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How will the census count the most undercounted age group?

By Richard Stradling

RALEIGH (AP) - The push is on to get people to fill out their 2020 census forms, particularly among groups that have traditionally been missed in previous censuses, such as African-Americans, renters and people who live in poverty.

But one of the groups most undercounted in the 2010 census will remain oblivious to the efforts to make sure they're included this time: children under the age of 5.

An estimated 4.6% of children from newborns through age 4 - about 1 million nationwide - were not counted in the last census, the highest percentage of any age group, according to the U.S. Census Bureau. It's not their fault, of course; young children rely on adults in their household to fill out the forms and to include them.

Some of the undercount can be explained by the fact that young children disproportionately belong to demographic groups that are difficult to reach. Latinos, for example, make up less than 10% of North Carolina's population but they now account for about 18% of the state's children under the age of 5, says Whitney Tucker, research director for NC Child, an advocacy group.

"We're seeing that our state is increasingly full of black and brown children who we know from previous census results we don't have a very good history of being able to count well," Tucker said during a conference call on children and the census last month.

It's not just that entire households of black and Hispanic residents are undercounted. Researchers looking into the undercount have determined that young children were being left out even when their parents and older siblings were listed on the forms.

"Most of the children missed in 2010 lived in a household that returned the census form," Arturo Vargas, executive director of the National Association of Latino Elected and Appointed Officials (NALEO) Educational Fund, said at a conference in Research Triangle Park last month. "So there was an adult filling out a form that made the decision, 'I am not going to put Judy or Juanito on this form.'"

The census is required by the U.S. Constitution to determine how seats in Congress are divided among the states. Because of its growing population, North Carolina is expected to pick up a 14th seat in the House of Representatives as a result of the 2020 census, at the expense of a slower-growing state like Michigan or New York. Tucker said if the estimated 25,000 young children missed by the 2010 census in North Carolina had been counted, the state would likely already have that 14th seat.

Census numbers are also used to help determine where the federal government spends hundreds of billions of dollars for health care, education, transportation and housing. That's why advocacy groups and state and local governments have created campaigns to try to ensure everyone is counted in their areas.

"There is a great deal at stake," says Machel Sanders, the state Secretary of Administration and head of the N.C. Complete Count Commission. "We cannot afford an undercount of the state's residents."

NO ONE REASON CHILDREN LEFT OFF

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau attempts to count everyone living in the United States and its territories on April 1. On March 12, the bureau was set to begin sending out cards to every household in the country, inviting them to fill out a census form online, by phone or by mail.

A household includes everyone who occupies a house, apartment, mobile home or room as their usual place of residence on April 1, whether they're related to each other or not. A child living with her grandparents would be included in the household; a daughter away at college would not.

While the 10-year census is the country's most comprehensive effort to count everyone, there are always flaws. Using birth certificates, surveys and other public records the Census Bureau and other researchers can estimate what kinds of people were more likely to be miscounted.

Researchers have found that some groups are actually over-represented in the census, including non-Hispanic whites and homeowners. Among the people who may be tallied twice are owners of weekend or vacation homes who fill out two forms, or children at college who are counted in their dorms and also erroneously listed by their parents at home.

The census misses adults, too. But the undercount of adults has declined over the decades, even as the number of young children missed has actually grown, according to demographer William P. O'Hare, former director of the KIDS COUNT project at the Annie E. Casey Foundation and author of a book on census undercounts. An estimated 1.5% of both adults and young children were left out of the 1980 census, O'Hare says, but since then the net undercount for young children has tripled, while adults as a whole now tend to be overcounted.

There's no single reason why people don't include young children on census forms, O'Hare and others say.



Nathan Aragaw, 4, mimics his mother Mule Haile, of Washington, as she instructs him on how to apply hand sanitizer between his fingers and on the backs of his hands, Monday, March 16, after playing soccer at a public park in northwest Washington. Haile and her extended family are taking turns watching each other's children so the others can work while schools are closed due to coronavirus precautions. Haile says she may stop taking the children to parks outside due to coronavirus fears. (AP Photo/Jacquelyn Martin)

After police shoot him, North Carolina man faces charges

By Shameka Dudley-Lowe and Jonathan Drew

RALEIGH (AP) - A police shooting that wounded a suspect during a foot chase in North Carolina sparked protests early March 11 hundreds who demanded answers and burned a flag outside the governor's mansion.

Firearms-related charges were later filed against the man, who was wounded in the encounter with police in the city of Raleigh. Body camera footage released Wednesday afternoon shows him running toward an officer during a foot chase with a black object that police identified as a gun.

Officers responded to a 911 call Tuesday evening by a man at a restaurant in eastern Raleigh who described a group of men "talking trash" and one of them "flashing" a gun, according to a recording of the call. Police Chief Cassandra Deck-Brown said arriving officers spotted 26-year-old Javier Torres, who matched the description of the man with the gun.

Torres ran and was chased by officers who repeatedly ordered him to stop and drop the gun, Deck-Brown said. Torres was shot in the abdomen by an officer who had joined the chase, the chief said, adding that the suspect was running directly toward that officer and would not drop his gun.

The extent of Torres' injuries wasn't clear. Wake County District Attorney Lorrin Freeman said in an email Wednesday that Torres remained in hospital care but could not elaborate on his condition.

On Wednesday afternoon, Raleigh Police issued a statement that Torres was charged with altering a gun's serial number, "going armed to the terror of the public" and resisting or obstructing officers. It wasn't clear if he had an attorney, and calls to a listing for a possible relative rang busy.

A handgun, as described by the 911 caller, was located at the scene of the shooting, police said. No officers were injured.

Police body camera footage shows officers arrive in cruisers in response to the 911 call and identify Torres based on his

Cyber attack on Durham County halts real estate transactions

(AP) - A cyber attack on the county of Durham in North Carolina has stalled real estate transactions and prevented some people from moving into homes.

A local newspaper reported March 13 that real estate department in Durham County's Register of Deeds remains offline.

That means that some real estate transactions cannot be recorded.

Attorney Maggie Davis said home buyers are being put in tough situations if they can't move into their new home.

Jon Fletcher, a broker-in-charge at RE/MAX United in Chapel Hill, said there's been a "ripple effect" that impacts movers, cleaners and painters who've been hired as well as the transfer of utilities between owners.

The county says it's still working to restore services.

description. A black object, which police say was the gun, is seen in his waistband and he holds a pizza in his hand. He takes off on foot, and officers begin to chase him, the video shows.

"Drop the gun! Drop the gun! Drop it right now!" an officer behind him yells.

Another officer approaches from another angle, and fires a shot from a few feet away as Torres runs in his direction, the video shows. Police say Torres was holding the gun in his right hand, though the blurry black object is hard to discern in the footage. Officers are seen giving first aid to Torres as they wait for an ambulance.

Deck-Brown had directed her department to ask a judge to release the footage, and the judge approved the request.

Deck-Brown spoke to reporters at an early-morning news conference, saying she wanted to "address some misinformation that is circulating on social media" about Torres' age and the circumstances of the shooting.

"The body-worn camera footage will show that some of those statements were inaccurate," she said, adding, "As a result of the reckless and false information that has been spread on social media, a number of spontaneous protests occurred during the night which resulted in minor damage to property in and around the downtown area."

The scene Tuesday evening quickly became chaotic, according to police radio recordings released Wednesday afternoon. After calling in the gunshot wound, one or more officers can be heard on the recordings saying "large crowd forming," "we need multiple units of crowd control" and finally, "we need every available unit possible."

Footage from news outlets showed that a large crowd gathered and began street protests that continued into early Wednesday, moving to the police chief's home, where people demanded she come outside, and the governor's mansion, where a U.S. flag was taken and later burned in the street. WRAL-TV footage showed a flag burning in the street near the governor's mansion and an empty flagpole in front of the residence.

"Whose streets? Our Streets!" demonstrators chanted, as lines of protesters and police faced off in places around the state capital.

Community activist Kerwin Pittman said he spoke to witnesses after the shooting, and they told him Torres was unarmed, something the police chief later denied. Similar witness accounts saying the suspect also appeared to be a teenager had circulated on social media.

"They say he was carrying a pizza box," Pittman told The Associated Press by phone early Wednesday morning.

"The city is fed up," Pittman said. "We feel there is always something happening with the Raleigh Police Department. We feel like they are brutalizing us," he added.

He said the protests would continue in a community that has long sought police transparency but faced an uphill battle.

Rolanda Byrd, whose 24-year-old son, Akiel Denkins was shot by Raleigh police while running from an officer in 2016, said before the police chief's news conference that she should come out to meet with protesters: "She needs to be out here to support her black community, right now, tonight."

This shooting happened in the same area where Soheil Antonio Mojarrad, 30, was fatally shot in April 2019 by police who said he was wielding a knife. In that case the officer was wearing a body camera but it was not activated. According to an autopsy, Mojarrad was shot eight times. The Wake County District attorney declined to pursue criminal charges against the Raleigh police officer in that case.

Dudley-Lowe reported from Atlanta.



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