2020 Census: Critical to Meeting Big Country Needs

“The United States census is so much more than just a head count. It is a snapshot of America that determines how congressional seats are apportioned, how state and federal dollars are distributed, where businesses choose to ship products and where they build new stores. To do all that properly, the count needs to be accurate.” -The New York Times

What does the census mean for the Big Country?
Participating in the census is in everyone's best interest, because the information on the forms is used by decision-makers to determine which communities, schools, hospitals and roads need federal funding.

The federal government bases a large amount of its spending decisions, including on highways and low-income programs, on census data.

Credit: Credit: Rich Pedroncelli/Associated Press

Census 101

- Your data are confidential
- Federal Law protects your responses
- Real Estate developers use the census to build new homes and revitalize old neighborhoods
- You’ll be able to respond online for the first time; making it easier than ever
- Census responses are used to redraw the boundaries of congressional and state legislative districts
The Kiwanis Club of Abilene presented the DIA director with the Community Caring Award for September 2019 along with a gift of $100.00.

Kiwanis is a world wide organization doing tremendous things for children, one community at a time. Currently, Kiwanis has over 550,000 members in over 80 countries and geographic areas.

The Kiwanis Club of Greater Abilene sponsors the much loved Chili Supper and Pancake Breakfast every year at the Abilene Convention Center. These events raise money to help children here in the Big Country Communities. The funds raised also assist young people with college scholarships.

Thank you Kiwanis for your recognition and more importantly for your partnership!

Ruby Quanz, Kiwanis President and Leah Beltran, DIA Director (right)

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**Angela Kay Johnston**

*July 24, 1959—August 27, 2019*

We lost a friend and a fierce advocate of people with disabilities. Angela was a member of the Disability in Action Board of Directors for 6 years. She lived in Abilene all of her life. She was a business owner who was active in many civic groups in the community.

Angela wanted young people with disabilities to learn more about self-advocacy; because she was a person with a disability herself. She was always excited to learn what Disability in Action was doing to reach out to the youth.

She continued to be the board Treasurer for DIA and an employee of Goodwill Industries, even when her health was failing. Angela will be remembered for her strength, determination and her unwavering self-advocacy.
Fighting Depression with Movement

Yes, we all know exercise is one of the best things a person can go do to improve their mental and physical health. But knowing that it’s good to get your heart rate going doesn’t mean it will be easy to do if you are experiencing a depressive episode. It almost seems like it takes superhuman effort to make even the slightest activity. A plan can help during these times.

**Write a Script**

What are the signs that a depressive episode is coming? Write them down. Below each trigger, write a goal to counteract it. Place the script in a place where it will be seen; like on the night stand or on the bathroom mirror. Goals don’t have to be big. Set the goals for success. Maybe having the ability to get to the mailbox everyday is a great beginning!

**Remove Every Barrier Possible**

If getting out of bed is challenging, then going to an exercise class can seem next to impossible. Looking for the right clothes and getting to the class can be barriers to the goal of body movement. Think about ways to remove those barriers. One suggestion is to wear workout clothes to bed and ask a friend for a ride. Disability in Action is here to help with transportation and we offer free exercise classes. Remember, every movement of your body and mind is a movement in the right direction.

**Forget “Go Hard or Go Home”**

To reiterate, any movement is positive! If it takes every ounce of effort to get up and walk once around the yard, it’s still a good thing. Endorphins are a wonderful healer. A person may discover that one lap around the yard today, could mean 3 laps tomorrow.

**Avoid Opportunities to Get Down on Yourself**

When you’re depressed, your chance of negatively comparing yourself to others and putting yourself down is at its greatest. Don’t feel compelled to be at the group exercise class that day if it means there will be no movement at all. Days like these call for solitary activities. The goal is to continue moving.

**Recognize Your Accomplishments**

It may sound silly, but a gold star on a calendar or a big red heart in your journal is important! The experience of looking back on documented goals and recognizing your success is powerful! If you fail....keep trying!

Remember, DIA is here to provide support to those who experience depression. We have free exercise classes too. Transportation can be provided if it’s requested.
About a year ago, Abilene welcomed Cheddars to it’s line up of available cuisines. There are many restaurants to chose from in our city. For people with disabilities, it is crucial to have first hand knowledge about the accessibility of a business. Sometimes it might not be apparent from the outside or just past the front doors, but older businesses and dining establishments can make accommodations if you ask. Recently my son, who is a person with a disability and uses a wheelchair, visited Cheddars. The service was great. The food was excellent.

The bar height tables work well for him, so we were seated in the bar. The waitress was friendly and so was the bartender. She engaged us in conversation and it was refreshing to see someone from the community who wasn’t afraid to strike up a conversation with someone who has a disability.

The best part is the accessible bathrooms. Cheddars not only has very large accessible stalls, they also have a family bathroom. For a person who needs hands on assistance, this is important for the privacy and comfort of the person with a disability but also for the other patrons. Visit if you can!

Donation

Disability in Action is a private, non-profit, 501 c3 organization. Many of the activities that we offer at the Center are funded through the generosity of donors, not through grant funding.

Your donation is tax deductible.

Donations are used to cover the cost of:

⇒ Activities outside of the Center like going to the County Fair or to the Movies
⇒ Sponsoring our consumers and staff to take advantage of educational opportunities
⇒ Applying for new funding opportunities that would advance the Center

If you would like to Donate, visit our website and click the “Donate” button

Or mail your donation to:

317 N. Willis St.
Abilene, Texas 79605
New Program at Disability in Action

SHARING
Healthy
Activities &
Resources with Peers

SHARP is a youth program created to reach individuals that are about to or currently transitioning from high school into either college or the work force. We are equipped to assist “at-risk” youth in matching them with a group of peers who have similar challenges and interests to create a support group for this stage of life.

SHARP is designed to partner with parents, teachers, school districts and the local community to prevent issues our youth with disabilities face during their high school and college years.

We will specifically work to prevent the following:

- High School Drop Out
- Homelessness/Poverty
- Depression

By Providing:
- Physical Activity within peer groups
- Recreational Activities within peer groups
- Nutritional guidance/Eating together

Please contact Disability in Action and ask for Lora Cottle for more information.

(325) 672-5460
Crock Pot Recipe

PREP TIME: 10 MINS  COOK TIME: 4 HOURS  TOTAL TIME: 4 HOURS AND 10 MINS

- 4 to 6 skinless boneless chicken breasts (about 2 lbs)
- 2 (10.75-oz) cans cream of chicken
- 1 package Lipton Savory Herb & Garlic Recipe Soup & Dip Mix
- 1 3/4 cups milk
- 1 cup regular long-grain rice
- salt and pepper to taste

1. Spray the insert of the slow cooker with cooking spray. Place chicken in the bottom.
2. Mix together the cream of chicken soup, Lipton Garlic Soup Mix, milk, and regular rice. Season with salt and pepper, if desired. Pour over chicken. Sprinkle parmesan cheese on top of rice mixture.
3. Cover slow cooker and cook on HIGH for 3 or 4 hours.
4. Remove chicken from slow cooker and chop. Place back in the slow cooker and stir to combine.

NOTES:
Do not cook rice in advance. I used Great Value Long-Grain Rice. The rice will not be light and fluffy like plain cooked rice. The rice is soft. This is a casserole. The mixture will be somewhat thick.
Exercise Your Right! 2020 Election Dates

Disability in Action can provide transportation to the polling places

Feb. 3: This is your last day to register to vote and be eligible to cast a ballot in the March primaries. Check out this page for more information about voter registration in Texas.

Feb. 18: Early voting starts in the Texas primaries. It will continue for the next 10 days. You can check your county's website for information about polling locations.

Feb. 21: This is your last day to request a ballot to vote by mail in the primaries. In order to vote by mail, you'll have to meet certain conditions. Call DIA for more information about vote by mail.

Feb. 28: Early voting ends.

March 3: If you didn't vote early, you get your chance on election day. Make sure to show up at your local precinct, unless your county is participating in countywide voting. Again, you can find this out by checking your county's website.

April 27: This is the last day to register to vote and be eligible to cast a ballot in the primary runoffs. Runoffs happen whenever a single candidate doesn't cross the 50% threshold in the March primary. Almost certainly, there will be races that head to a runoff.

May 15: This is your last day to request a ballot to vote by mail for the primary runoff. In order to vote by mail, you have to meet certain conditions. Call DIA to learn more.

May 18: Early voting in the primary runoff begins. Keep in mind that voters can only participate in one party's primary each year. If you voted in the Democratic primary in March, for example, you can't vote in the Republican primary runoff in May.

May 22: Early voting in the primary runoff ends.

May 26: This is primary runoff election day, your last chance to have a say in whom the Republicans or Democrats nominate in any races that went to a runoff. Make sure to show up at your local precinct, unless your county is participating in countywide voting. You can find this out by checking your county's website.

July 13-16: Delegates will convene at the Democratic National Convention to officially select and nominate their presidential ticket. Normally, a single candidate breaks from the pack and effectively clenches the nomination before the actual convention. But it is possible that no one wins a majority of delegates in the primaries. At this point, the party will have a contested convention on its hands.

Aug. 24-27: Just like the Democratic Party did last month, the Republican Party will convene to officially select its ticket. Barring any developments, President Donald Trump is expected to lead the ticket on the Republican side of the ballot.

Oct. 5: This is your last day to register to vote for the general election. Contact DIA if you would like assistance registering.

Oct. 19: Early voting starts in Texas. You can check your county's website for information about polling locations.

Oct. 23: This is your last day to request a ballot to vote by mail for the primary. In order to vote by mail, you have to meet certain conditions. Learn more here.

Oct. 30: Early voting ends.

Nov. 3: If you didn't vote early, you get your chance on Election Day. Make sure to show up at your local precinct, unless your county is participating in countywide voting. Again, you can find this out by checking your county's website.

“Add Texas 2020 election dates to your calendar” was first published at https://www.texastribune.org/2020/01/09/add-texas-2020-election-dates-your-calendar/ by The Texas Tribune. The Texas Tribune is proud to celebrate 10 years of exceptional journalism for an exceptional state.
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Hours of Operation: Monday—Thursday 8:00 am to 6:30 pm
Accessible entrances at the front and the back of the building