

# TOOLKIT



## CENSUS 2020

Getting Our Community Counted!



# INFORM. ENGAGE. ACT.

## What's in this toolkit?

- Information about the Census
- Organizing Tips and Tricks
- Templates, Frequently Asked Questions, and More!

# Supporting the Census is Supporting Our Community.

From March 2020 through August 2020, the federal government will be administering the census—a count of every resident in the United States.



**The census determines critical representation and funding for every city in the country and we need your help to make sure everyone in Detroit gets counted.**

Your experience and knowledge of your community are crucial to the success of the 2020 U. S. Census and the future of the city of Detroit. You are receiving this tool kit because of your demonstrated interest and involvement in supporting your neighborhood. CitizenDetroit has created this package with you in mind to ensure you have the tools needed to get your community counted in the 2020 Census.

This tool kit will equip you with the essential items to reach out and communicate with neighbors. The materials include tips and methods for effective outreach which you can adapt for any group you plan to engage. **Inside you'll find:**

- FAQ's
- Basic census information
- Community organizing tips and tricks
- Facts vs. Myths
- Resources and worksheets

**Use this tool kit to put together your outreach and engagement plan to encourage your neighbors to complete the census.** Share with us how many people you've engaged, and we'll be able to paint a picture of the impact you and your fellow organizers have had across the city.

**Thank you for being a change agent and helping to ensure that everyone is counted for the betterment of our city.**



## What's the Census?

The Census is a count of all the people living in the United States —no matter, what age, race, or citizenship status. The federal government is required to count all people because the U.S. Constitution says that the amount of tax supported programs and services AS WELL AS the number of congresspeople a community will have is based on the number of people living there.

**Every 10 years our communities are shaped by the number of people counted by the Census—the number of people who agree to completing a confidential, 10 question form.**

The census asks demographic questions such as race, the number of children in the home, and income so, there is an accurate picture of who lives in different communities and their needs.

- ★ **Census data determines how many tax dollars are provided for state, county and community programs** such as free student lunches, Section 8 housing, road maintenance, Head Start, and more.
- ★ **Census results determine how many federal representative seats each state gets**, and the number of seats is the number of votes a state has on issues of federal law.
- ★ **Census data is used to redraw boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts** based on population shifts, impacting which candidates you can vote for and what communities they're from.

So, you can see how important the census is for the support and representation of our communities.

**Starting March 1, 2020** there are four ways to be counted in the Census and all of them are available in multiple languages, so you and your neighbors can choose what's best for you.



By Mail



By Phone



In person with  
trained Census staff



Online

# Myths and Facts

Many people don't understand the importance of being counted in the census and the myths surrounding the census create more confusion. Here are some common myths and the actual facts you, and everyone should know.

MYTH: It will take too long to complete.

**FACT: The census is 10 questions and could take as little as 10 minutes.**

You can compare this to waiting in a doctor's office, cooking a quick breakfast, or taking a trip to the corner store.



MYTH: I won't be able to understand the form.



**FACT: The form only asks about who you are—your age, occupation, and so on—and there is a lot of assistance available if you have a reading or language issue.**

You can complete the form in the language of your choice on paper or online by yourself, with the assistance of a census taker, or even over the phone with someone reading the questions to you.



*Later in this tool kit, you'll create your own talking points about the census based on what you know your community needs to hear. You may want to include some myths and facts.*

MYTH: The government will use my information to hurt me.

**FACT: By law, information reported on the census is confidential and when reported, cannot be connected to any one individual.**



Your identity is separated from your responses.

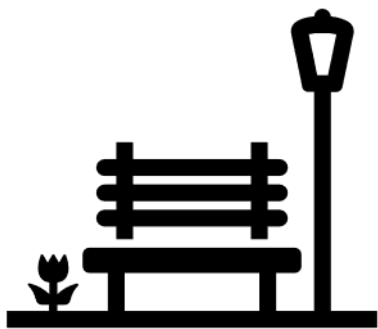
Responses cannot be shared with immigration or law enforcement agencies. Responses also cannot be used to determine eligibility for government benefits. Responses are used to produce statistics, such as the percent of a population that is a certain race or has a certain income level.

MYTH: The census doesn't affect me.

**FACT: The census affects EVERYONE and has a huge impact on our communities.**

Population size and demographics are used to make many decisions because **service and resources go where there is need.**

The need for **government grants** that support community development is determined with this information. **Businesses** decide to build factories or offices where there are people to employ. Local governments plan new **schools and hospitals** where there are children and the need for care. Developers plan new **homes** and support **neighborhoods**. And finally, data is used to support **community initiatives**—local nonprofits and community development corporations use census information to design programs and strengthen grant applications.



**"You cannot change  
any [community]  
unless you take  
responsibility for it,  
unless you see yourself  
as belonging to it, and  
responsible for  
changing it."**

**-Grace Lee Boggs**

# What's in this Tool Kit?

Now that you know a little more about the census, you can use the rest of this tool kit to engage and organize your community. Your work is essential to the support of our city and neighborhoods.

<b>Creating Your Plan of Action.....</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Developing Your Community Outreach.....</b>	<b>12</b>
<b>How Do I Talk to People About the Census?.....</b>	<b>19</b>
<b>Frequently Asked Questions.....</b>	<b>24</b>
<b>Additional Resources.....</b>	<b>26</b>



*Throughout this toolkit, there are documents you can use in your work. Write on them, tear them out, photo copy them—whatever you need to do to make them useful!*

# *Did you know* you're a **Community Organizer** ?

## Com•mu•ni•ty Or•gan•iz•er

Noun, a person who coordinates efforts with local residents to promote the interests of their community.

Maybe you're new to this or maybe you've been doing it for a long time. Either way, encouraging your community to complete the census is a form of community organizing. As you start to develop your plan of action to organize your community, consider these **essential engagement tips**.

### Know Your Audience's Needs

- Identify groups of people based on what they have in common—do they work full time, are they members of organizations, do they have physical disabilities, etc.
- Consider the best way to connect with each group such as over the phone, in person or at an event.
- Some groups work best with incentives. What kinds are specific to the group?

### Use Helpful Tools

- Use a workplan so you can see your goals and progress.
- Maintain your lists of people in writing as you plan your engagement; make sure you have sign-in sheets at events and can track your planning vs. activities.
- Develop talking points that work best for you along with other informational materials for your audience.

### Stay Connected

- Follow up, follow up, follow up—check back in with people who seemed unsure.
- Keep contact information for people you've newly met.
- Invite people who have committed to complete the census to help get others to do the same.
- Always make the direct ask, "Will you complete the census?"
- Always say, "Thank You" for your time, for your help, for your support.



The census can be completed from March 2020 through August 2020 so your efforts should be targeted for that window. **Let's get started!**



*Use a calendar for all your planning. The one below outlines how the federal government will be engaging people and includes where your work might happen. Follow this and use regular lined paper to create your own plans.*

<b>Get Detroit Counted 2020! Project Calendar</b>										
	Jan	Feb	March 1	March 12	March 20	April	May 1	June	July	Aug
<b>CitizenDetroit Census Training</b>										
<b>CitizenDetroit Toolkit Available</b>										
U. S. Census postcards mailed										
Self response occurs										
Internet self response occurs										
Identify opportunities to engage people										
<b>Reach out to your contacts</b>										
<b>Schedule your events / meetings</b>										
<b>Obtain materials</b>										
U. S. Mailing w/online survey info and paper survey										
U. S. Mailing to non-respondents										
<b>Conduct outreach</b>										
<b>Track events/ participants</b>										
<b>Provide CitizenDetroit participant data</b>										
At home census takers										
<b>Conduct any follow-up to get people to fill it out</b>										

# What Kind of Engagement Should I Do?

Remember our essential engagement tips? One of them is to know your audience. The types of engagement—or tactics— you decide to do should be based upon your audience. Over the next few pages, you'll start thinking about WHO to engage, so for now **we'll start with a brainstorm.** Then, you can compare your ideas with your lists of people and start to really form your plan.

In the stars below write down some of your ideas about how you can encourage people to complete the 2020 Census. We've provided a few, now you write down as many other ideas as you can think of.

Canvass/Knock Doors

Host an information session at home

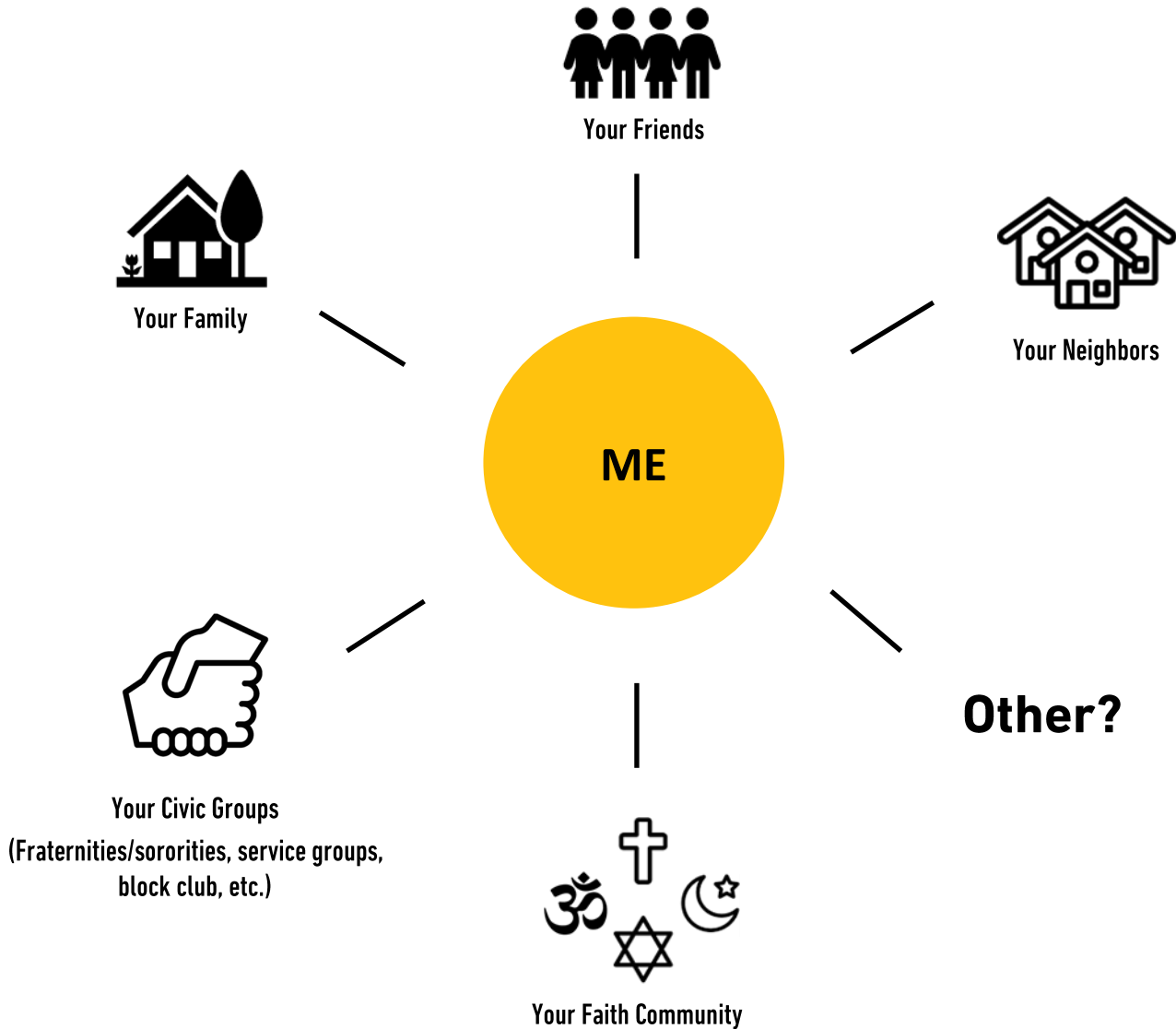
Speak at community meetings

Text people

Send e-mails

# Who Will I Talk to About the Census?

On the next pages, you'll find worksheets to help you think who in your network you might talk to about the census—both individuals and groups/organizations. Below is a relationship map, a tool that helps you think about all the different kinds of people you know who you might engage.



There are some groups of people who need even more engagement because they are frequently undercounted.



*Communities of color, low-income households, immigrants, those distrustful of the government, people who move frequently, and young children (whose parents are responsible for counting them on their form) miss out on being counted.*

**Do you know anyone who's a part of one or more of these groups?**

# How Do I Connect with My Network?



1

**Start with who you know really well**—the people you are closest to are likely to be most receptive to your message—plus they’re easier to get to attend a meeting or event, and for you to visit.

2

**Think about who is physically close to you**—these are the people you see all the time in your neighborhood or in the places you go often. Do you have kids in school and spend a lot of time in the building? Do you play basketball regularly at a rec center or gym? What about your hair salon, barber or coffee shop? Even the people at work, if you’re comfortable. There are lots of people you talk to and interact with every day outside of your close friends and family.

3

**Groups and organizations allow you to connect with many people at one time**—the organizations you’re a member of are easiest to access but if you’re familiar with others, or know people who are members elsewhere, you can connect to those organizations as well.

**Note:** When planning to work with groups, organizations, or even with new communities, it’s helpful if you’re familiar with people who are sometimes referred to as **GATEKEEPERS**—people who either lead or are very trusted and have influence with the group and who advocate for the needs of the group. Think of a church for example, the pastor is a gatekeeper but what about deacons, ministry leaders, or even a highly respected church elder? Connecting with those individuals can help you connect with the rest of the congregation.





# YOUR ORGANIZING NETWORK

Use this worksheet to **start thinking about who is in your network** and who you could engage. Sometimes we think we don't know many people until we start making a list. Consider how open or receptive the person will be to the information, then you can create targeted engagement strategies.

NAME	PHONE	ADDRESS	HOW RECEPTIVE?
Example: John Smith	313-863-0000	00000 Snowden Detroit, MI 48235	Very



# YOUR ORGANIZING NETWORK

**Working with organizations allows you to reach more people at one time.** Use this worksheet to think about which organizations you're connected to—block clubs, community organizations, sororities/fraternities, etc. Then you can create targeted engagement strategies. Also, consider how many people the organization can reach. You can plan your engagement from there.

ORGANIZATION	LEADER OR	PHONE	HOW	REACH
Example: My church	Leader Community Outreach Ministry	313-995-0000	Somewhat	100

# *Now Put Your Ideas Together!*

Match your people with the right tactics for them and for you and your budget (see page 26 for ideas about budget).

**Person or Group**

**Type of Engagement**



## How Do I Present at Community Meetings?

There are lots of community meetings happening around town—block clubs and neighborhood associations, business associations and greek organizations—that you may want to visit. For each of these, remember they have their own schedules and set agendas for the meeting so it's important to reach out ahead of time to find out their procedures and be prepared when you attend.

### ★Prepare an Outline

You'll likely have a set amount of time to speak at the meeting, so having a prepared list of what you'll discuss will ensure you're ready for anything.

### ★Use “Talking Points”

Your talking points are the important facts to hit and often the catchy things people will remember so make sure they're included in your plan.

### ★Gather Materials Based on the Audience

You can always bring flyers and handouts, but think about what the audience might uniquely need—maybe FAQ's over an info sheet, or a sample census form. It all depends on the group and what you think they need.

### ★Conduct Activity, If Possible

If you have an activity to facilitate, ask the meeting host if you can have more time on the agenda to conduct it. Groups you have particularly good relationships with may be more open to the idea.



### Use a Sign-In Sheet or Tracker for Follow Up

People are more likely to complete the census the more they hear about it and when they're directly asked to commit to doing it. Tracking how many people you talk to is important so you know your reach AND following up when possible is also important.



# How Do I Host My Own Informational?

You can have people over to your house for coffee and light refreshments, or organize your event elsewhere.

## 1) Confirm Location

Select a location depending on your budget and the number of people you want to invite.

## 2) Send Invites

Invites can go out any number of ways: a facebook event, email, text, phone calls, or you can mail invitations. If you're having an open event, you can also post flyers.



## 3) Prepare an Agenda

An agenda is simply a list of what will happen at the meeting/event. Consider who will speak, what activities you might do, and in what order.

## 4) Have sign-in/tracking sheet

Review your sign-in sheet after the event and have an accurate count of who attended, plus a list to use to track who made commitments and who needs follow up!

## 5) Gather sufficient amount of materials

Handouts with information and reminders are great materials for people to take home and put on their refrigerators or share with others.

## 6) Provide simple refreshments

No need to use your whole budget on food. Guests appreciate finger foods, snacks and beverages. It makes people feel welcomed and considered.

## 7) Use “Talking Points”

Giving people accurate information is critical. It ensures that people can trust you. Plus, we all need accurate information to make good decisions for ourselves. Talking points help you prepare to give accurate information.

## 8) Conduct Activity, If You Can

If you have the time and materials, do a little activity to get people talking and engaged.

**The U.S. Census is**

**10 Questions**

**you can complete in**

**10 minutes**

**and help determine the next**

**10 years**

**for the city of Detroit**

# How Do I Talk to People About the Census?

You can use talking points to share critical information or a script to make it easier when canvassing or making phone calls. Check out the sample script and talking points below.

## SAMPLE SCRIPT

**Good \_\_ (time of day) \_\_\_\_\_, this is your neighbor \_ (your name) \_\_\_\_\_ .** I am reaching out to you to discuss the importance of participating in this year's United States Census. As Detroiters, it is essential that we are all counted. This year there are four ways you can participate in the census — via the phone, on-line, traditional paper form that you mail in, or with a Census Taker who comes to your home.

### **Do you plan to complete the Census form?**

**Yes**, respond: "Thank you. Have a great day." No further discussion required.

**No**, ask next questions:

Do you have any questions about the census that would help you make a decision?

Would you like more information about the process?

### **What is the Census?**

The U. S. Constitution requires a census every 10 years and covers the entire country, state, city and town -- everyone living here.

### **Why does the Census matter to Detroit?**

- ★ Our representatives fight for tax dollars to be allocated to programs for our city.
- ★ Congressional and state legislative district boundaries impact the representation of our city.
- ★ Census results are used to reapportion the House of Representatives, determining how many seats each state gets, which ultimately impacts the city.

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**What do you think is the most important information that will compel people to complete the census? Fill it in below.**

- 
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- 
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# Using Your Script with Family, Friends, and Neighbors

## ***Nothing Like a Good Old Fashioned Phone Call***

Even though texting is popular, many people appreciate a phone call. A phone call also has the benefit of connecting you directly with your audience for a conversation. Texts and emails on the other hand, allow you to send a message but the person may not respond limiting the opportunity for discussion. If you're going to conduct "phone bank" type outreach:



- ★ Set aside blocks of time in your schedule to just call people.
- ★ Review your network list (page 13) and determine which people you're going to call.
- ★ Sit in a quiet uninterrupted space.
- ★ Keep additional notes and Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ's) with accurate information near by.
- ★ Don't rush your calls. Be warm and open to a conversation. The more information you're able to give, the more likely it is you'll get the support of the person you called.

## ***Bumping Into People Around Town***

Your script can also be used when you happen to see people you know while running errands, going to meetings, or any of your other usual activities.

- ★ Simplify your script to a 2 minute "elevator speech".
- ★ Keep it natural and try starting with a question, "Did you know we fill out the Census this year?" or "Are you planning to fill out the Census?"
- ★ If they're interested in more information, arrange to meet in a quiet accessible space like a coffee shop, home, the local coney island, etc.
- ★ Offer additional materials.



*You can also use your script to send texts and e-blasts if you want to get information out fast and to a lot of people you know.*

# Track Your Outcomes!

How many people have you reached? How successful have you been? Write it down and you'll know how to plan for the future.

2020 Census Outreach Tracking Sheet				
Activity	Date	# Attended	# Committed to Complete	Follow Up?
Example: Coffee Hour at Home	3/10/2020	12	9	Yes-by 4/15/2020

**"It always seems  
impossible until it  
is done."**

**-Nelson Mandela**

# *Congratulations!*

**You went through the pages of this toolkit, you have everything you need to activate your census engagement plan!**

The next few pages are additional information about the census, sample activities, as well as templates (including forms and flyers) that you can use in your work to get our communities counted.



# Census FAQ's

## What is the Census?

Every 10 years, the U.S. Constitution requires a head count of every person living in the United States, regardless of age, immigration status, or type of residency. The census population count determines political and legislative representation and how federal funding is distributed to states and cities.

## What questions are on the Census?

The 2020 Census form will have a short set of 10 questions about the number of people living in your household, their ages, race, ethnicity, marital status, and housing type.

## Are My Answers Safe and Secure?

By law, **your information is confidential**. The Census Bureau collects data for statistical purposes only and cannot share or publish any household specific census data including: name, address, Social Security number, or phone number. The Census Bureau will not identify your household, any person in your household, or business.

## Who Gets Counted?

People living in apartments, homes, prisons, college dorms, shelters or living outdoors are all counted based on where they live on April 1, 2020. Children living in foster care or with grandparents are counted where they live and sleep most of the time on that same date.

## Do I have to be a citizen to be counted?

No! The Constitution says **EVERY PERSON LIVING IN THE U.S.** as of April 1, 2020, including non-citizens, legal residents, and seasonal workers.

## Why Does Filling Out the Census Matter?

The census count determines how much federal funding Detroit receives for health care, education, and food—programs that families rely on to survive. Counting more people means more funding:

- Public schools receive grant funding for tutoring, textbooks, and other programs
- 240,000 Detroiters qualify for Bridge cards based on the City's census count
- Detroit hospitals and clinics receive Medicaid funding to treat Detroit residents

## How can I fill out the Census?

People in Detroit will receive forms in the mail and only one person in the household needs to complete the form for the **entire household**. You can also complete the form over the phone, online or in person with a sworn census taker.

## How can I identify census scams or fakes from the real census?

Census workers will have a photo ID badge with the Department of Commerce watermark and expiration date, as well as a laptop or bag with the Census Bureau logo. The Census Bureau will never ask for:

- Full social security number, bank or credit card numbers
- Money, donations, or anything related to a political party



## Where to Find More Census Information

### The Census Bureau is part of the Federal Government.

Visit [2020Census.gov](https://2020census.gov) where you can find official information and printable materials to share.



### The City of Detroit has its own Census 2020 Initiative for Our Communities.

Visit [www.DetroitMI.gov](http://www.DetroitMI.gov) for information about community partnerships, special programs, and information about the impact of the Census on Detroit.

### Organizations all over Detroit are working on getting us counted in the 2020 Census.

The Community Foundation for Southeast Michigan funded local organizations through the Southeast Michigan Counts 2020 Initiative (that's how we've funded this toolkit!). Visit [www.cfsem.org/southeast-michigan-counts-grantees](http://www.cfsem.org/southeast-michigan-counts-grantees) to see what organizations in your neighborhood you could connect with.

Community  
Foundation

FOR SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN

SOUTHEAST  
MICHIGAN  
COUNTS2020



### Your public library is always a good source of information.

Visit the library and learn more about the 2020 Census, plus take some time to check out books on the history of the census.

# Quick Look Budget Guide

**Anyone can do outreach for a cause they care about!** You don't have to have a lot of money to make a difference. The guide below shows different kinds of outreach you could do based on your budget. If you want to do something that's more costly, think about organizing with a friend or neighbor and pooling your resources together.

\$0	\$0-\$50	\$50-\$100
Phone Calls	Presenting at Community Meetings	Facilitating Educational Activities
Texts/Emails	Hosting Your Own Event <i>Your event can be small or huge depending on what you envision!</i>	
Door Knocking		Hosting an Informational Table at a Community Event

The expense of getting information out to your community depends on what you're planning. Common expenses include:

- ★ **Printing flyers** to promote an event
- ★ **Printing handouts** to make sure people have information to take home
- ★ **Providing refreshments** to create a nice event experience, especially if you're working with individuals facing personal struggles

**Have you decided to host an event? Use this flyer template to promote it!** Fill in the name of your event, the date, time and location. Then you can photocopy and post it around your neighborhood, scan it and email it or even take a photo and text it!

# COUNT EVERYONE EVERYONE COUNTS



*Join Us!*

**Learn About the 2020 Census and  
Why You Should Fill It Out and Be Counted.**

**What:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Hosted By:** \_\_\_\_\_

**When:** \_\_\_\_\_

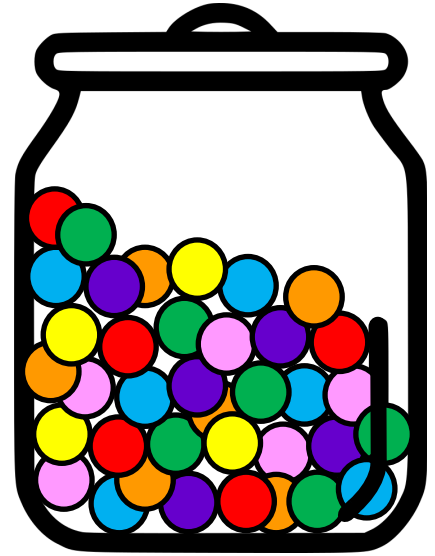
**Where:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Sample Activity 1

# *Count and Be Represented!*

## A Jelly Bean Guessing Game

You can do this activity on your own and with a small budget. This activity can be used at community meetings and events or as an ice breaker when you host neighbors at home. Use the activity to help explore the idea of the census counting and representing communities. You can have people play for “pride not prizes” or grab gifts from the dollar store and award the winner.



**Objective:** Guess how many jelly beans are in the jar.

**Materials Needed:** Jar of any size, jelly beans—or another multicolored candy—prizes (optional).

**Pre-work:** Count the jelly beans yourself, or use the nutrition guide on the package (multiply the number of pieces in a serving, by the total number of servings in the package).

**Message/Lesson:** A true count is the only way to know for sure how many jelly beans, and how many of each flavor, are in the jar. Filling out the Census is the only way to get a true count of everyone living in our communities.

## Sample Activity 2

# Host a Storytelling Event

## *I Was Counted—Stories of Representation*

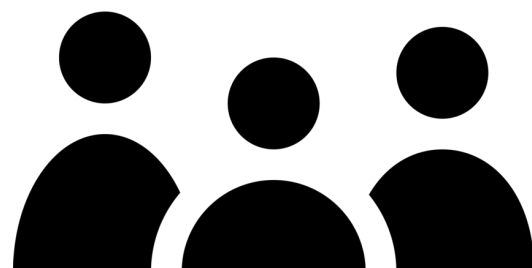
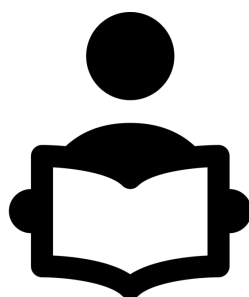
With a larger budget you can host a larger event. Projects like these are helpful to have partners to work with and work well when you know you can promote the event. Stories and storytelling are powerful tools to get your message across. An event with a storytelling focus invites others to tell their stories, builds community and gives you an opportunity to get your message out to a larger audience. You could also use this idea in a smaller format, for example with a few people in your home for dinner or coffee just make sure that you open the event and close the event with your message about the Census.

**Objective:** Individuals tell stories about representation: being left out, being seen, and the power of being counted.

**Materials Needed:** Promotional flyers, invitations to storytellers, refreshments, venue.

**Pre-work:** Determine size of event, write out run of show—who will speak when, identify and invite storytellers, promote event (at least 6 weeks out).

**Message/Lesson:** Being represented is important. Completing the Census ensures everyone is represented in the story of Detroit.



# Event Sign In Sheet

**EVENT NAME:**

**EVENT DATE:**

NAME	PHONE OR E-MAIL	I WOULD LIKE MORE INFO (Y/N)	I WILL COMPLETE THE CENSUS (Y/N/?)
<b>Example:</b> Mary Tyler Moore	313-333-3333	Y	?-Not Sure

# Notes

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# Sources

1. **City of Detroit**, "Census," <https://detroitmi.gov/census>
2. **Community Foundation of Southeast Michigan**, "Southeast Michigan Counts," <https://cfsem.org/initiative/southeast-michigan-counts/>
3. **United States Census 2020**, "2020 Census," <https://www.2020census.gov>






CitizenDetroit is 501c3 that supports the civic engagement of Detroiters with non-partisan, factual educational materials.

**We envision Detroit as the most civically engaged city in the nation.**

Visit [www.citizendetroit.org](http://www.citizendetroit.org) for more information.

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Community **SOUTHEAST**  
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