

U.S. Department of Labor
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

Data Collection and Data Release Schedule

The following is the latest schedule for NLSY79 and NLSY97 data collections and data releases:

- **NLSY97 Survey.** Rounds 1 through 12 of NLSY97 data are now available. Round-13 data are scheduled for release in the summer of 2011. Round-14 data collection began in the fall of 2010 and will be released in 2012.
- **NLSY79 Main Survey.** Rounds 1 through 23 of NLSY79 data are available. Round-24 data will be released in early 2012. Round-25 data collection will begin in 2012.
- **NLSY79 Child Survey and NLSY79 Young Adult Survey.** Both surveys are fielded during the same approximate timeframe as the main NLSY79 survey. Data from all survey years through 2008 are now available. Data collected in 2010 will be released in 2012.

Each cohort's dataset includes a merge of all previous rounds from that cohort which have been released. All public NLS data can be accessed free of charge on the Internet at www.nlsinfo.org/investigator, which features data from the active cohorts just listed, as well as the four NLS original cohorts (Older Men, Mature Women, Young Women, and Young Men). □

Attention, Geocode Users: County-Level Marriage and Divorce Data Available from NCFMR

NLS geocode data users may be interested in augmenting their research with county-

level marriage and divorce information compiled by the National Center for Family & Marriage Research (NCFMR), part of Bowling Green State University in Bowling Green, Ohio. The NCFMR estimates adjusted marriage and divorce rates for more than 3,000 counties in the United States. The estimates are from county court records on numbers of marriages and divorces and from U.S. census data for 2000. Researchers can use these data to examine marriage and divorce rates geographically. The data are provided in a spreadsheet that contains estimates of the number of divorces, population, married population, divorce rates, adjusted divorce rates, and geocodes, by county. The data are found on the NCFMR website, <http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu/page81181.html>.

NLS geocode data files contain restricted data on respondents, including FIPS codes. Want to become an NLS geocode data user? Learn about the application process at www.bls.gov/nls/geocodeapp.htm. □

Tips on Using Investigator: How to Look at Discrepant Cases

Outliers or other unusual responses from subjects can sometimes present "use or don't use?" dilemmas for researchers. One solution is to look more closely at the discrepant cases (especially when there are only a handful) to see how other responses from those individuals match up with the questionable data. Another solution is to look for a pattern of invalidity. Armed with more information, a researcher may feel more confident in making a decision about including or excluding those data.

NLS Investigator (www.nlsinfo.org/investigator) has an easy-to-use option

that lists specific respondents' answers for selected variables. Here is the step-by-step process, using the NLSY97 as an example:

1. Get the ID number (R00001.00) for a few of the discrepant cases for the variable in question. For instance, suppose you were using the variable YSAQ-366, which indicates the number of alcoholic drinks a respondent reports taking per day in the 30 days prior to the interview. You note that in the 1999 survey year, four respondents reported drinking 60 drinks per day, obviously an unusually high number. Using Investigator's "Create Frequency/Table" option under its Advanced Download tab, run a cross-tabulation with this drinks-per-day variable (use the Apply Universe Restrictors option to restrict the data to those reporting 60 drinks per day) and the R00001.00 variable (the preselected ID variable that is automatically a part of the list of variables selected). The resultant table will show the ID number of those four respondents.
2. Returning to the variable search option, select several variables that might be relevant to check. In the case of extreme alcohol consumption, a researcher might choose general health, weight and height, hours worked per week, reported alcohol consumption in other rounds, and more. Click the "Review Selected Variables" to list the variables you have chosen. (Alternatively, you could bring in a tag set you already created).
3. Once the list of selected variables is on the screen, look for the word "Options" on the left side of the page, just

above the RNUM column. Click on “Options” to expand the list of options, which are listed in the various columns.

4. Click on the box labeled “Show Data Column.” Notice that Investigator now adds a new column on the right side. (You may need to scroll over to see it.)
5. Just above the added column is a field called ID. In this field, type in the ID number of one of the discrepant cases and click on the refresh symbol icon just to the right of the field to refresh the screen.
6. The new column is now populated with numbers. These numbers are the responses by the respondent in question for your selected variables.
7. Check the remainder of the discrepant cases by entering their ID numbers one at a time in the ID box, refreshing each time.

To gain further insight into the reliability or accuracy of a response, users also may want to look at the interviewer’s assessment of the respondent’s basic understanding and cooperation during the interview. (See the “Interviewer Remarks” Area of Interest). □

What We Know about NLSY Interviewers

Both the NLSY97 and NLSY79 datasets include demographic data about the interviewers and details about their tenure as NLS interviewers.

NLSY79 Interviewer Characteristics. Information about NLSY79 interviewers is available for each NLSY79 survey round. Variables present in all survey years include the interviewer’s race, sex (gender), age, and educational level, as well as the number of previous rounds the interviewer has interviewed the respondent, the number of years the person has been a National Opinion Research Center (NORC) interviewer, and a unique ID number (each interviewer receives a public ID number that remains the same

for that interviewer across rounds). Selected survey years have included questions about the interviewer’s fluency in languages other than English; whether and, if so, why the interviewer left NORC; and the interviewer’s, pay rate, number of NORC projects worked on in the calendar year, and number of hours worked.

NLSY79 interviewer characteristic variables can be found in NLS Investigator (www.nlsinfo.org/investigator) as part of the “Interviewer Characteristics” Area of Interest. In the Child data, the Interviewer ID number is assigned to the “Child Supplement” or “Mother Supplement” Area of Interest, according to the instrument administered by the interviewer. In the Young Adult dataset, the interviewer ID number for each round can be found in the “YA Interview Remarks” Area of Interest.

NLSY97 Interviewer Characteristics. The datasets for rounds 1–5 of the NLSY97 included only the interviewer ID number. Starting in round 6, data on interviewers included year of birth, Hispanic or non-Hispanic ethnicity, race, gender, highest grade completed, current or previous occupation, and experience (number of years worked as an interviewer for any survey organization). Rounds 8 and up included an interviewer’s starting and stopping dates for a particular survey round and a yes/no variable on whether NORC classified the interviewer was classified as Spanish speaking. Also available beginning in round 10 is a variable specifying the interviewer’s average number of hours worked per completed interview as a proportion of the overall number of hours worked per case for the project at the end of the first 8 weeks of the field period.

Starting in rounds 2 and up, each interviewer recorded the number of calls and/or visits needed to complete the interview and whether he or she had been the person who had interviewed the respondent in the previous interview. Beginning in round 7, variables were made available about the history of contacting the respondent for each survey round, regardless of whether the respondent was successfully interviewed in any particular survey year.

NLSY97 interviewer variables can be found in the “Interviewer Remarks” Area of Interest in NLS Investigator. □

NLS Terms to Know: “Young Adult”

Although many of the NLS cohorts have included respondents who might be categorized as young adults in terms of their age, the “Young Adult” term in NLS parlance refers specifically to those respondents ages 15 years and older who are the children of NLSY79 female respondents. Beginning in 1994, NLSY79 Young Adults ceased receiving the assessments given to their younger counterparts, the Children of the NLSY79. Instead, the Young Adults began participating in biennial personal or telephone interviews more similar to the main NLSY79 instrument. The Young Adult respondents answered questions on their work and military experience, schooling, training, family background, health, fertility, income and assets, dating and relationships, attitudes, and drug and alcohol use. (Note that, prior to age 15, most of the Young Adult respondents were assessed multiple times as part of the Child survey, making the young adult data particularly rich.

Eight rounds of data on Young Adults (information gathered from 1994 to 2008) have been released to the public. In 2008, this cohort ranged in age from 14 to 37 years, with 6,306 respondents interviewed. Data for 2010 will be released in 2012. The plan is to interview these respondents every 4 years, starting when they reach age 40.

The young adult data collection effort is funded by grants from the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development. □

Pro-Social Activities Recently Added as NLSY97 Area of Interest

Users can now select “Pro-Social Activities” as an NLS Investigator Area of Interest search option for the NLSY97 cohort. Pro-social activities include those denoted by the following variables:

- Respondent’s volunteer work, including frequency and main reason for participation
- Frequency of attending meetings or events for political, environmental, or community groups

- Donations to a cause
- Respondent’s mode (online or offline) for communicating with family and friends
- Mode for sending greetings, cards, or invitations
- Mode for seeking new people to meet or date
- Mode for sharing photos, videos, etc.
- Performance of altruistic deeds in the past 12 months, including donating blood, giving to the homeless, returning extra change to a cashier, letting someone ahead in line, and allowing someone to borrow a valuable item.
- Respondent’s opinion on the importance of community participation, including voting in elections, jury duty, reporting a crime, and keeping informed about news and public issues.

Users can access these pro-social variables along with all other public variables on the Internet at www.nlsinfo.org/investigator. □

NLS Topic Spotlight: Caregiver Variables

At some point in their lives, many Americans face the added responsibility of caring for aging parents, in-laws, or other relatives or friends who need special assistance. The NLSY79 Main Youth Survey and the NLS Mature Women’s Survey and NLS Young Women’s Survey (known collectively as the NLS Women’s Surveys) for various years all include questions about providing care to someone who is chronically ill or disabled. The Women’s Surveys also included questions about assisting elderly parents.

NLSY79 Caregiver Variables. In 2008, NLSY79 respondents answered a series of questions about providing care. (See T20531.00 through T20537.00.) Respondents were asked whether any household members were disabled or chronically

ill. If the respondents said yes, then they identified the household members and indicated whether they regularly spent time helping or taking care of them and the number of hours they regularly spent providing such care. They were then asked whether they provided regular care for a relative or friend not living in the household and the number of hours they spent doing so. For the 2008 survey year, 458 NLSY79 respondents reported that they regularly spent time helping household members. The mean number of hours spent per week was 35.66. A total of 707 respondents reported that they helped out-of-household friends or relatives; the mean number of hours spent per week was 10.35.

These variables are found in the “Caregiving” Area of Interest in NLS Investigator. *NLS Women’s Surveys Caregiver Variables.* In the 1982, 1984, and 1987–93 survey years, the Mature Women respondents answered questions about giving care to the disabled or chronically ill. As in the NLSY79, these respondents were asked about caring for individuals inside and outside the household and about the amount of time they spent doing so. The 1984 survey also gathered information on the relationship of the outside-the-household individuals to the respondent—parent, in-law, son or daughter, brother or sister, other relative, friend, or “other”—and on the amount of time spent helping each person. The Young Women respondents provided similar information about caregiving in the 1991–2003 survey years. To find the associated variables, use “Helping Others” in the “Word in Title” search.

In addition, the datasets from the Women’s Surveys provide details on time spent helping parents. In 1997 and 2001, the Young Women and Mature Women cohorts were asked whether they had spent any time during the previous 12 months helping their father, mother, or in-laws with personal care, household chores, or errands and, if they had, the number of hours they spent doing so. The 1997 datasets also included variables about the overall health (excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor) of the respondents’ parents. These variables can be found in the “Transfers—Parents” Area of Interest. □

Bankruptcy Variables in the NLSY

Bankruptcy is a timely research topic in these days of economic uncertainty. The NLSY79 and NLSY97 datasets have included bankruptcy variables in recent survey years.

NLSY79 and NLSY97 respondents were asked whether they or their spouse had ever declared bankruptcy and, if so, whether they had declared it more than once, the month and year of the bankruptcy, the type of bankruptcy (Chapter 7, 11, etc.), and whether the bankruptcy was related to a failure of a business that the respondent or spouse owned. This series of questions was included in the NLSY79 survey in 2004 and 2008 and in the NLSY97 survey during the 2005–08 survey years. Bankruptcy variables also will be included in the NLSY97 Round-13 dataset (to be released in mid-2011) and in Round 24 of the NLSY79.

In 2004 and 2008, NLSY79 respondents also provided information about whether they or their spouse had applied for any type of credit or loan since the bankruptcy had been declared and whether their request for credit was turned down or reduced.

Bankruptcy variables can be accessed through NLS Investigator (www.nlsinfo.org/investigator) by using “bankruptcy” in the Word-In-Title search. □

Frequently Asked Questions

The NLS staff encourages researchers to contact NLS User Services with questions and problems encountered while accessing and using NLS data or documentation. Every effort is made to answer these inquiries. Following are some recent questions and answers that may be of general interest to NLS users:

Q1. How can I tell whether an NLSY97 respondent has a sibling who is also an NLSY97 respondent?

A1. The variable SIDCODE (R11930.00) is the unique identifier assigned to respondents of multiple-respondent households. For example, if there are three respondents in a particular household, these respondents

would share the same SIDCODE value. To identify an sibling who was interviewed, use the variables YOUTH_SIBID, which is the ID of the other interviewed youth, and YOUTH_SIBRELY, which is that youth's relationship to the respondent. Up to five siblings were interviewed as respondents in the NLSY97.

Q2. With regard to the "Activity Most of Survey Week" variable in the NLSY79, how is "working" defined?

A2. The "Activity Most of Survey Week" variable comes from the respondent question "What were you doing most of last week—working, going to school, or something else?" Civilian respondents are considered to be "working" if they are (1) working for pay at a job, (2) running their own business, profession, or farm, or (3) working without pay in their family's farm or business. The "working" category includes respondents on paid jury duty, respondents working as civilian employees of the Armed Forces or the National Guard, and respondents paid, not with money, but "in kind" (e.g., meals, living quarters, or supplies).

Besides the category of "working," other coded activities include "with a job—not at work," "looking for work," "keeping house," "going to school," "unable to work," and "other."

The "Activity Most of Survey Week" variable comes from a series of questions often referred to as the CPS questions, so called because the series corresponds to questions found in the Current Population Survey. Conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau for the Bureau of Labor Statistics, the CPS is a monthly survey that collects information about the number of persons in the United States who are employed, unemployed, or not in the labor force in a specific survey week. CPS questions can be found in all NLS cohort datasets, although they are available only in select survey years.

Q3. Does the NLSY79 include any variables about whether the respondents' parents are still alive?

A3. NLSY79 respondents answer a series of questions about their biological parents' mortality in the 40+ Health Module and the 50+ Health Module. The respondent first

indicates whether his or her father or mother is still alive. If the parent is deceased, the respondent cites the cause of death and the age at death.

Q4. How are height and weight measured in the NLSY79 Young Adult and Children of the NLSY Surveys?

A4. In the Young Adult Survey, height and weight are self-reported. In the Child Survey, the child's height and body weight at the time of the interview are measured by the interviewer or recorded as reported by the mother. Starting in the 1988 dataset, a "How was height/weight reported?" variable indicates how that information was obtained (with a tape or scale measure, from the mother's recall, or from the child's recall).

Although efforts are made to review out-of-range values in the child data, values generally appear in the database as reported by the mother or child or as measured by the interviewer. In 1986 only, two additional revised child weight variables are provided, reflecting edits to the original values.

Height and weight variables appear in each year-specific "Child Supplement" Area of Interest in NLS Investigator. Starting in 2006, reports of children's height and weight were also captured in the Mother Supplement. For Young Adults, height and weight variables are assigned to the "YA Health" Area of Interest. Beginning in 2006, Young Adults also described their own weight, from very underweight to very overweight.

Q5. Could you tell me where the Young Adult risk-taking variables originated?

A5. The "risk-taking variables" refer to questions asked of Young Adults in survey years since 1994 to rate how impulsive or ready to take risks they were. Respondents' answers were evaluated for how well they applied: "I often get in a jam because I do things without thinking"; "I think that planning takes the fun out of things"; "I have to use a lot of self-control to keep out of trouble"; "I enjoy taking risks"; "I enjoy new and exciting experiences, even if they are a little frightening or unusual"; and "Life with no danger in it would be too dull for me." (See Y22345.00 through Y22350.00 in 2008). These same questions also were asked in the Child Self-Admin-

istered Supplement (CSAS) back when the respondents were 10 years old.

The six risk-taking answers provided to respondents were taken from a series of 25 items in Section F, "Social-Psychology," of the Teen In-Home Questionnaire of the American Teenage Study, a forerunner of the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health.

Q6. How can I find out how many NLSY97 respondents are deceased?

A6. Use the "Reason for Noninterview" created variable, abbreviated RNI. Available for each survey round since the initial 1997 round, the RNI variable provides a list of the reasons respondents did not participate. The following two answer categories within the variable can be combined to get the number deceased: "Prior deceased," which gives a count of the respondents who were reported as deceased during the previous rounds, and "Deceased," which gives a count for respondents reported as deceased during the most recent round. For the 2008 survey year (Round 12), there were 90 prior deceased and 13 deceased, for a total of 103 deceased respondents.

Q7. What is the NLSY97 transcript survey?

A7. The NLSY97 supplemented its regular data collection efforts with special collections of information gleaned from the high school transcripts of NLSY97 respondents. Transcripts were secured only if the respondents granted permission and the school or district agreed to release the information and after the respondents were no longer enrolled as high school students. In 1999–2000, transcripts were processed for 1,417 youths. A second wave in 2004 yielded transcripts for 4,815 youths. (For both the 1999–2000 and 2004 waves, transcript information could not be obtained for 2,752 respondents.) School registrars provided a copy of the transcript and a course catalog (if available) and indicated whether the respondent had been designated for a special program (such as bilingual, gifted/talented, or special needs). From these sources, variables were created that contain a history of the respondent's terms in school, courses taken, and other academic indicators. To find these variables in NLS Investigator, search the prefix TRANS_ as a variable name. Users can learn more

about transcript data in Appendix 11 of the *NLSY97 Codebook Supplement* (on the Internet at www.nlsinfo.org/nlsy97/nlsdocs/nlsy97/codesup/mapp11.html). □

Completed NLS Research

The following is a listing of recent research based on data from the NLS cohorts that has not appeared in its current form in a previous issue of the *NLS News* (see the NLS Annotated Bibliography on the Internet at www.nlsbibliography.org for a comprehensive listing of NLS-related research):

- Ahn, Taehyun. "Attitudes Toward Risk and Self-Employment of Young Workers." *Labour Economics* 17,2 (April 2010): 434–442. [NLSY79]
- Aratani, Yumiko. "Public Housing Revisited: Racial Differences, Housing Assistance, and Socioeconomic Attainment Among Low-Income Families." *Social Science Research* 39,6 (November 2010): 1108–1125. [NLSY79]
- Cutler, David M., and Lleras-Muney, Adriana. "Understanding Differences in Health Behaviors by Education." *Journal of Health Economics* 29,1 (January 2010): 1–28. [NLSY79]
- D'Onise, Katina, Lynch, John W., Sawyer, Michael G., and McDermott, Robyn A. "Can Preschool Improve Child Health Outcomes? A Systematic Review." *Social Science and Medicine* 70, 9 (May 2010): 1423–1440. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY97]
- D'Onofrio, Brian M., Goodnight, Jackson A., Van Hulle, Carol A., Rodgers, Joseph Lee, Rathouz, Paul J., Waldman, Irwin D., and Lahey, Benjamin B. "Maternal Age at Childbirth and Offspring Disruptive Behaviors: Testing the Causal Hypothesis." *Journal of Child Psychology and Psychiatry* 50,8 (August 2009): 1018–1028. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Flores-Lagunes, Alfonso, and Light, Audrey L. "Interpreting Degree Effects in the Returns to Education." *Journal of Human Resources* 45,2 (Spring 2010): 439–467. [NLSY79]
- Gitchel, Dent, Turner, Ronna, and Rumrill, Phillip. "Differential Item Functioning in Rehabilitation Research." *Work: A Journal of Prevention, Assessment and Rehabilitation* 36,2 (January 2010): 361–369. [NLSY79, NLSY79 Young Adult]
- Grissmer, David W., Grimm, Kevin J., Aiyer, Sophie M., Murrah, William M., and Steele, Joel S. "Fine Motor Skills and Early Comprehension of the World: Two New School Readiness Indicators." *Developmental Psychology* 46,5 (September 2010): 1008–1017. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Han, Wen-Jui, Miller, Daniel P., and Waldfoegel, Jane. "Parental Work Schedules and Adolescent Risky Behaviors." *Developmental Psychology* 46,5 (September 2010): 1245–1267. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Harford, Thomas C., Yi, Hsiao-Ye, and Grant, Bridget F. "Five-year Diagnostic Utility of 'Diagnostic Orphans' for Alcohol Use Disorders in a National Sample of Young Adults." *Journal of Studies on Alcohol and Drugs* 71,3 (May 2010): 410–417. [NLSY79]
- Kahn, Lisa B. "Long-Term Labor Market Consequences of Graduating From College in a Bad Economy." *Labour Economics* 17,2 (April 2010): 303–316. [NLSY79]
- Lee, Kyunghye. "Do Early Academic Achievement and Behavior Problems Predict Long-Term Effects Among Head Start Children?" *Children and Youth Services Review* 32,12 (December 2010): 1690–1703. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Lo, Celia C., and Cheng, Tyrone C. "Onset Drinking: How It Is Related Both to Mother's Drinking and Mother-Child Relationships." *Substance Use and Misuse* 45,6 (May 2010): 888–900. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY97]
- Lucas-Thompson, Rachel G., Goldberg, Wendy A., and Prause, JoAnn. "Maternal Work Early in the Lives of Children and Its Distal Associations with Achievement and Behavior Problems: A Meta-Analysis." *Psychological Bulletin* 136,6 (November 2010): 915–942. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY97]
- Margerison Zilko, C.E. "Economic Contraction and Birth Outcomes: An Integrative Review." *Human Reproduction Update* 16,4 (July–August 2010): 445–458. [NLSY79]
- Morgan, S. Philip, and Rackin, Heather. "Correspondence Between Fertility Intentions and Behavior in the United States." *Population and Development Review* 36,1 (March 2010): 91–118. [NLSY79]
- Munasib, Abdul, and Bhattacharya, Samrat. "Is the 'Idiot's Box' Raising Idiocy? Early and Middle Childhood Television Watching and Child Cognitive Outcome." *Economics of Education Review* 29,5 (October 2010): 873–883. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Painter, Matthew A. II. "Get a Job and Keep It! High School Employment and Adult Wealth Accumulation." *Research in Social Stratification and Mobility* 28,2 (June 2010): 233–249. [NLSY79]
- Roberts, Tracy Elizabeth, and Martin, Steven P. "Welfare Exit, Marriage, and Welfare Recidivism: A Reevaluation of Patterns of the 1980s and 1990s." *Population Research and Policy Review* 29,2 (April 2010): 105–125. [NLSY79]
- Robst, John Michael, and Weinberg, Charlie. "Childhood Behavioral Problems and Dropping Out of School." *Eastern Economic Journal* 36,4 (Fall 2010): 523–538. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Wang, Lijuan. "IRT–ZIP Modeling for Multivariate Zero-Inflated Count Data." *Journal of Educational and Behavioral Statistics* 35, 6 (December 2010): 671–713. [NLSY97]
- Western, Bruce, and Pettit, Becky. "Incarceration and Social Inequality." *Daedalus* 139,3 (Summer 2010): 8–19. [NLSY79]
- Yamaguchi, Shintaro. "The Effect of Match Quality and Specific Experience on Career Decisions and Wage Growth." *Labour Economics* 17,2 (April 2010): 407–423. [NLSY79] □



NLS Contact Information

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