Steven Romalewski, Mapping Services Director, Center for Urban Research, CUNY Graduate Center, [www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us](http://www.censushardtocountmaps2020.us), and compiled and analyzed by William O'Hare. North Carolina population totals are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2012-2016 American Community Survey estimates. Wake County population totals are from the U.S. Census Bureau's 2013-2017 American Community Survey estimates.

<sup>4</sup> Reamer, A. (2019). *Counting for Dollars 2020: The Role of the Decennial Census in the Geographic Distribution of Federal Funds [North Carolina]*. The George Washington Institute of Public Policy, the George Washington University. Spending data analysis provided by Sean Moulton, Open Government Program Manager, Project on Government Oversight. Retrieved from [https://gwipp.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2181/f/downloads/IPP-1819-3%20CountingforDollars\\_NC.pdf](https://gwipp.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2181/f/downloads/IPP-1819-3%20CountingforDollars_NC.pdf).

<sup>5</sup> Wake County Government (2018). *Comprehensive Annual Financial Report: Fiscal Year 2018*. Retrieved from <http://www.wakegov.com/finance/annualreports/Pages/Fiscal-Year-2018.aspx>.