

# National Survey of Children's Health

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# NSCH: Purpose, Participants, & Procedures

- Designed to produce national and state-level data on physical and emotional health of children 0 to 17 years old in the US
- Households randomly sampled and contacted by mail to identify those with one or more children under 18 years old; one child randomly selected from each household as survey subject
- Oversamples children with special health care needs & children 0 to 5
- Combined data set includes 2018 ( $N = 30,530$ ) & 2019 ( $N = 29,433$ )
- Weighted response rate = 43.1% (2018) & 42.4% (2019)
- Data weighted (adjusted for combined data set) to represent population of non-institutionalized children ages 0 to 17 who live in housing units nationally and in each state

# NSCH: Purpose, Participants, & Procedures

- Households received mailed invitation asking adult who is familiar with child's health and health care (usually a parent) to complete short screener questionnaire (online or hard copy)
- If child reported to live in household, participants immediately directed to more detailed, age-specific topical questionnaire for one randomly selected child (or parent could request paper copy)
- Can work with combined data set (items that are common to both surveys) or each survey separately
  - Combined data provides greater opportunity to conduct analyses using variables with small sample sizes or low prevalence and ability to conduct complex cross-tabs among variables
  - Combined data particularly helpful for researchers interested in state-level data

# National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) At a Glance

- Survey Design and Sponsorship:
  - Maternal and Child Health Bureau at the Health Resources and Services Administration in partnership with Census Bureau, National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control, Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative, and a National Technical Expert Panel
- Data Collection:
  - 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019: Census Bureau
  - 2003, 2007, 2011/12: National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
- Geographic Areas:
  - Nationwide, all 50 states and the District of Columbia

# NSCH At a Glance

- Periodicity
  - Yearly survey beginning in 2016
  - Previous surveys conducted in 2003, 2007, 2011/12
- Population Sampled
  - Non-institutionalized children in the US ages 0-17 years
- Sample Size and Range
  - 2019: Nationally: 29,433; State: between 474 – 651
  - 2018: Nationally: 30,530; State: between 520 – 769
  - 2017: Nationally: 21,599; State: between 343 – 470
  - 2016: Nationally: 50,212; State: between 638 – 1351
  - 2003, 2007, 2011/12: Nationally: between 91,000 and 102,000; State: between 1,800-2,200

# NSCH At a Glance

- Representative
  - Weighted to be representative of the US population of non-institutionalized children ages 0-17
- Topics Covered by Survey
  - Physical and emotional health
  - Factors that may relate to well-being of children
    - Medical home
    - Family interactions
    - Parental health
    - School experiences
    - Safe neighborhoods

# NSCH 2019: Survey Topics

- Child's Health
- Child as an Infant
- Health Care Services
- Experience with Child's Health Care Providers
- Child's Health Insurance Coverage
- Providing for Child's Health
- Child's Learning (0 to 5 years)
- Child's Schooling and Activities (6 to 17 years)
- About You and Child
- About Family and Household
- About You
- Household Information

# How to Obtain NSCH Data

- General information and overview  
<https://www.childhealthdata.org/learn-about-the-nsch/NSCH>
- Publicly available and free of charge through the website for the Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health (DRC)  
<https://www.childhealthdata.org/>
- Can use DRC's interactive query to access the data and compare national and state-level findings among children of different ages, race/ethnicity, income levels, and health status  
<https://www.childhealthdata.org/browse/survey>

# NSCH: Strengths and Weaknesses

- Strengths

- Large, comprehensive survey of children's functioning in physical health, mental health, and related areas (e.g., schooling)
- Can work with data that represent national and state child populations
- Data are current and updated annually
- Access is free of charge with no application requirements
- Strong track record of data use for publications in peer-reviewed journals
- Potential use for student and faculty research as well as course-related projects

# NSCH: Strengths and Weaknesses

- Weaknesses
  - Single respondent (parent or caregiver)
    - Diagnostic status, school functioning, etc. based on parent report only
  - Good response rate but dependent on mail contact with families (similar to Census)
  - Cross-sectional (no longitudinal link from year to year for individual participants)
  - Need expertise to employ necessary statistical weighting for research looking to represent state or national populations

# Example Use of NSCH Data

- Pediatric Siblings of Children with Special Health Care Needs: Well-being Outcomes and the Role of Family Resilience (Rosenthal, Franklin-Gillette, & DuPaul, submitted for publication)
- Used NSCH 2018 data to compare psychosocial functioning of siblings of children with special health care needs ( $n = 1486$ ) to matched sample of siblings of children without special health care needs ( $n = 1429$ )
- Analyses included  $t$ -tests and multiple regression analyses
- Sibs of children with special health care needs exhibit significantly worse functioning in terms of school engagement, psychosocial flourishing, and family resilience
- Preventive intervention research is warranted to enhance resilience of siblings and families of children with special health care needs

# Other Health-Related Publicly Available Data

- National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhanes/index.htm>
- National Health Interview Survey  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/index.htm>
- National Survey of Family Growth  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nhis/index.htm>
- See National Center for Health Statistics website for more surveys  
<https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/index.htm>

# Questions and Discussion