

Public Comment for NAC 2019 Spring Meeting

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To: Census National Advisory Committee (CENSUS) <census.national.advisory.committee@census.gov>;

Good morning.

My name is Kim Keating and I am writing from ZERO TO THREE, a national nonprofit nonpartisan organization whose mission is to ensure that all babies and toddlers have a strong start in life. For almost 40 years, ZERO TO THREE has translated the science of early childhood development into useful knowledge and strategies for parents, practitioners, and policymakers. We are pleased to be a member of the leadership team of the Count All Kids Committee, the national complete count committee for young children. We appreciate this opportunity to offer comments addressing the young child undercount in the Census.

The Census is a crucial data source for our organization's work, but more importantly, it is a crucial tool for the allocation and availability of essential resources for very young children and their families across the country. However, as the Committee is aware, infants and toddlers are the most undercounted age group, with *as many 2 million missed in the 2010 Census*, and the undercount is particularly high among low-income families in hard to reach communities.

The 2020 Decennial Census will be the first in which the primary methods for distributing and completing the form will be electronic. I am writing today to ask that the Census Bureau test the 2020 form on browsers and smartphones *and* that operational planning includes proactive outreach in hard to reach communities where families with young children are more likely to have cell phones that do not include Internet capabilities. We

[\[i\]](#) know from our ZERO TO THREE survey of parents with young children that aside from relatives, friends, and their child's pediatrician, a majority of parents of young children seek out important information electronically. The survey was conducted among a nationally representative sample of 2,200 parents with young children, with oversampling of Hispanic, African-American and low-income parents. A key area of the study (and relevant to the upcoming 2020 Census enumeration) was focused on where and how parents preferred to receive information – specifically: 1) how often they get advice, information or guidance from different resources and 2) which digital media sources they prefer to receive information. The findings were as follows:

Resources from which they get advice, information or guidance

Preferred way of receiving digital information

- Google and other internet search engines (82%)
- Websites (82%)
- Blogs (71%)
- Social media (62%)
- Apps (54%)
- Text services (41%)
- Website (54%)
- Blog site (54%)
- Email (39%)
- Smartphone/tablet app (34%)
- Text messages (18%)

Source: ZERO TO THREE and Bezos Family Foundation (2016), "Tuning In: Parents of Young Children Tell Us What They Think, Know and Need."

While most families with young children obtain information electronically, many – particularly those in the hard to reach communities -- don't have access to the internet or computers in their homes, are dependent on smartphone only access to the Internet, or have cell phones (e.g., "HUD phones") that do not include Internet capabilities. This is reflected in the lower preference levels among our survey respondents for receiving important information through smartphone and text messages, 34% and 18% respectively, and in the research cited below.

As reported by HUD in the 2016 article, *Digital Inequality and Low-income Households*, in their *Evidence Matters* newsletter ^[ii]: "Low-income households have lower rates of in-home Internet connectivity compared to higher-income groups. Connectivity rates are particularly low among HUD-assisted renter households, who are also more likely to depend exclusively on smartphones and other handheld devices to access the Internet from home."

Low-income families with young children are least likely to have smartphones. We have compiled a list of the most common smartphones in use and their operating systems and provide that below for your reference. As is reflected in Pew Research Center's 2018 Mobile Fact Sheet ^[iii] findings, as many as 25% of adults with incomes below \$30,000 has only a cell phone that is limited to call and text messaging functioning.

Percentage of U.S. adults who own the following devices	Any cellphone	Smartphone	Cellphone, but not smartphone
Less than \$30,000	92%	67%	25%

Source: Pew Research Center, "Mobile Fact Sheet," 2018, <https://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>

The Pew Research Center reports, "A substantial majority of Americans are cellphone owners across a wide range of demographic groups. By contrast, smartphone ownership exhibits greater variation based on age, household income and educational attainment."

It is essential that young children be fully counted in the 2020 Census to ensure appropriate planning and allocation of resources and services that are critical for their families and their communities' health and well-being. We appreciate this opportunity to offer comments and look forward to hearing more in the months ahead about the Census Bureau's strategies to ensure a complete count.

Respectfully,

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Android phones

The top 10 Android phones in use in the U.S. all are from Samsung. In order of traffic share, these are the models:

Galaxy S8
Galaxy S7
Galaxy S9
Galaxy S8 Plus
Galaxy Note 8
Galaxy S9 Plus
Galaxy S7 Edge
Galaxy S6
Galaxy Note 9
Galaxy Note 3

Companies that sell inexpensive Android phones:

Alcatel, ASUS, Huawei, LG, Motorola, Nokia, Orbic/Reliance Communications, Samsung, ZTE

Android versions

Given the large number of Android phones, it may be more useful to test using versions of Android.

iPhones

The following versions of the iPhone each account for at least ½ of a percent of the iPhones currently in use:

XS
XS Max
XR
SE
8
8 Plus
7 Plus
6S
6S Plus
6
6 Plus
5S
5

iOS versions

The universe of different models of iPhones is much smaller. Still, the version information may be useful in determining what to test, as the software really is what's important. Apple's statistics are that as of February, 80% of all users of the App Store were on iOS 12, 12% were on iOS 11, and 8% were on earlier versions.

[i]

ZERO TO THREE and Bezos Family Foundation (2016), "Tuning In: Parents of Young Children Tell Us What They Think, Know and Need." Available at: <https://www.zerotothree.org/resources/1425-national-parent-survey-report>

[ii]

U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development (2016), "Digital Inequality and Low-income Households," in *Evidence Matters*, 13-21. Available at: <https://www.huduser.gov/portal/sites/default/files/pdf/EM-Newsletter-fall-2016.pdf>

[iii]

Pew Research Center, "Mobile Fact Sheet," 2018, <https://www.pewinternet.org/fact-sheet/mobile/>