



of Greater Indianapolis

## HOW CAN WE VOTE? PART 2: 2020 CENSUS & GIRLS INC.

**Ages:**

Ages 15-18

**Description:**

Discussion on the US Census and what Girls Inc. is doing around mobilization.

**Time:**

30 minutes

**Materials Needed:**

- None

**Instructions**

Read over the information about voting, voter suppression, and voter access. Grab some friends and use the discussion questions to find ways YOU can get involved with our democratic process!

**The Basics of the US Census**



What is the census?

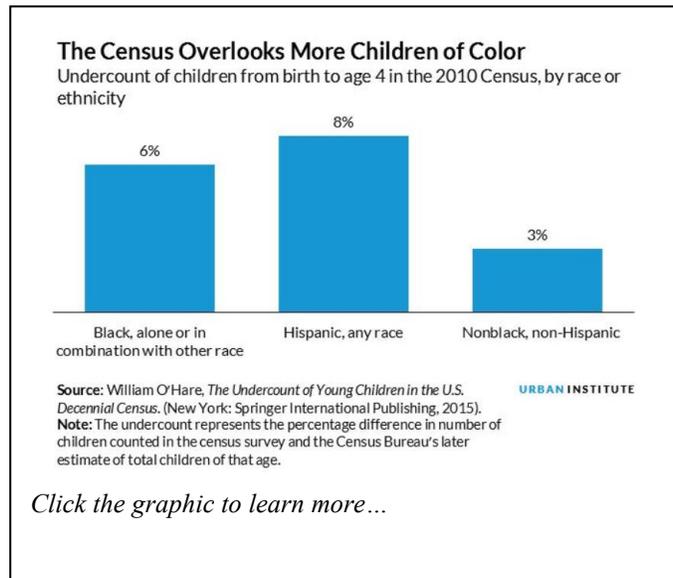
The census is a 10-questions survey that counts every resident in the United States, including citizens, non-citizens legal residents, non-citizens long-term visitors, and undocumented immigrants. The census is only conducted once every ten years.

U.S. residents will be able to fill out the US Census from March to May 2020. Starting in March, households will receive a letter with details on how to fill out the census online. Several additional reminders will be mailed. In April 2020, households that have not responded will be sent a paper census. In May 2020, home visits will begin for households not yet counted.

(From Girls Inc. Census Mobilization Toolkit)

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## Why does the census matter?



### Data Determines Crucial Funding

Data collected from the US Census will influence the fairness of democratic representation for hundreds of millions of people across the U.S. and will also determine the distribution of more than 900 billion dollars in federal funding for the next ten years.

The federal funding provides support for school lunch programs and children's health insurance to the apportionment of congressional representation, the federal government uses that data from the census to determine thousands of crucial policy decisions.

### Accurate Counting

Census data is used widely by both private (businesses) and public (government and nonprofit) spheres. If the count is not accurate, the children, families, and the communities we serve stand to lose a host of resources.

Groups that are likely to **not** be counted:

- Highly mobile persons (travelers, satellite workers, etc.)
- Racial and ethnic minorities
- Non-English speakers
- Low income persons
- Persons experiencing homelessness
- Undocumented immigrants
- Persons who distrust the government
- LGBTQ persons
- Persons with mental or physical disabilities
- Children and infants
- Persons who do not live in traditional housing

Use [this map](#) to find communities that have been undercounted in the past.

(From Girls Inc. Census Mobilization Toolkit)

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## How can Girls Inc. make a difference?



1. Educate peers, families, and your community about the importance of the US Census.
2. Provide access to computers with internet so people can complete their census.
3. Become a [paid census taker](#) (18 or older).
4. Share the [59 non-English resources](#) for non-English speakers.
5. Talk about it! Share on social media! Discuss at family dinners! Text your friends!

Follow us on Social Media!



**Use the discussion questions below to learn how YOU can become involved!**

Or, with your parent/guardian's permission, use the [#girlsincindy](#) to start a conversation on social media.



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# KEY FACTS ABOUT THE U.S. CENSUS

MORE INFO IS AVAILABLE AT [CENSUS.GOV](https://www.census.gov)

**girls  
inc.**

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## CRITICAL

**The census is a critical survey that is used to allocate federal funding and apportion political power. The census occurs every ten years and is happening this spring from March-May 2020.**



## EVERYONE

**Everyone including citizens, non-citizen legal residents, non-citizen long-term visitors, and undocumented immigrants need to be counted. This includes children.**



## NECESSARY

**It is necessary we ensure an accurate count so that political power and resources - everything from schools and hospitals to roads and community centers - are allocated fairly.**



## SAFE

**Filling out the census is safe. It is illegal to use any information obtained in a census form for anything other than an accurate count. There will be no citizenship question on the census.**



## UNDERCOUNTED

**Certain populations are historically undercounted including: low-income communities, communities of color, and children. When these communities are undercounted, they are deprived of equal political representation and access to resources.**



## SHARE

**Share information about the census with your circles and in undercounted communities. You can fill out the census online or on paper. If you don't have a computer, you can complete the census at a public library or at most community centers.**

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## ACTIVITY RECAP

### Discovery Questions:

- Have you heard of the US Census before? The last census was 2010, how old were you?
- Why is it important to fill out the US Census?
- How can you talk to your family, friends, and community members about the US Census?