



Exploring Local Demographics Using Online Data Tools: A Focus on Hispanics

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Why research on low-income Hispanic children and families matters

Hispanic children currently make up roughly one in four of all children in the United States,^a and by 2050 are projected to make up one in three, similar to the number of white children.^b Given this, how Hispanic children fare will have a profound and increasing impact on the social and economic well-being of the country as a whole.

Notably, though, 5.7 million Hispanic children, or one third of all Hispanic children in the United States, are in poverty, more than in any other racial/ethnic group.^c Nearly two thirds of Hispanic children live in low-income families, defined as having incomes of less than two times the federal poverty level.^d Despite their high levels of economic need, Hispanics, particularly those in immigrant families, have lower rates of participation in many government support programs when compared with other racial/ethnic minority groups.^{e-g} High-quality, research-based information on the characteristics, experiences, and diversity of Hispanic children and families is needed to inform programs and policies supporting the sizable population of low-income Hispanic families and children.

^a Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2014). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2014, Table POP3*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office. <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables.asp>

^b Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics. (2012). *America's Children: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2012, Tables POP1 and POP3*. Washington, DC: Government Printing Office. <http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/tables.asp>

^c DeNavas-Walt, C., & Proctor, B.D. (2015). *Income and Poverty in the United States: 2014, Table B-2, Current Population Reports, P60-252*. Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Commerce, U.S. Census Bureau. <http://www.census.gov/content/dam/Census/library/publications/2015/demo/p60-252.pdf#TableB-2>

^d Lopez, M. H., & Velasco, G. (2011). *Childhood Poverty Among Hispanics Sets Record, Leads Nation*. Washington, DC: Pew Research Hispanic Center. <http://www.pewhispanic.org/2011/09/28/childhood-poverty-among-hispanics-sets-record-leads-nation/>

^e Williams, S. (2013). *Public assistance participation among U.S. children in poverty, 2010*. Bowling Green, Ohio: National Center for Family & Marriage Research. <http://www.bgsu.edu/content/dam/BGSU/college-of-arts-and-sciences/NCFMR/documents/FP/FP-13-02.pdf>

^f Lichter, D., Sanders, S., & Johnson, K. (2015). *Behind at the starting line: Poverty among Hispanic infants*. Durham, NH: University of New Hampshire, Carsey School of Public Policy. <http://scholars.unh.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1250&context=carsey>

^g Child Trends Databank. (2014). *Health care coverage*. Bethesda, MD: Child Trends. <http://www.childtrends.org/?indicators=health-care-coverage>

Overview

Having up-to-date, high-quality information about local populations can help community agencies and leaders better understand their community's needs. This resource summarizes key characteristics—detailed in the box below—of 10 online tools that the public can use to obtain estimates of local Hispanic populations. It also includes information about how well each tool allows users to document the diversity (in nativity, English proficiency, etc.) within the Hispanic population. Together, these online tools give users access to a vast amount of information on the Hispanic population.

Data tool (URL)

Hosting organization

Highlights: *Some key capabilities of each tool—for example, the ability to create tables and maps, look at change in population characteristics over time, export data files, or compare population characteristics in different geographic areas.*

Main themes: *The most prominent topics each tool covers—for example, economics, health outcomes or behaviors, demographics, etc.*

Hispanic data elements: *Which of 10 key data elements capturing critical dimensions of Hispanic diversity are included in each tool (in some capacity): Hispanic ancestry/heritage subgroup; country of birth; parent country of birth; U.S. citizenship; time in United States; language(s) spoken at home; English-speaking proficiency; literacy in any language; highest education level outside of the United States; and legal residency.^a*

Data source(s) used: *Primary data sources the tool uses—for example, the American Community Survey or Head Start administrative data. All tools listed in this guide include data from the last 5 years (i.e., 2011 or later), and many include data from earlier years. Years covered will vary by data source.*

Geographic level of analysis: *Whether data are available at the national, state, county, city, or other level (e.g., school district, census tract, or zip code). Within each tool, geographic specificity may vary depending on the data source and the outcomes and population of interest.*

Hispanic-specific analyses: *Ability to tailor the tool to look at user-defined breakdowns within the Hispanic population. While many tools do provide some information on the diversity within the Hispanic population, the available information is often determined by the tool and cannot be selected by the user.*

Notes on use: *Additional useful information.*

^a <http://www.childtrends.org/?publications=improving-data-infrastructure-to-recognize-hispanic-diversity-in-the-united-states>

DataFerrett (<http://dataferrett.census.gov/>)

U.S. Census Bureau

Highlights:

- Create tables, maps, and graphs
- Save and export data and products (e.g., tables)
- Re-code variables, make nested tables, select subgroups
- Apply statistical weights
- Perform statistical analyses (e.g., t-tests, regressions)
- Search for data sets by type (e.g., microdata, aggregate, longitudinal, time series)

Main themes: Demographic, geographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: Hispanic ancestry, country of birth, parents' country of birth, U.S. citizenship, time in United States, language(s) spoken at home, English proficiency

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey, Current Population Survey, Decennial Census, National Health Interview Survey, Survey of Income and Program Participation

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, county, city, block, and more

Hispanic-specific analyses: Yes

Notes on use: DataFerrett can be used to conduct a wide array of analyses, from simple to complex. However, it is not as user-friendly as other tools listed in this guide. Users will need to install a Java plug-in and should consult the DataFerret website for guidance on using the tool (<http://dataferrett.census.gov/>).

Data Resource Center (<http://www.childhealthdata.org/>)

Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative

Highlights:

- Child focused
- Create maps and tables
- Create state snapshots
- Browse data and survey topics
- Request raw data

Main themes: Demographic, health, school, and community

Hispanic data elements: None

Data source(s) used: National Survey of Children's Health, National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs, and additional specialized data sets

Geographic level of analysis: National, regional, state

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: The Data Resource Center has a user-friendly interface and provides many links to other related data resources, as well as guidance on the surveys available and how to use their data. Users can generate some customized analyses.

KIDS COUNT Data Center (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>)

The Annie E. Casey Foundation

Highlights:

- Child focused
- Create maps, charts, and tables
- Download raw data
- Use multiple years of data
- Browse data by topic or location

Main themes: Demographic, economic, health, family and community

Hispanic data elements: English proficiency, literacy, U.S. citizenship, country of birth (United States or foreign), parents' region of birth, language(s) spoken at home

Data source(s) used: KIDS COUNT state- and national-level data, provided by Census and various state and local groups

Geographic level of analysis: National, state/territory, county, city, congressional district

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: The KIDS COUNT Data Center tool has a simple and user-friendly interface. Users can generate some customized analyses.

NCCP 50-State Demographics Wizard

(<http://www.nccp.org/tools/demographics/>)

Mailman School of Public Health, Columbia University

Highlights:

- Create tables
- Generate basic counts and percentages

Main themes: Demographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: Parents' country of birth (United States or foreign)

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey

Geographic level of analysis: National, regional, state

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: The NCCP 50-State Demographics Wizard has a simple interface. However, users should have some knowledge on how to conduct basic descriptive estimates.

Urban Institute Children of Immigrants Data Tool

(<http://datatool.urban.org/charts/datatool/pages.cfm>)

Urban Institute

Highlights:

- Child focused
- Create tables and charts
- Generate results for specific groups by location
- Compare measures across multiple areas
- Export tables to PDF or Excel; charts to PDF

Main themes: Demographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: English proficiency, U.S. citizenship, country of birth (United States or foreign), parents' country/region of birth

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, metro area

Hispanic-specific analyses: Yes

Notes on use: The Urban Institute Children of Immigrants Data Tool has a basic interface that takes users through table creation one step at a time. This is a helpful feature, though it sometimes requires practice to get the desired product.

Diversity Data Kids (<http://www.diversitydatakids.org/>)

The Heller School for Social Policy and Management, Brandeis University

Highlights:

- Child focused
- View tables by age, race/ethnicity, and other categories
- Generate location profiles, rankings, maps, and policy equity assessments
- Map "Child Opportunity Index", which measures neighborhood-level availability of educational, health, environmental, social, and economic opportunities for children
 - (http://www.diversitydatakids.org/files/CHILDOI/DOCS/DDK_KIRWAN_CHILDOI_OVERVIEW.pdf)
- Compare estimates and policies across areas

Main themes: Demographic, economic, health, Child Opportunity Index, policy

Hispanic data elements: Literacy, language(s) spoken at home, parents' country of birth (United States or foreign)

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey, Decennial Census, Current Population Survey, National Assessment of Educational Progress, Head Start administrative data, and more

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, county, metro area, large city, large school district

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: Diversity Data Kids is easy to use, and provides a large selection of pre-made tables. Some customization is possible when creating area rankings, and users can sort and compare these results by location and race/ethnicity.

Census QuickFacts Beta (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>)

U.S. Census Bureau

Highlights:

- Create tables, maps, charts
- Export data
- Compare multiple areas

Main themes: Demographic, economic, geographic

Hispanic data elements: Country of birth (foreign), language(s) spoken at home

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey, Current Population Survey, Small Area Health Insurance Estimates, Small Area Income and Poverty Estimates, State and County Housing Unit Estimates, and more

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, county, city, town, zip code

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: Census QuickFacts Beta has a user-friendly interface, and is ideal for users who want very basic and straightforward population and housing statistics for a particular geographic area.

CPS Table Creator (<http://www.census.gov/cps/data/cpstablecreator.html>)

U.S. Census Bureau

Highlights:

- Create customized tables
- Generate basic descriptive statistics
- Use or compare multiple years of data
- Apply statistical weights and select specific subgroups (race, age, income, etc.)

Main themes: Demographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: Country of birth (United States or foreign), U.S. citizenship

Data source(s) used: Current Population Survey (March Supplement)

Geographic level of analysis: National, state

Hispanic-specific analyses: Yes

Notes on use: The CPS Table Creator is ideal for users with intermediate or advanced experience creating complex tables (e.g., tables with estimates broken down by group—e.g., race/ethnicity) and interpreting descriptive statistics.

Social Explorer (<http://www.socialexplorer.com/>) - Free version

Social Explorer

Highlights:

- Create maps and tables
- Export data and tables
- Compare maps and create visualizations of trends
- Get limited data access and tools with free subscription, or full access with paid membership or through institutional membership

Main themes: Demographic, economic, religious

Hispanic data elements: Country of birth, U.S. citizenship, Hispanic ancestry

Data source(s) used: 2000 Decennial Census

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, county, census tract, block

Hispanic-specific analyses: No

Notes on use: The free version of Social Explorer has a clear and visually appealing interface that walks users through the process of selecting their desired indicators for tables or maps. A paid version of the tool provides more options, including a wider variety of data sources, unlimited storage, and access to more tools and customer support (not reviewed here).

American FactFinder

(<http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml>)

U.S. Census Bureau

Highlights:

- Generate tables and maps
- Compare multiple areas
- Use or compare multiple years of data
- Export tables to Excel, .csv, and other formats

Main themes: Demographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: Language(s) spoken at home, English proficiency, U.S. citizenship, country of birth (United States or foreign), Hispanic ancestry

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey, Decennial Census, American Housing Survey, Puerto Rico Community Survey, and more

Geographic level of analysis: National, state, metro area, and smaller

Hispanic-specific analyses: Yes

Notes on use: Though large and comprehensive, American FactFinder is relatively easy to navigate. However, users who plan to export results for their own data manipulation will benefit from a basic understanding of descriptive statistics. A more detailed guide on using this tool is here: http://factfinder.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/using_factfinder.xhtml. Also see this brief from the National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families: *Making National Data Local: Using American FactFinder to Describe Local Hispanic Communities* (2016), at http://www.childtrends.org/?post_type=publications&p=19200.

Statistical Portrait of Hispanics in the United States

(<http://www.pewhispanic.org/2016/04/19/statistical-portrait-of-hispanics-in-the-united-states/>)

Pew Research Center

Highlights:

- Browse key tables and charts
- See time trends in key population characteristics
- See state and county rankings of Hispanic population size and growth
- Read a full report discussing the estimates
- Download an Excel workbook accompanying the report

Main themes: Demographic, economic

Hispanic data elements: Hispanic ancestry group, country of birth (United States or foreign), U.S. citizenship, language(s) spoken at home, English proficiency

Data source(s) used: American Community Survey, Decennial Census

Geographic level of analysis: National, regional, state, and county

Hispanic-specific analysis: No, but the resource itself is a detailed portrait of the Hispanic population

Notes on use: The Statistical Portrait is not a data tool, but is a useful reference for users interested in characteristics of the Hispanic population by state and county.

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About the Center

The National Research Center on Hispanic Children & Families is a hub of research to help programs and policy better serve low-income Hispanics across three priority areas—poverty reduction and economic self-sufficiency, healthy marriage and responsible fatherhood, and early care and education. The Center was established in 2013 by a five-year cooperative agreement from the Office of Planning, Research, and Evaluation (OPRE) within the Administration for Children and Families (ACF) in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to Child Trends in partnership with Abt Associates and New York University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro, and University of Maryland, College Park. This publication was made possible by Grant Number 90PH0025 from OPRE. Its contents are solely the responsibility of the authors and do not necessarily represent the official views of OPRE, ACF, or HHS.

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