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Texas' Child Population: More Kids, More Diversity, More Responsibility

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Two-thirds of

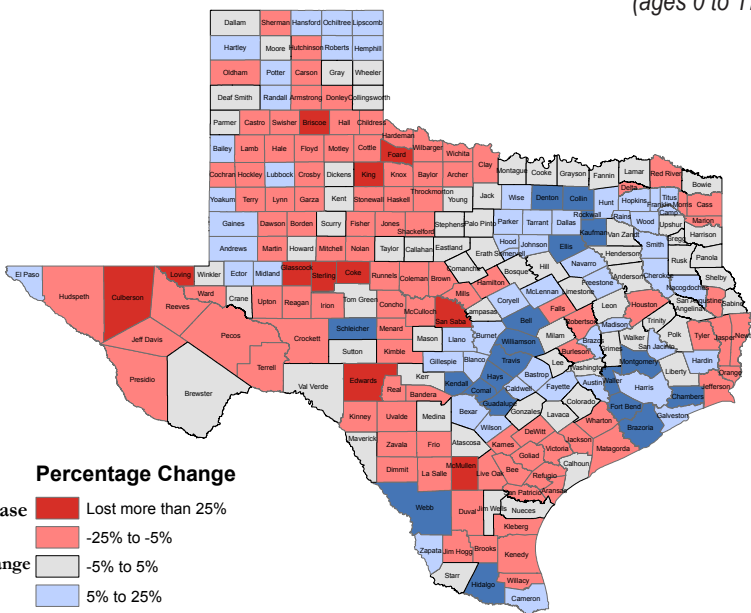
Texas' child population growth happened in just eight urban counties.

Every 10 years, the U.S. Census Bureau counts every man, woman, and child, allowing us to track the growth of our national, state, and local populations. Between 2000 and 2010, the U.S. population grew to nearly 309 million people, increasing by 9.7 percent. But Texas grew at twice the national rate, expanding by 20.6 percent to more than 25 million people. A large part of Texas' growth is due to an increase in our child population (ages 0 to 17), expanding from 5.9 million to 6.9 million children in the last ten years, an increase of 16.6 percent since 2000. In fact, the total U.S. child population grew by only 1.8 million children from 2000 to 2010—and more than half of that growth occurred in Texas (for more on state by state comparisons, see this recent [Brookings report](#)).¹

The growth of Texas' total child population does not tell the full story. To get an accurate picture of the changes in our child population, we must look at the changes in each county. Although Texas has experienced an increase in the total number of children, more than half of our counties—and nearly all of them rural—actually have fewer kids now than they did in 2000.² In contrast, more than two-thirds of the child population growth happened in just eight urban counties (Bexar, Collin, Denton, Fort Bend, Harris, Hidalgo, Tarrant, and Travis).

Total Child Population Change Between 2000 and 2010

(ages 0 to 17)



Percentage Change

- Decrease
 - Lost more than 25%
 - 25% to -5%
- Little Change
 - 5% to 5%
- Increase
 - 5% to 25%
 - Gained more than 25%

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Source: CPPP analysis of 2000 SF3 data and 2010 redistricting data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Texas' Child Population



Click here

to view changes by race/ethnicity for each of Texas' 254 counties.

Not only are there major geographic changes, but the faces of Texas children are changing too. Across the state, the number of Hispanic and Asian children has increased, while the number of White children has actually decreased. Over 200 of Texas' 254 counties have seen a decline in the number of White children since 2000, contributing to a 7 percent decline across the state. Overall, Hispanics account for the majority of the increase in children across the state, but their numbers are not growing in every county. And though Asian children represent a small portion of the under-18 population in Texas, the Asian child population has increased at a faster rate than that of Hispanics, African Americans, or Whites.

According to former State Demographer Steve Murdock, "the future of Texas is tied to its minority populations. And how well they do is how well Texas will do." If we do not take into account these population changes as we plan for the future of our communities and state, we'll be much less successful.³

Race	2000	2010	# Change	% Change
Hispanic	2,386,765	3,317,777	931,012	39%
White	2,507,147	2,322,661	-184,486	-7%
Black	732,807	810,543	77,736	11%
Asian	139,226	231,458	92,232	66%
Other	120,814	183,385	62,571	52%
Total	5,886,759	6,865,824	979,065	17%

Source: CPPP analysis of 2000 Decennial Census Data, Summary File 3 and 2010 Decennial Census Redistricting Data.

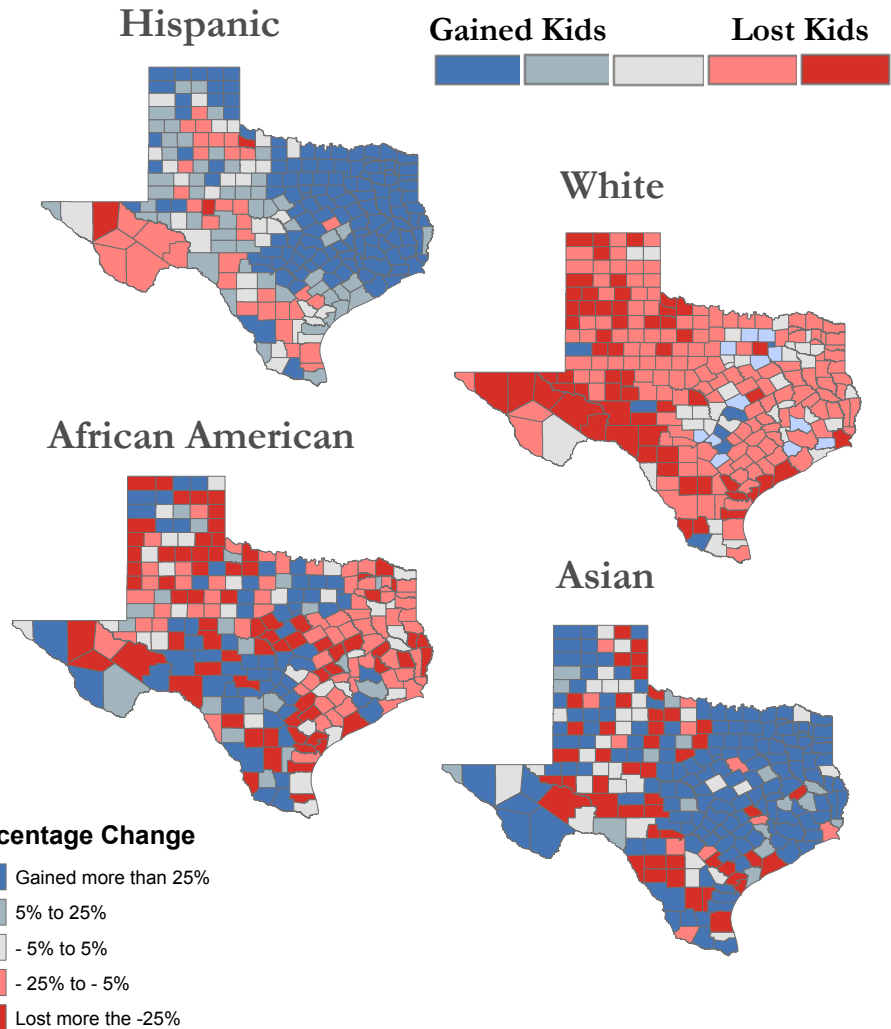
What is the Impact of Immigration?

Data from the Census Bureau shows that the vast majority (96 percent) of children living in Texas are in fact citizens.⁴ In fact, the pace of international migration to Texas has declined in recent years.⁵ Of the total growth that occurred in Texas during the last decade, three-fourths was the result of more births than deaths (54 percent) and people moving from other states (22 percent), with only 24 percent from international migration, which includes both documented and undocumented child and adult immigrants.⁶

Regardless of the citizenship status of a child or parent, children growing up in Texas, as Texans, need to be educated, healthy, and prepared for our state's 21st century workforce (see our [Common Sense Principles for Immigration Reform](#)). Unfortunately, high school graduation, college degrees, and median earnings are significantly lower for Hispanic and African American Texans as compared to White, non-Hispanic Texans. If we do not improve educational outcomes for our growing populations, the prosperity of Texas will surely suffer.⁷

Congress uses the census to allocate more than \$400 billion annually to the states.

Child Population Change by Race Between 2000 and 2010



Source: CPPP analysis of 2000 SF3 data and 2010 redistricting data from the U.S. Census Bureau.

Why Does Child Population Change Matter?

The changing population distribution shifts power and influence in the U.S. For example, the number of seats allocated to each state in the U.S. House of Representatives is determined by the decennial Census. In 1990 Texas gained three seats and an additional two in 2000. As a result of growth between 2000 and 2010, Texas gained four seats in the U.S. House, giving it 36 seats out of 435 total, strengthening Texas' influence over national policy decisions that affect children across the country. If our growth continues through the next decade, Texas will likely gain congressional influence again in 2020.

Congress also uses the census to determine the allocation of more than \$400 billion in federal funds annually to the states.⁸ Since 2000, Texas has received over \$30 billion a year in federal funds that are based on data collected in the

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census. By learning more about the size and make-up of local populations, governments can assess a community's needs for critical public infrastructure like schools, health centers, and highways. Apart from large infrastructure projects, federal funds can be especially important for low- and middle-income households. The Census informs 10 years of decisions about Medicaid, community health programs, public housing assistance, transit programs, education, and Head Start—each critically important in supporting working families and their children across Texas.

What Does This All Mean?

Texas' growing child population is an asset, not a liability, as long as we educate them and enable them to contribute to our economy. With many young workers for every older Texan, the old and young are connected. Taxes from older Texans support education for our younger population. And a growing, highly-educated young workforce will support Social Security and provide necessary services for our growing elderly population.⁹

Unfortunately, Texas does not have a track record of planning for the future. For example, Texas budget writers do not always budget for population growth or increased costs. Texas faces a serious revenue shortfall due to the Great Recession and poor fiscal choices in our past.^{10,11} Simply put, we do not have enough money in our budget to meet our most basic needs. (See our [Budget Resources](#) for more information.)

We must take a balanced approach to meeting the short and long-term needs for our children and our state. An expanding child population is only good for Texas if we [invest in kids](#) now. We do big things in Texas—but that will only continue if our future innovators and leaders are healthy and educated.

We're 25 million—including nearly 7 million children of many races and ethnicities—in this together.

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For More Information

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Endnotes

- 1 Frey, William H. (2011). America's diverse future: Initial glimpses at the U.S. child population from the 2010 Census. The Brookings Institution. Retrieved 5-9-11 from http://www.brookings.edu/~media/Files/rc/papers/2011/0406_census_diversity_frey/0406_census_diversity_frey.pdf.
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- 5 Potter, L. (2011). Texas: Demographic Characteristics and Trends Among Young Texans (Slide 6). Presentation to The Texas Association of Chicanos in Higher Education, retrieved 3-29-11 from <http://txsdc.utsa.edu/presentations/>.
- 6 Murdock, S. (2011). See note 3.
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- 8 Reamer, A., & Carpenter, R. B. (2010). Counting for dollars: The role of the decennial census in the distribution of federal funds. Brookings Institute. Retrieved 3-29-11 from http://www.brookings.edu/reports/2010/0309_census_dollars.aspx.
- 9 Murdock, S. (2011). See note 3.
- 10 McCown, F.S., Lavine, D., & DeLuna Castro, E. (Aug. 2010). A balanced approach to meeting the needs of Texas. Austin, TX: Center for Public Policy Priorities. Retrieved <http://www.cppp.org/research.php?aid=1006&cid=6>.
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TEXAS KIDS COUNT

CPPP is the Texas home to KIDS COUNT, a national and state-by-state effort to track the status of children in the U.S. funded by the Annie E. Casey Foundation. In addition to publishing annual reports, the center also offers access to an interactive, comprehensive database of county-by-county and state data on child well-being.