

National Longitudinal Survey Of Children And Youth Vol 1, number 1



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WELCOME TO OUR NEWSLETTER

On behalf of the NLSCY Project Team, we welcome you to the inaugural edition of "Developments". We hope that this newsletter will help to keep people informed as we progress in the development of the NLSCY, and we welcome your feedback.



COLLECTION ON SCHEDULE

Data collection for 1994-95 is nearing completion. The survey was conducted in November, December, February, and March. The data files are now being processed.



DID YOU KNOW...?

In 1992, funding for the National Longitudinal Survey of Children (NLSCY) was approved. A joint team of staff of

Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) and Statistics Canada was responsible for the development of the Survey.

Purpose

The primary objective of the NLSCY is to develop a national database on the characteristics and life experiences of Canadian children as they grow from infancy to adulthood. Longitudinal data can help us to learn about the impacts of various factors on children's development over time. This information will be available to policy makers and researchers interested in developing effective policies and strategies to help children to live healthy, active and rewarding lives. Data collected will help us find out what works for children so that we can place our dollars where they work best.

Design

For the data being collected in 1994-95, the sample is divided into seven age groupings: 0-11 months, 1, 2-3, 4-5, 6-7, 8-9, and 10-11 years. Information will be collected every two years on a maximum of four children under the age of 12 in each household.

The NLSC is using Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAP) to collect the data. The interviewers read the questions off the screen of a lap-top computer and enter responses directly on the computer. This helps reduce both interview and data capture time.

Content

The NLSCY covers a broad range of factors affecting child growth and development. Information on the child's parent(s) and other family members, on the characteristics of the family and on the neighbourhood are collected. The NLSCY also gathers data on the child's health, development, temperament, behaviour, child care and school experiences, participation in activities and family and custody history. The primary respondent in the initial collection cycles is the household member most knowledgeable about the child, usually the mother. She provides information about the parent(s) and child(ren). The other components of the survey are described elsewhere in this newsletter.



NLSC DIRECT ASSESSMENT MEASURES

One component of the NLSCY consists of the direct assessment measures, that is, sets of questions that are asked of the children themselves. We have tried to strike a balance between respondent burden (we don't want to wear out our respondents in the first cycle...we value their long-term participation) and our zeal to learn all that we can!

The two direct assessment measures for the first NLSCY cycle are the receptive vocabulary measure for pre-schoolers and a math skills test for children in grades 2 and over.

The first measure, the Peabody Picture Vocabulary Test - Revised (PPVT-R) measures the receptive vocabulary of four and five year olds and is conducted in the household by the interviewer. The child looks at pictures on an easel and identifies the picture which matches the word the interviewer reads out.

The second measure is a shortened version of the Mathematics Computation Test of the standardized Canadian Achievement Tests, Second Edition (CAT/2) and is administered by the teacher in the classroom. Both these measures will allow us to follow the cognitive development of these children.



TEACHER/PRINCIPAL COLLECTION

Yet another interesting component of the NLSCY is our teacher/principal collection. We have asked the parents of each school-age child for permission to contact the teacher regarding the academic achievement and behaviour of the child and for information on the classroom environment. The school principal will also be contacted to provide information on school policies and educational climate, including information on the student body as a whole. This information, in conjunction with responses received from the parent and child, will provide multiple sources of information on the child, will enrich the data and will enhance data analysis.



QUESTIONNAIRE FOR 10 & 11 YEAR OLDS

The 10 and 11 year olds in our sample are helping us out too. While their Mom or Dad is being interviewed, they are completing a questionnaire on their own (provided their parents have given consent).

We want to find out how they get along at school, with friends and family members, and how they feel they generally behave. This information will provide a rich addition to the data collected from their parents and teachers.

As the children in our sample get older we plan to use questionnaires like this one to get more and more of our information from the children themselves.

DATA COLLECTION IN THE TERRITORIES

Data collection in the Yukon and Northwest Territories was carried out by the Bureau of Statistics in each territory on behalf of Statistics Canada. The Bureaus, with the territorial governments, HRDC and Statistics Canada, developed a somewhat reduced version of a combined NLSC and National Population Health Survey (NPHS) questionnaire for use in both territories. The NPHS is another national, longitudinal survey conducted by Statistics Canada

We are grateful for the assistance and cooperation of the Bureaus of Statistics in both territories and eagerly await their results.

WHAT'S NEXT

We are beginning to work on the content of the survey instruments for the second cycle of data collection which will occur in the Winter of 1996-97. Because the process of selecting, testing and programming questions takes time, we have to start early to determine which questions will be included. We will keep you posted on second cycle developments in subsequent newsletters.

DATA RELEASE

Because of the large amount of information being collected in the first survey cycle, the data will not all be ready for release at the same time. Statistics Canada will release a Highlights Report, an initial microdata file and documentation in the Fall of 1995. The remaining data will be released as it becomes available. Interested persons will be able to purchase a public microdata file, obtain copies of the other reports or request specialized datafiles.



Schedule of Activities

● Cycle One

- Early 1995 - Distribution of final documentation, including final questionnaire.
- Dec. 1994-Sept. 1995 - Processing and validation of data.
- April-Sept. 1995 - Development of documentation to accompany data file.

- Fall 1995 - Beginning of data release.

- **Cycle Two**

- Jan.-Dec. 1995 - Development of survey instruments.
- Fall 1995-Spring 1996 - Computer Assisted Personal Interviewing (CAPI) programming & testing.
- Summer 1996 - Finalization of survey instruments.
- Nov. 1996-Mar.1997 - NLSCY Data Collection.

**"Developments" is produced by the Applied Research Branch, Human Resources Development Canada. For additional copies, or an alternate format or further information including questionnaires and copies of papers, please contact NLSCY Project Coordinator Susan Mckellar at
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