

The 1998 NLSY79 YOUNG ADULT QUESTIONNAIRE

An Overview

The 1998 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY79) included an interview with the children of NLSY79 mothers who were at least 15 years of age by 12/31/98 and who were no older than twenty at the time of the interview. Interviews were completed with 2143 of these Young Adults, out of an eligible sample of 2547. The in-person, CAPI-administered questionnaire focused on the transition to adulthood, with detailed questions on work experience, military experience, schooling, training, family background, dating and relationship history, fertility, child care, health, income and assets, and attitudes. A confidential self-report booklet was used to collect information on interactions with other family members, substance use, sexual activity, non-normative activities, computer use, health problems, and prosocial behavior.

The NLSY79 1998 Young Adult and Child preliminary data are being released on CD with Windows-based extraction software. The CD includes html versions of each section of the survey. The preliminary data are largely unedited. Users are encouraged to bring data and documentation errors to the attention of Canada Keck by e-mail at keck@postoffice.chrr.ohio-state.edu. Although only the 1998 Young Adult data are on the preliminary release CD, the identification codes of both the Young Adult respondents and their mothers allow users to connect these data to Young Adult respondent information from 1996 and 1994 as well as to any of the Child record types, including the 1986-1996 assessment files, or to information about that young adult's mother, drawn from the NLSY79 main Youth.

The final release of the NLSY79 1998 Child and Young Adult data is scheduled for April 2000. This final release CD will contain the 1986-1998 longitudinal record for the Children and the 1994, 1996, and 1998 Young Adult data. Thus, the final release will contain all the assessment information and constructed variables for these same respondents when they were part of the Child sample that has been interviewed every two years since 1986, as well as their 1994 and 1996 Young Adult data if applicable.

The following outline briefly describes the contents of each section of the 1998 Young Adult survey instruments and highlights differences between the main Youth and the Young Adult CAPI instruments.

Section 1: Household Interview (see [Household Interview.html](#))

The household interview for the Young Adult questionnaire closely parallels that of the NLS main Youth; however, no pre-existing information is incorporated into this section. Each young adult goes through this section as though this were a new household, even if the young adult is living in the NLSY79 mother's household. The interviewer is first asked to describe the type of dwelling that best describes the Young Adult's usual living arrangement. Questions are asked about the identification, gender, age, and relationship to the young adult of each person usually living in the household. Information is also asked about the employment status during the past year of each person age 14 and older and the highest grade completed by each household member age five and older. A limited amount of information is collected on the type and location of the residence.

Section 2: Family Background (see [Sec2 Family Background.html](#))

The family background section is unique to the Young Adult questionnaire but parallels information collected at earlier points in time for main Youth respondents. This section includes information about date of birth, residence history, race, ethnicity and religious affiliation and attendance. There are also some questions about father's presence/absence, his work, education, and race. Respondents are branched in this section based on whether they are living with their mother, with both parents, on their own, or in some other living arrangement as well as on their interview status in 1994 and 1996. Young adults not living with their mother are asked when and why they left home and the amount of contact they have with their parent(s).

Section 3: Dating and Marital History (see [Sec3 Dating and Marital History.html](#))

This section of the questionnaire collects detailed cohabitation histories, with comparable series for spouses and partners. It parallels the marital history section in the NLS main Youth; there are some important differences. Whereas information is *updated* in the main Youth, the Young Adult first establishes an initial relationship history. Information is collected on up to four relationships. This YA section asks more detail about current spouses and partners than does Main Youth. For current spouses or partners, there is a short CPS (Current Population Survey) section on employment as well as a 14-item series on relationship quality. A number of questions are asked about current dating. Respondents are branched to various points in this section based on marital status.

Section 4: Regular Schooling (see Sec4 Schooling.html)

This section collects information about enrollment status, school experiences, and educational aspirations. Respondents, unless they are never enrolled or already have a HS diploma, answer core questions about repeating or skipping grades and dropping out. Additionally, there are special questions on (1) school quality and time spent on homework, as well as practices used by teachers and parental involvement, for people currently in grades 1-12, (2) course-taking for people who have completed ninth grade or more, (3) the use of career planning or college preparation services by people who are high school seniors or above, and (4) the type of school and program and financial assistance for college students. Respondents are branched throughout this section according to both enrollment status and highest grade completed.

Section 5: Military and Military Training (see Sec5 Military.html)

This section establishes a history of military service, with detailed questions asked about up to two periods of service. This section is similar to the military section in the NLS main Youth; however, the questions in the Young Adult ask greater detail about military jobs and training. This section determines which branches the Young Adult has been sworn into and the time period of service. There are also questions which ask about the most recent military job and training. The Young Adult is asked about schooling prior to and during their service.

Section 6: Current Labor Force Status (see Sec6 CPS.html)

This section in the Young Adult is nearly the same as the section in the NLS main Youth. If they are not currently serving in the Active Military Forces, the Young Adult respondents are asked about work activities during the last week. The survey determines if the Young Adult did any work for pay or profit, if they did unpaid work in a family business or farm, whether they have a disability that prevents them from doing work, number of jobs or businesses, and hours per week usually worked at job. If on layoff, they are asked about the duration of the layoff and job search activities. Those not working are asked about when they last worked, and if they are searching for a job. Respondents are also asked about active and passive job search methods.

Section 7: Jobs (see Sec7 Jobs.html)

The jobs section in the Young Adult closely parallels that in the NLS main Youth. The major difference between the two surveys is that the main Youth section updates from the date of the last interview, whereas the Young Adult creates an initial job history. Information about dates of employment for all jobs held since January 1, 1997, is collected.

Employer Supplements (see [Employer Supplement.html](#))

As in the main Youth, the employer supplements gather details about each job for each employer within the target period. These sections are essentially the same for the two surveys; however, the first employer supplement (which asks about current or most recent job) in the Young Adult has a short series of additional questions that asks the respondents to assess certain aspects of their job. Young Adults are also routed around questions concerning severance pay, pensions, and job search methods.

The specific questions asked about each job closely parallel those asked in the main NLSY79. Information is collected on the start and stop dates of employment, the number of hours worked, the type of shift worked, as well as within-job gaps and between-job gaps. Other job characteristics asked include occupation, industry, and the reason the respondent left a job (if not currently working there). Information on usual earnings as well as the hourly rate of pay is collected for up to the last five jobs held by the respondent. The Employer Supplement section also contains questions pertaining to the current/most recent job and corporation status of business. The class of worker questions are the same as in the main NLSY79.

Section 8: Gaps When Not Working or in Military (see [Sec8 Gaps.html](#))

This section of the Young Adult is the same as that in main Youth. The number and time periods of gaps when not working are determined. Young Adult respondents are asked whether they were looking for work or on layoff. If not looking for work, the respondent is asked the main reason why.

Section 9: Last Job Lasting Two Weeks or More (see [Sec 9 Last Job.html](#))

This short section is designed to collect a small amount of employment information from respondents who are not on active duty in the military and who do not report working at any jobs since January 1, 1997 (see Section 7, Jobs). For respondents who are not initially skipped out of this section, questions attempt to determine if and when they have had a job for pay lasting two or more weeks.

Section 10: First Significant Job after Leaving School (see [Sec10 1st Significant Job.html](#))

This section attempts to identify the first job a respondent had after leaving high school. Only respondents who have left school prior to January 1, 1997 are branched into this section. The respondent had to work at this job for at least 2 months and at least 20 hours a week in order to be eligible for detailed questions in this section. A limited number of job characteristics are asked about, including: start date, stop date, kind of business or industry, kind of work the respondent did, hours per week, hours per day, usual earnings, and why they left the job.

Section 11: Other Training (see Sec11 Other Training.html)

This section collects information about training received outside of regular schooling or the military. The questions are very similar to the training section of main Youth; however, the Young Adult has additional questions about types of government programs and types of ancillary services received as part of training programs. Respondents are asked to identify the type of training, the duration of the program, as well as the source of money to pay for the training. In addition, they are asked if the training was useful on the current job or if it helped them to get a different job. The Young Adult questionnaire also asks about certificates, licenses and journeyman's cards.

Section 12: Fertility (see Sec12 Fertility.html)

The fertility section of the Young Adult parallels that in main Youth in most ways. However, in the Young Adult fertility section, no information is collected about non-biological children and female respondents are not asked about pregnancies not ending in a live birth. The fertility section includes two paths for collecting fertility information. Previously interviewed Young Adults are asked to verify and update their fertility information, as is done for main Youth respondents. Respondents who are Young Adults for the first time in 1998 have their complete fertility record collected. The respondent identifies each child either ever born or born since the last interview and answers questions regarding the child's residence and contact with each parent. Female respondents are asked about the pregnancy, the birthweight and length of the child when born, medical visits during the first year due to sickness or injury, well baby care, health insurance, and feeding for either all pregnancies or pregnancies since the last interview. Both males and female respondents are asked about wantedness and health insurance for their children. All respondents are asked about how many children they expect to have.

Section 13: Child Care (see Sec13 Child Care.html)

The child care section in the Young Adult has questions which are parallel in form to main Youth, but the Young Adult questionnaire focuses on current child care rather than on child care in the first three years of life. The Young Adult survey asks about child care arrangements for respondent's own and/or spouse's/partner's children who are currently living in the household.

Section 14: Health (see Sec14 Health.html)

The health section in the Young Adult differs in several ways from the health section in the Main Youth. In Main Youth, the health section concentrates on work-related injuries, whereas the Young Adult health section is more general and more closely parallels the health history that has been obtained for the children of NLSY79 mothers. The Young Adult health section gathers information on types of limitations, accidents and injuries, number of hospitalizations, height, weight, and insurance coverage. Young Adult respondents who are not in their mother's household are asked additional questions about illnesses and routine medical care. Questions on whether the respondent is right- or left-handed are asked of new respondents.

Section 15: Income and Assets (see Sec15 Income and Assets.html)

This section closely parallels the analogous section in main Youth; however, main Youth has more extensive questions in areas such as interest income, filing income taxes, and income received by household members other than the respondent or spouse/partner. The Young Adults are asked about income they have received from the military, from wages, salary, commissions, or tips, from their farm, or from non-farm business, partnership, or professional practice. Respondents are asked if they received unemployment compensation and, if so, they are asked how much they received per week for each year received.

Respondents who are married or who have a partner are asked about income received by their spouse or partner from the military, wages, farm, or business. They are also asked whether their spouse received unemployment compensation.

For each of the following types of reciprocity, respondents are asked if they or their spouse or partner have received it, and if so, during what time periods and for what amounts. The reciprocity categories are: child support; AFDC; food stamps; supplemental security income, public assistance, or welfare payments. Finally, respondents are asked about assets.

Section 16: Attitudes (see Sec16 Attitudes.html)

This section is somewhat unique to the Young Adult questionnaire but contains series of questions that have been used in previous rounds of main Youth. Some of the attitudinal series are asked only of Young Adults going through the survey for the first time in 1998.

The first questions about the world of work are based on questions in the 1979 round of the NLSY79; these are asked only of new Young Adults. The series about the respondent's knowledge of the world of work is followed by a number of hypothetical job offers, also asked only of new respondents. Each job offer contains a wage offer as well as a brief description of the job duties and respondents are asked whether or not they would accept the offer.

All respondents are given the Pearlin Mastery scale, the Rosenberg self-esteem scale, and a 7-item version of the CES-D depression. Young Adults either new to the survey in 1998 or interviewed as Young Adults in 1994 answer a number of questions on women's roles and family attitudes.

NLSY79 Young Adult Self-Report (see yasrb98.pdf)

This self-administered confidential booklet includes a wide range of questions about parent/child relationships, computer use, drug and alcohol use, cigarette use, contact with the criminal justice system, sexual activity, abortion history and participation in community activities.