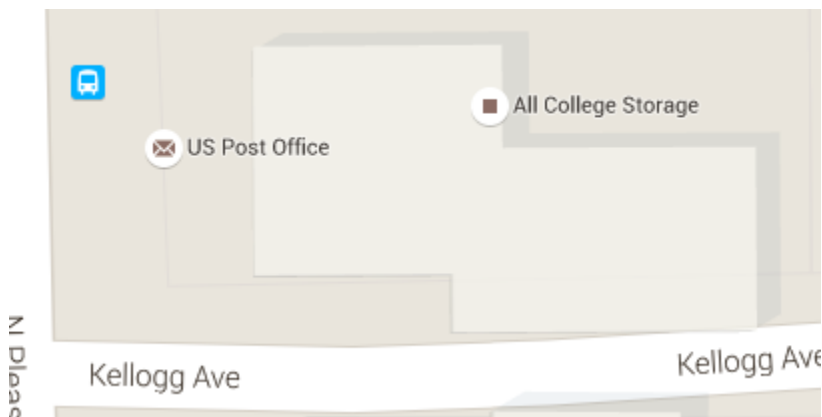## Parent ZIP Codes Documentation

Description:

The Parent ZIP Codes product is very handy to use when you need to know demographics for ZIP Codes that aren't in the standard Census Data files. Here's what happens when a Census is taken:

- The Census data is only appended to ZIP Codes that had a residential population *at the time of the census*.
- A ZIP Code may not have had population at the time of the census because it was used exclusively for PO Boxes, or it was totally in a business district, but since the census was taken, the U.S. Postal Service could have added general delivery addresses to the ZIP.

If you need demographics for these ZIPs, such as when you have prospective customer addresses with PO Boxes, but still need to know the demographics of that area (such as average household income), then you should purchase the Parent ZIP Codes product along with our Census Demographics by ZIP Code. This product will show you what ZIP Code a Point ZIP (a ZIP Code without general delivery addresses) is either physically located within, or is the most significant ZIP Code for our corresponding Census demographics data.

For instance, the lowest ZIP Code in the country is 00501. This ZIP belongs to the IRS in Holtsville, NY. This is a private PO Box where people in New York and New Jersey send their income tax returns. This is physically located within ZIP Code 11742, so our data will have 11742 as the parent ZIP of 00501.

Another example is 01004 which is a ZIP Code at Amherst College. It is shared by two different Post Offices in Amherst:

This ZIP is used for PO Boxes, so there are no Census records available. 01002 is the general delivery ZIP Code where the post offices are located, so that is the parent ZIP Code:

Important Note: there are many Point ZIP Codes that have a Parent ZIP Code, but there are census demographics for the Point ZIP Code, so you should first check if the ZIP Code is available in our Census Demographics product (with a population greater than zero) and use that ZIP Code's demographics. For instance, 02357 is a private ZIP Code for Stonehill College in North Easton, Mass. Private ZIP Codes are normally for businesses and government agencies, but since there was a population of 1,360 students living there at the time of the 2010 Census, we have demographic data available for it.

File names: the full version of the data file is '**parent-zips-full.csv**' for the full version and 'parent-zips-demo.csv' for the demo version of the data. These are comma-delimited files.

File Layout:

The **Parent Zip Code file** has a header record followed by detail records with these fields:

- ZIP Code.
- Parent ZIP Code (will be the same as the ZIP Code if it isn't a Point ZIP with a corresponding Parent ZIP Code.
- Type Codes: We have had many requests to add on the U.S. Postal Service's type codes. These codes can be exported by selecting the option in our Extractor program. The codes are as follows:

- Blank = General Delivery, which may include PO Boxes.
  - B = Business/Government private 5-digit Zip Code.
  - E = Exclusive PO Box ZIP (normally there is no General Delivery)
  - M = Military
- State abbreviation.