

POPULATION OF CHILDREN

In 2010, there were more than 74 million children under 18 years of age in the United States, representing nearly one-quarter of the population. Young adults aged 18–24 years made up another 9.9 percent of the population, while adults aged 25–64 years composed 53.0 percent of the population, and adults aged 65 years and older composed 13.0 percent.

The age distribution of the population has shifted significantly in the past several decades. The percentage of the population that is under 18 fell from 28.2 percent in 1980 to 24.0

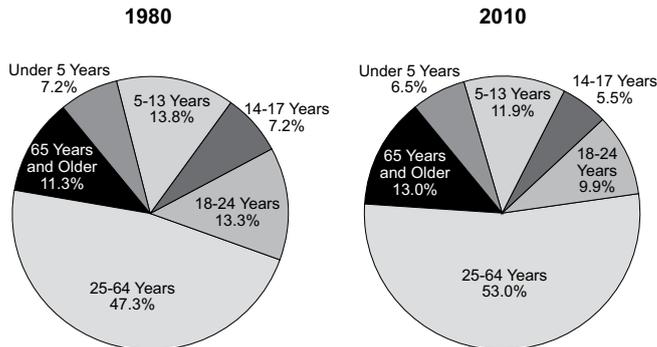
percent in 2010. The representation of young adults (aged 18–24 years) has also fallen, from 13.3 percent to 9.9 percent. During this time period, the percentage of the population that is aged 25–64 years has increased from 47.3 percent to 53.0 percent, and the percentage that is over 65 years has increased from 11.3 percent to 13.0 percent. The median age in the United States has increased from 30.0 years in 1980 to 37.2 years in 2010 (data not shown).

The shifting racial/ethnic makeup of the child population (under 18 years) reflects the increasing diversity of the population as a

whole. Hispanic children represented fewer than 9 percent of children in 1980, compared to more than 23 percent in 2010, while the percentage of children who are non-Hispanic Black has remained relatively steady over the same period, around 15 percent. However, the percentage of children who are non-Hispanic White has fallen significantly, from 74.3 percent in 1980 to 58.3 percent in 2010. After 2000, changes in the ways that racial and ethnic data were collected limit comparison over time for some groups, including Asians and individuals of more than one race.

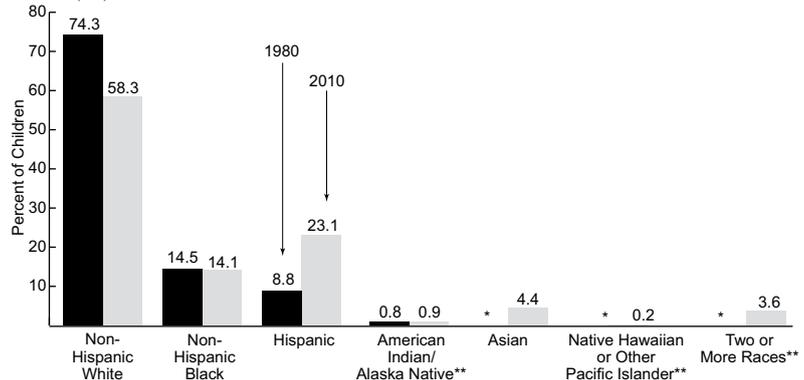
U.S. Population, by Age Group, 1980 and 2010

Source (I.1): U.S. Census Bureau.



U.S. Population of Children Under Age 18, by Race/Ethnicity, 1980 and 2010

Source (I.2): U.S. Census Bureau



*1980 data not available for this population. **May include Hispanics.