

U.S. Department of Labor
Bureau of Labor Statistics

Release of the Round 1 NLSY97 Data

The round 1 NLSY97 main and geocode data files are now available for distribution to researchers. The newest survey in the National Longitudinal Surveys program, the NLSY97 represents the U.S. population born during 1980 through 1984.

Through the annual NLSY97 survey, the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) will be able to identify characteristics that define today's youths' transition from school to the labor market and into adulthood. To achieve this, the round 1 NLSY97 survey collected extensive information on youths' labor market behavior, educational experiences, and family and community backgrounds from both the youth respondent and one of the youth's parents. This information will help researchers assess the impact of schooling and other environmental factors on these newest labor market entrants. NLSY97 data will also aid in determining how youth experiences relate to establishing a career, participating in government programs, and forming a family.

This article summarizes characteristics of the NLSY97 sample. It then discusses the main topics of the round 1 interviews. Finally, it provides information on the NLSY97 CD-ROM now available to users.

NLSY97 sample

The NLSY97 cohort includes 9,022 respondents, ages 12–16 as of December 31, 1996, who were first surveyed between January and October 1997 or March and May 1998.¹ The sample design selected all

¹ Approximately 8,600 respondents were interviewed in the initial 1997 field period; several hundred respondents were first surveyed during the supplemental refielding in spring 1998.

household residents in the appropriate age range; 1,872 households out of 6,844 included more than one respondent. The most common relationship in a multiple respondent household is sibling. Biological, adoptive, half-, step-, or foster siblings are present for 3,826 of the respondents.

The NLSY97 includes an oversample of Hispanics and blacks, allowing analysis across race and/or ethnicity. Two subsamples comprise the NLSY97 cohort:

- 1) A cross-sectional sample of 6,770 respondents, representing the non-institutionalized segment of people living in the United States during the initial survey round and born between January 1, 1980, and December 31, 1984; and
- 2) A supplemental sample of 2,252 respondents, designed to oversample non-institutionalized Hispanics and blacks living in the United States during the initial survey round and born during the same period as the cross-sectional sample.

Table 1 provides basic demographic information for respondents interviewed in round 1.

Content of the NLSY97

The round 1 NLSY97 CD-ROM contains data gathered by three different survey instruments: The screener, household roster, and non-resident roster questionnaire; the youth questionnaire; and the parent questionnaire. The contents of these survey instruments are described below.

Screener, household roster, and non-resident roster questionnaire. This instrument was initially administered to a member of each household selected for sampling in the NLSY97 survey areas. Completed by a household resident age 18 or older, subsequently referred to as the household informant, this questionnaire identified youths potentially eligible for the NLSY97 survey.

The first section of this instrument collected the name and birth date or age of each person who usually resided in the household. If the household contained a youth born between 1980 and 1984, the interviewer asked for the gender, race, and ethnicity of each person in the household. Birth year was the only criterion for NLSY97 eligibility in the cross-sectional sample; race and ethnicity were used as further criteria in the supplemental sample

Table 1. Round 1 NLSY97 sample size by subsample, gender, and race/ethnicity

	Men	Women	Total
Total	4,620	4,402	9,022
Cross-sectional sample	3,473	3,297	6,770
Non-black, non-Hispanic	2,448	2,284	4,732
Black, non-Hispanic	537	539	1,076
Hispanic	469	448	917
Race or ethnicity missing	19	26	45
Supplemental sample	1,147	1,105	2,252
Black, non-Hispanic	633	626	1,259
Hispanic	508	472	980
Race or ethnicity missing	6	7	13

areas, where non-black, non-Hispanic respondents were not sampled for NLSY97 participation.

In households with an eligible youth, the household informant then reported the relationships between household occupants and collected basic demographic information (e.g., marital status, highest grade of schooling completed, employment status) for all household members, including any NLSY97-eligible youths. Finally, this instrument gathered similar data from the household informant on members of the youth's immediate family (for example, biological, adoptive, or stepparents; biological or adoptive siblings; spouse; biological children; parent of the youth's biological children) who lived elsewhere at the survey date.

Youth questionnaire. A youth questionnaire was administered to each NLSY97 respondent youth. This instrument focused on the youth's employment and schooling; the interview also collected extensive data on the respondent's family background, social behavior, and health status. The major topics in the youth questionnaire are described below.

The employment section focused on two different types of jobs: (1) Employee jobs (those in which the respondent had an ongoing association with a particular employer) held since the age of 14 and (2) freelance and/or self-employment jobs. Information on jobs was collected using an event history format, allowing researchers to examine the respondents' work experiences in their entirety rather than a single point in time.

The questions on employee jobs sought information from respondents age 14 and older at the time of the survey about jobs held since their 14th birthday. The youth reported information about the job, such as the usual number of hours per week worked, the rate of pay, industry, and occupation. Respondents who reported a job that ended after the date of their 16th birthday (or, for those age 16 and over at the survey date, who reported an ongoing job) answered an additional series of questions. This information included the class of worker; the type of benefits offered; the respondent's regular work shift; collective-bargaining status; the sex, race, and age of the respondent's immediate supervisor; the number of employees working at the same

location as the respondent; the number of employees at all locations; and general job satisfaction.

Respondents age 14 and older at the time of the survey were questioned on the freelance jobs they have held since age 14. A freelance job is defined as any job for which the respondent performs tasks, such as baby-sitting or mowing lawns, for a number of people but does not have a specific boss. The questions on freelance employment gathered information about the start and stop dates, the usual number of hours the respondent worked per week, the usual weekly earnings, the total number of days worked per week, and the number of hours worked per weekday and weekend. Respondents who were age 16 or older and who reported usually earning \$200 or more per week in a freelance job were classified as self-employed; these respondents also defined the industry and occupation of the job and stated the number of people working for them.

Respondents ages 12 and 13 reported on all jobs they had held since age 12, without distinguishing between employee and freelance jobs. The information collected from these respondents was the same as the freelance questions described above.

The schooling section of the youth questionnaire obtained data on the respondent's educational attainment, experiences, and courses taken. Scores on national exams (the *Scholastic Aptitude Test* [SAT], *American College Test* [ACT], and *Advanced Placement* [AP] exams) were also collected. Youths who participated in school-based learning programs reported the program's characteristics (e.g., type of program, time spent at the work site, whether the respondent was paid). The *Peabody Individual Achievement Test—Revised (PIAT-R) Math Assessment* was administered to a group of younger respondents.

In addition, youths reported their attitudes toward teachers and their perceptions of the school environment. A series of questions asked respondents about peer behavior (e.g., percentage of students in their grade they believe to be involved in a gang, an organized sport, or volunteer work).

In the training section of the questionnaire, respondents age 16 and older provided information about their participation in training programs outside of school.

These questions solicited information on the youth's reasons for participating in the program, the types of certification earned (if any), the youth's sources of financing, and the program's duration.

The youth questionnaire contained a number of questions on the respondent's income, assets, and participation in government programs for the economically disadvantaged. Youths also were surveyed about their income during 1996. A subset of respondents, consisting of those who either had a child, had ever been married or were in a marriage-like relationship at the survey date, were no longer enrolled in school or were enrolled in a 4-year college, or reported not living with any parent or parent figure, was asked in-depth questions on their participation in government programs. Included in the survey were specific questions on AFDC/ADC or the equivalent program, Workers' Compensation, Unemployment Insurance, food stamps, WIC, SSI, public housing, and other welfare. These respondents were also asked detailed questions on income and about current asset holdings (such as home ownership and stocks).

NLSY97 respondents provided information about their general health and about their height and weight in the health section of the survey. Those youths not living at home were also asked about their health insurance coverage. Thirteen-year-old respondents answered a series of health knowledge and practices questions.

The self-administered section of the youth questionnaire collected information on sensitive topics. A series of questions on health-related behaviors asked youths whether they had ever smoked cigarettes, consumed alcohol, or used illegal drugs, as well as whether and how much they had engaged in these activities within the past month. Respondents were also questioned about their participation in criminal activities (such as assault, theft, battery, or carrying a handgun). Information on sexual activity was obtained from respondents ages 14 and older. The self-administered section also contained a series of questions on the youth's contact with an absent parent and gathered additional information on the relationships of parents and parent-figures to one another and to the youth.

To obtain data on youth expectations, respondents ages 15 and 16 were surveyed about their perceptions of the future. These

youths were asked to assess the probability of certain events occurring in their lives over the next year, by the time they turn 20, and by the time they reach 30. The list of events included working more than 20 hours per week, serving time in prison, and earning a 4-year college degree.

In a series of questions on time use, respondents age 16 and older as of December 31, 1996, who were no longer in school or employed reported the time they usually wake up each day, whether they go to a specific place on a regular basis, and the time that they leave for and return from that place. Youths ages 12–14 estimated the amount of time they spent in a typical week doing homework, watching television, or taking extra classes or lessons.

Respondents age 16 and older were asked about their history of marriage and marriage-like relationships. Along with the legal status and length of each relationship, respondents reported the age, education, religious background, and race and ethnicity of each spouse or partner. Youths who were married or involved in a marriage-like relationship at the survey date answered a series of questions about their spouse or partner's behavior toward the respondent.

Youths who reported having given birth to or having fathered a child answered a series of questions about that child, including who has legal responsibility. Characteristics of the other biological parent of the child, and the type of relationship the youth had with that person, were also collected.

Parent questionnaire. The parent questionnaire collected extensive background information from one of the youth's resident parents. During the parent interview, general questions determined the family's nationality, religious orientation, and community environment. The responding parent then provided detailed information on his or her marital and employment histories, health, and income; similar data were collected for the responding parent's current spouse or partner. If the youth did not live with both biological parents, the responding parent further provided basic information regarding the non-resident biological parent or parents' background, health, and contact with the youth.

The parent questionnaire also asked the responding parent detailed questions about the activities of the NLSY97 youth. The parent described the youth's residence his-

tory, custody arrangements (if applicable), and child care and Head Start experiences during early childhood. The interview collected a detailed schooling history starting with grade 7, covering topics such as the number of schools attended, gaps in enrollment, and whether the child ever skipped a grade or was held back. For home-schooled youths, parents additionally reported standardized test scores and college coursework.

Complementing information collected during the youth interview, the responding parent described any health conditions that limited the youth's schooling or employment. The parent also reported the source of the youth's health insurance coverage, if such coverage was available. Similarly, the parent questionnaire asked the responding parent to state the youth's 1996 income from various sources, including transfers of money from the parent (for example, allowances and other financial support).

If the NLSY97 youth was born in 1980 or 1981, the parent questionnaire contained a series of questions on that parent's expectations about the youth. The responding parent was asked the probability that certain events would happen in the youth's life within the next year, before the youth turns 20, and before the youth reaches 30. Many of these events mirror those appearing in the youth questionnaire. For parents with a youth born in 1982-84, the survey included questions about rule-making that involved, for example, who the youth can hang out with and who determines the youth's curfew. Similar questions appear in the youth questionnaire on this topic as well.

Interviews are available with 6,149 parents; 7,973 youth respondents have information available from a parent interview.

School survey and CAT-ASVAB. The round 1 survey included two additional data collection efforts, the school survey and the administration of the computer-adaptive version of the *Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (CAT-ASVAB)*. In the winter of 1996-97, all high schools with a 12th grade in the NLSY97 sample areas received a mail-back school survey. This survey asked school administrators to provide detailed data on the characteristics of the school, the staff, and the student body. Additional information was solicited on the school's general prac-

tices, graduation policies, and school-to-work programs.

The Department of Defense (DOD) used the NLSY97 sample as part of a larger effort to establish new norms for the computer adaptive form of the *Armed Services Vocational Aptitude Battery (CAT-ASVAB)*, a military enlistment test. The scores from this group will also be instrumental in creating norms for the DOD *Interest-Finder (I-F)*, an occupational interest inventory. Administered from summer 1997 to spring 1998, the *CAT-ASVAB* and *I-F* collected baseline information on the aptitudes and vocational interests of NLSY97 respondents. Additionally, the *CAT-ASVAB* and *Interest-Finder* were administered to a group of participants age 17-23 who were sampled at the same time as NLSY97 respondents.

School survey and *CAT-ASVAB* data are not included on the main file or geocode CD-ROMs at this time. Researchers should either contact NLS User Services or look to future issues of this newsletter for updated information on these data sets.

NLSY97 data on CD-ROM

NLSY97 data are available to the public on CD-ROM at a charge of \$20. Each main file CD-ROM contains the data record of each youth, including information from the three survey instruments described above. The geocode CD-ROMs contain all the information present on the main file disc as well as detailed county-level geographic information about the youth's residence similar to that found in the NLSY79. To protect respondent confidentiality, the geocode file is available only to researchers who complete a non-disclosure agreement with BLS and agree to follow security procedures. For more information on the geocode accessing agreement, contact Rita Jain at BLS or NLS User Services (contact information is available on the back of this newsletter).

Each NLSY97 CD-ROM includes DOS-based search and extraction software and complete codebook documentation on each variable. To aid researchers in using the data, each disc is also accompanied by the *NLSY97 User's Guide*, which examines the data set in detailed topical sections, and various other supplemental documentation items, including the questionnaire. Researchers can obtain the NLSY97 discs

and documentation from NLS User Services.

Preliminary NLSY79 CD-ROM Now Available

Interested users may acquire a beta version of the 1998 NLSY79 CD-ROM. This disc presents only the data from the 1998 interview; users interested in longitudinal analyses must link the beta information to data extracted from the previously released 1979–96 CD-ROM. Researchers should be aware that the beta disc is a preliminary version that contains no created variables (except for sampling weights). Additionally, the data have not been completely cleaned, so there may be some changes between this preliminary disc and the final public release, expected later this year. However, the beta CD-ROM allows researchers to get an early start on analyses of the 1998 data.

The beta CD-ROM is not accompanied by the extensive documentation typical of a final public release, so it is best suited for experienced NLS users. Interested researchers should contact NLS User Services for pricing and ordering information.

Family Background Information from the NLS Original Cohorts and NLSY79

Surveys of the original cohorts and the NLSY79 have included various questions on respondents' family backgrounds. Family background information, typically asked about in the first round interviews, includes data on characteristics of the respondents' parents, siblings, and other background topics (for example, aspects of their home environment at age 14 or 15).

This article reviews the questions asked on these topics and the years they have been included in the surveys of the original cohorts and the NLSY79. It does not discuss current information collected on the respondent parents, such as data on transfers of time and money to parents that were collected in the 1997 surveys of the mature and young women, because the focus is on background information. In addition to the questions described below, researchers should note that most surveys have asked for basic information on all

members of the respondent's household, including age or birth date, educational background, labor force status, and relationship to the respondent. If any of the respondent's parents or siblings share the same household, basic information will be available for any years in which this arrangement is present.

Although they are not discussed in this article, NLSY97 respondents have also answered family background questions. Interested researchers should see the *NLSY97 User's Guide* for more information.

Parent information

Some basic demographic information is available for the parents of members of each cohort. In 1967, the mature women survey asked for the country of birth of both parents and the mother's highest grade completed. In 1992, the questionnaire for the mature women asked whether the respondents' parents were living and the age of the parents.

There is considerable information available about the parents of the young women respondents. Starting with the initial interview in 1968, various surveys have included questions about parents. Some items were asked only in that first year: Birthplace, highest grade attended, and highest grade completed. In several early surveys (including 1968), respondents reported whether parent was living or deceased; current occupation; and, referring to the past year, occupation, number of weeks worked, and whether the work was full time.

In addition to these basic questions, the 1978 young women questionnaire asked for the father's highest grade of school completed, and in 1987 respondents reported whether their father had ever worked at a union job. The 1978 survey also asked two questions about the mother's employment when the respondent was a teenager (that is, was she employed all of the time, part of the time, or never; what was her main occupation).

Information about family background is more limited for the older and young men cohorts compared to either of the women's cohorts or the NLSY79. The only information available concerning the parents of the older men is their birthplace. The young men answered a number of questions about both of their parents. In 1966, the survey asked about each parent's birth-

place, highest grade attended, highest grade completed, and whether the mother worked in the past year. For the first several surveys, respondents were asked about the number of weeks their parents worked in the past year, whether that was full-time work, their employment status, and their current occupation. From 1967 to 1969, young men respondents were also asked to report whether their parents' were living or deceased.

The parent information gathered from NLSY79 respondents is more detailed than that collected for the original cohorts. The 1979 and 1980 surveys contained questions asking whether the respondents' parents were living or deceased, the parents' birthplace (country, and state if in the U.S.), highest grade completed, if the parents worked for pay, if they worked full-time, and occupation of their longest job. The early questionnaires also inquired about residency situations, that is, whether the respondent lived with the mother and the distance from the respondent to the mother if they lived separately. They also asked whether the respondent's mother and father lived together and the distance from the respondent to the father if they did not. In the 1987 and 1988 surveys, respondents provided each parent's birth date; if this information was unknown, the questionnaire asked for the parent's age.

The NLSY79 children and young adult respondents have information about their mothers collected as part of the main NLSY79 surveys, since all the mothers are part of that cohort. The young adult questionnaire also gathers some specific information about the biological father that might not otherwise be available, such as the father's highest grade completed, race, and most recent employment. It also asks when the father last lived with the young adult or mother (or date of his death if applicable).

Sibling information

Most sibling information available for the mature women cohort was gathered in the 1977 and 1981 surveys. The 1977 questions asked about the number of siblings; the number who lived in the respondent's household; and the sex, date of birth, and highest grade completed of those living outside of that household. In 1981, the survey collected the number of living female and male siblings, as well as

the frequency of contact and distance between the respondent and her siblings. A separate 1984 question asked for the number of hours that the respondent spent caring for siblings not in her household.

Extensive information about the siblings of young women respondents was collected in 1968, 1978, and 1993. The original 1968 survey recorded the total number of the respondent's siblings, as well as the number living within and outside her household. For the oldest sibling outside of the household, the initial survey also collected the age, highest grade attended, and highest grade completed.

Besides the total number of siblings and the total number in the household, the 1978 questionnaire also asked for the sex, date of birth, and highest grade completed of siblings living outside of the respondent's household. The 1993 survey recorded the existence of any biological siblings as well as each sibling's sex, current age, highest grade completed, age at the birth of the sibling's first child, and the number of children ever born to him or her.

As with the parental information, the men's cohorts were asked far fewer questions about their siblings than the women. The older men reported the number of siblings dependent on them (1981, 1990), the likelihood of any sibling becoming dependent (1981), and whether a sibling was the source of financial aid the respondent had recently received (1990). In 1966, young men respondents reported the total number of their siblings and the number living outside the household. In the same survey, more detailed questions were asked concerning the respondent's oldest sibling. These included his or her age, the highest grade attended, whether grade was completed, the total hours worked in the past year, and the usual number of hours worked per week.

A few additional sibling questions were asked of young men in later years. In the 1967 survey, the number of siblings living in the respondent's household was listed by grade level. Questions that focused on details about siblings living outside of the household were part of the 1976 questionnaire; these asked for the sibling's age, highest grade completed, and sex. The 1981 survey asked for the number of siblings living outside of the household who were dependent on the respondent.

The NLSY79 gathered sibling informa-

tion in two surveys, 1979 and 1993. In the initial survey, respondents reported the number of siblings they had, how many were attending school, how many were older than the respondent, the age of the oldest, and the highest grade completed by the oldest. In addition, the 1993 questionnaire recorded individual details about each sibling. Starting with the first sibling that the respondent listed, the survey asked whether each was older or younger than the respondent, the age difference in years, the sibling's sex, the highest grade ever completed, the number of children each had, and their age at the first child's birth. If any of the siblings' birth dates indicated a possible twin or triplet relationship with the respondent, follow-up questions in the 1994 survey asked for confirmation of this multiple birth. If the respondent had a twin or triplet sibling, the survey also asked whether they were identical or fraternal.

The 1993 NLSY79 sibling data collection is assessed in a CHRR report, *The Collection of Sibling Attributes: Some Data Quality Issues*. Examining response rates to the various sibling questions, the report concludes that respondents are better able to report stable characteristics, such as age, than varying characteristics, such as amount of education, for their siblings. Recall problems are also associated more often with older rather than younger siblings. Finally, respondents with more than four siblings seem to have difficulty reporting information about each individual sibling. Interested researchers can obtain this report through NLS User Services (contact information is provided on the back of this newsletter).

Any siblings of the NLSY79 child and young adult respondents are typically interviewed as respondents themselves, so specific sibling questions are rare. In the self-administered portion of the child and young adult questionnaires, a few questions are asked concerning the quality of the respondents' relationship with their siblings.

Respondent's own background

In both the initial mature women (1967) and older men (1966) surveys, information was gathered concerning the respondent's household when he or she was 15 years old. These questions asked whether the residence was urban or rural, who else lived there, and the occupation and highest

grade completed by the father or other head of household. This mature women survey also asked for the occupation of the respondent's mother (if she worked for pay). In 1971, members of the older men's cohort were again questioned about their household at age 15. This series included whether the respondent lived with his mother, whether his mother worked for wages, and whether a foreign language was spoken at home.

The young women and young men cohorts have answered various questions about their household environment at age 14. In the 1968 young women's and 1966 young men's surveys, these questions included whether the respondent's residence was urban or rural; who lived there; and whether magazines, newspapers, or a library card were made available. An additional question asked young men for the occupation of their father or other head of household; young women reported the occupations of their mother and father or other head of household (if they worked for wages). For the young women's cohort, the 1972 questionnaire again asked about the respondent's household at age 14, recording who lived with her, the educational goal the respondent's parents had for her, and the atypicality of her mother's occupation. The young men also were asked a few household environment questions in a later survey. Their 1971 questionnaire asked for the educational goal the respondent's parents had for him and whether he lived with either of his parents at age 14.

Like the young men and young women, the childhood information available for the NLSY79 cohort refers to the respondent's household at age 14. Included in the initial survey, these questions were concerned with details about the residence and the household members. The questionnaire asked for the location of the respondent's residence (country, as well as county and state if in the United States) and whether the area was urban or rural. The information collected for the household members includes their relationships to the respondent; the relationship, work status, and occupation of the adults in the household; and whether any household members had a library card or received magazines or newspapers regularly.

For those NLSY79 respondents born outside the United States, its territories, or

Puerto Rico, the 1990 survey asked for specific details concerning their immigration history and visa status. These data include the dates of first and most recent entrance into the United States, as well as visa or immigration status, citizenship status, and country of citizenship at first and most recent entry or change in visa or immigration status. Information was also gathered concerning the respondent's current citizenship status in the United States, residence inside or outside the United States, expectations for choice of country of permanent residence, and the total number of years spent outside the United States since initial entry.

Childhood residence history for the NLSY79. In 1988, a detailed childhood residence history was collected from each interviewed respondent. Information included the ages at which a respondent lived with a biological, step-, or adopted mother or father. For those individuals not residing with any parent-type figure at a given age, follow-up questions detailed other forms of living arrangements (e.g., with grandparents, other relatives, foster care, or group or institutional arrangements). Auxiliary questions documented ages at which the respondent stopped living with a parent, which type of parent figure this happened to be, the reason for the change, and frequency of visitation with the absent parent within one year after the change.

A CHRR report, *Childhood Residence Patterns: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Work Experience of Youth*, evaluates the childhood residence history information collected in 1988. It confirms the high reliability and quality of these data and analyzes the content. It also includes suggestions for future data collections and research, especially with regard to step-family processes. Interested researchers should contact NLS User Services to obtain a copy of this report.

For more information

Family background questions are discussed in the *1999 NLS Handbook* and in the cohort-specific *NLS User's Guides*. The Handbook includes tables that provide information on the years in which various questions have been asked. The "Family Background" sections in the various user's guides offer a summary of the information available for each specific cohort. Users

may also wish to examine the actual questions as they are printed in the questionnaires from the various survey years. Researchers can obtain these documents from NLS User Services; contact information is provided on the back of this newsletter.

The influence of a respondent's family on adult outcomes has been extensively researched using NLS data. Users interested in obtaining more information on past research can browse the citations contained in the NLS annotated bibliography, located online at <http://www.chrr.ohio-state.edu/nls-bib/>. Several hundred citations and abstracts pertaining to family background can be located by searching terms such as "family," "siblings," "parental influences," "mother's influences," "socio-economic background," and the various family relationships (e.g., brothers, sons, mothers, etc.). Researchers have also taken advantage of some of the more specific sets of questions contained in the NLS surveys, resulting in articles on topics such as "birth order," "childhood residence," and "maternal employment."

References

Haurin, R. Jean. "Childhood Residence Patterns: Evidence from the National Longitudinal Surveys of Work Experience of Youth." *Report to the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services*. Columbus, OH: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, 1991.

Haurin, R. Jean. "The Collection of Sibling Attributes: Some Data Quality Issues." Columbus, OH: Center for Human Resource Research, The Ohio State University, 1994.

NLSY79 Child Assessment Completion Rates

CHRR recently published *Patterning of Child Assessment Completion Rates in the NLSY: 1986-1996* (November 1998). Frank L. Mott, with the assistance of Loretta Pierfelice, studied several issues associated with the interviewing process for the children of the NLSY79. One of the goals was to study changes in interview quality, as seen by changes in assessment or interview completion rates over time. The authors also looked for any substan-

tial evidence of changes in interview quality associated with the transition from a paper-and-pencil instrument (PAPI) to a computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) between 1992 and 1994. Finally, this research considered any pronounced associations between child or family characteristics and completion patterns that could be used to improve future completion rates. Interested researchers should contact NLS User Services to obtain a copy of this report.

Frequently Asked Questions

NLS User Services encourages researchers to contact them with questions and problems they have encountered while accessing and using NLS data or documentation. Every effort is made to answer these inquiries. Some recently asked questions that may be of general interest to NLS users are listed below with their answers.

Q1: Does the NLSY79 survey include any questions regarding whether people who are currently employed are also looking for different work?

A1: The 1996 interview included questions about job search for respondents who were currently employed; see variables R52556.-R52558.11. Note that job search questions have been asked in most surveys of respondents who were unemployed; see, for example, R52420.-R52425.11.

Q2: I cannot find any variables for the respondent's income in calendar year 1994 on the latest NLSY79 CD-ROM. Were these variables affected by the move to the biennial fielding of the survey?

A2: The change to a biennial interview schedule has affected the continuity of some key variables, particularly in the income section. Questions in this section ask about income in the previous calendar year, so information is not collected for the calendar year of the survey in the biennial format. However, many key NLSY79 variables are collected in an event history format, so the switch to a biennial schedule does not affect these data. For example, weeks worked and months receiving aid from government programs use the last interview date as a time reference, so continu-

ous information is available regardless of the survey schedule.

Q3: Do the NLSY79 sampling weights take the oversampling of blacks, Hispanics, and poor whites into account? In other words, are race and income stratification dimensions?

A3: Yes. The sampling weights take into account race and income (for poor whites), as well as whether the respondent was in the cross-sectional or supplemental sample. It should be noted that the income adjustment is based on the respondent's family income in 1978. The weighting process is described in more detail in sections 3.8 and 3.9 of the *NLSY79 User's Guide*.

Q4: In earlier years of the young women's and mature women's data, titles of employment-related variables contain phrases such as "current or last job," "current or last dual job," and "1st most recent job intrvng." The 1995 data for each cohort refer instead to "job #01," "job #02," and so on. How can I identify the CPS job, dual jobs, and intervening jobs? Do all employment-related variables whose titles include, for example, "job #02" refer to the same job for each respondent?

A4: For the 1995 survey, the CPS job can be identified by using the created ECPS roster (R18089. through R18097.). The item ECPS-01 corresponds to job 1, ECPS-02 is linked to the second job, and so on. If the employer listed in the first line of the job roster is the CPS employer, then ECPS-01 equals 1; otherwise, ECPS-01 equals 0. If a respondent's CPS employer is listed in the second line of the employer roster then ECPS-02 equals 1, and so on.

Researchers can identify dual jobs held at the 1995 survey date by using the rostered variables R18205.-R18207. These items classify each job as either "current" or "non-current." "Non-current" means the respondent is not currently working for that employer but did work at

that job at some point since the last interview date.

All variables with the same job number in the title refer to the same job for each respondent for that interview. However, job 1 in one year is not necessarily the same employer as job 1 in another year.

Completed NLS Research

The following is a list of recent research based on data from the various NLS cohorts that has not appeared in its current form in a previous issue of the *NLS News*. For a comprehensive list of NLS-based research, see the NLS Annotated Bibliography, located online at <http://www.chrr.ohio-state.edu/nls-bib/>.

Fendrich, Michael; Kim, Julia; and Wislar, Joseph S. "Longitudinal Analysis of Retest Artifact in NLSY Drug Use Reporting." Presented at the Data Quality in Longitudinal Surveys Conference, Ann Arbor, MI, October 28-29, 1998. Sponsored by the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, the National Longitudinal Surveys, and the Health and Retirement Study. E-mail: fendrich@uic.edu [NLSY79]

Guo, Guang. "The Timing of the Influences of Cumulative Poverty on Children's Cognitive Ability and Achievement." *Social Forces* Vol. 77, No. 1, pp. 257-287, September 1998. [NLSY79, NLSY79 Children]

Harper, Cynthia C. and McLanahan, Sara S. "Father Absence and Youth Incarceration." Presented at the 1998 meeting of the American Sociological Association, San Francisco, CA. [NLSY79] E-mail: ccharper@pop.upenn.edu

Haveman, Robert and Knight, Brian. "The Effect of Labor Market Changes from the Early 1970s to the Late 1980s on Youth Wage, Earnings, and Household Economic Position." Discussion Paper No. 1174-98,

Institute for Research on Poverty, University of Wisconsin-Madison, September 1998. [Young Men, Young Women, NLSY79]

Maxwell, Nan L. "Fertility Policy and Employment: Implications from the Former Soviet Union." *Population Research and Policy Review*, Vol. 17, pp. 351-368, 1998. [Mature Women, Young Women, NLSY79]

Moffitt, Robert A.; Reville, Robert; and Winkler, Anne E. "Beyond Single Mothers: Cohabitation and Marriage in the AFDC Program." *Demography*, Vol. 35, No. 3, pp. 259-278, August 1998. [NLSY79]

Moore, Kristin A.; Mariner, Carrie L.; and Halle, Tamara G. "Scaling Back Survey Scales: How Short is Too Short?" Presented at the Data Quality in Longitudinal Surveys Conference, Ann Arbor, MI, October 28-29, 1998. Sponsored by the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, the National Longitudinal Surveys, and the Health and Retirement Study. E-mail: kmoore@childtrends.org [NLSY79 and NLSY79 Children]

Waldron, Ingrid; Weiss, Christopher C.; and Hughes, Mary Elizabeth. "Interacting Effects of Multiple Roles on Women's Health." *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, Vol. 39, Num. 3, pp. 216-236, September 1998. [Young Women]

Wu, Lawrence L.; Martin, Steven P.; and Long, Daniel A. "Comparing Data Quality of Fertility and First Sexual Intercourse Histories." Presented at the Data Quality in Longitudinal Surveys Conference, Ann Arbor, MI, October 28-29, 1998. Sponsored by the Panel Study of Income Dynamics, the National Longitudinal Surveys, and the Health and Retirement Study. E-mail: lwu@ssc.wisc.edu [NLSY79]



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