

4.5 Expectations, Attitudes, Behaviors & Time Use

Information in this section of the guide focuses on behavioral factors, such as the respondent's current outlook, perceptions of the future, and interactions with his or her parents. In the self-administered section of the *Youth Questionnaire*, a computer-assisted self-interview collects sensitive data that reflects anti-social behavior (e.g., substance use, delinquency, criminal activity), as well as details about attitudes and dating or sexual activity. Rounding out this section are data on respondents' typical weekly activities.

Table 1 summarizes the *NLSY97 User's Guide* subtopics available in this section and any global universe restrictions affecting those subtopics. Users should note that certain questions or groups of questions within a subtopic may have additional restrictions. Please consult the NLSY97 questionnaire and codebook for more information on particular questions.

4.5 Table 1. Expectations, Attitudes, Behaviors & Time Use Subtopics and Universe Restrictions

<i>NLSY97 User's Guide</i> Subtopic	Round 1 Universe	Round 2 Universe	Round 3 Universe	Round 4 Universe	Round 5 Universe
4.5.1 Alcohol Use	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
4.5.2 Attitudes					
Justice System	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
Parents	12–14	12–14	12–14	12–14	12–14
Peers	all ages	—	—	—	—
School	all ages; enrolled in school	—	—	—	—
Self	12–14	—	—	—	—
4.5.3 Autonomy & Parental Control	12, 13	12, 13	12, 13	12, 13	12, 13
4.5.4 Cigarette Use	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency & Arrest	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
4.5.6 Drug Use	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
4.5.7 Expectations	15, 16	—	—	all ages	all ages
4.5.8 Sexual Activity & Dating					
Dating	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages	all ages
Intercourse and Pregnancy	14–16	≥14 as of 12/31/97	all ages	all ages	all ages
4.5.9 Time Use	12–14 16—not enrolled, not employed	≥15—not enrolled not employed	≥15—not enrolled not employed	—	—

Note: Age restrictions as of 12/31/1996 unless stated otherwise.

Created Variables. In addition to the variables created by CHRR, Child Trends, Inc., an organization involved in the NLSY97 questionnaire design process, has created a number of scales and indexes from several groups of variables described in this section. These scales and indexes are intended to aid researchers in using the various data items relating to attitudes and behaviors. These variables are described in the following sections:

- Alcohol Use
- Attitudes
- Autonomy & Parental Control
- Cigarette Use
- Crime, Delinquency & Arrest
- Drug Use
- Sexual Activity & Dating

Although these Child Trends created variables are described only briefly in this guide, interested researchers may obtain a detailed discussion of the creation procedures from NLS User Services. This document, Appendix 9 of the *NLSY97 Codebook Supplement*, also summarizes statistical analyses of the scales and indexes, as well as related data items, performed by Child Trends researchers. (Although considered part of the *Codebook Supplement*, this appendix is a separate physical document.)

4.5.1 Alcohol Use

The focus of the alcohol use section is the frequency of beverage consumption in a recent period. An alcoholic beverage is defined as a can or bottle of beer, a glass of wine, a mixed drink, or a shot of liquor. The respondent is instructed not to include any “childhood sips that you might have had from an older person’s drink.”

The round 1 survey first established whether the respondent had ever consumed an alcoholic beverage and asked for the respondent’s age the first time. Respondents who answer don’t know, or who refuse to answer this retrospective question, continue to receive the question in later rounds until a valid answer is given. If a respondent answers affirmatively to having ever consumed alcohol, but cannot or will not provide the age at which they first drank, they continue to receive the age question in subsequent rounds. In rounds 2–5, respondents who have previously provided a valid answer to the question about having ever consumed an alcoholic beverage were asked whether they had a drink of an alcoholic beverage since the date of last interview. Respondents who had consumed alcohol were asked a series of follow-up questions in these rounds about the quantity and frequency of alcohol use in the 30 days prior to the interview. Specific questions included the number of days the respondent had one or more alcoholic beverage(s), how many drinks he or she usually had per day, and the number of days where the respondent had five or more drinks on the same occasion. In all rounds, the survey also elicits information on the number of days (in the 30 days prior to the interview) that the respondent had something alcoholic to drink right before or during school or work.

4.5.1 Table 1. Age Respondent First Drank Alcohol

Age	Male	Female	Total
≤ 10	380	192	572
11	184	125	309
12	311	304	615
13	394	374	768
14	540	586	1126
15	557	633	1190
16	435	420	855
17	388	360	748
18	284	274	558
19	150	138	288
20	64	56	120
21	29	26	55
22	3	1	4
Total	3719	3489	7208

Note: Universe is limited to respondents who reported ever drinking or drinking since the last interview. In rounds 2–5, respondents who had not drunk alcohol as of the previous round but did report drinking after that date were not directly asked their age when they first drank. These respondents were assigned their age at the round 2–5 interview date (CV_AGE_INT_DATE) for this table. This table is based on KEY!SEX, YSAQ-364, and YSAQ-364D.

Additional round 1 questions gathered information on the respondent’s perception of the effects of alcohol on various health conditions. Users can find a description of these questions in section 4.7, “Health.”

Created Variables. In rounds 1–4, the response to the “ever drank alcohol” question was used as part of the Substance Use Index (FP_YYSUBSI) created by Child Trends, Inc.; see the *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services, for more information and statistical analysis.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: NLSY79 respondents have provided information about the quantity and frequency of their alcohol consumption in the 1982–85, 1988–89, 1992, 1994, and 2002 surveys; the Children of the NLSY79 age 10 and older (including the Young Adults) responded to similar questions in 1988–2002. The 1989 and 1995–2001 interviews of the Mature Women, the 1991–2001 surveys of the Young Women, and the 1990 survey of Older Men also gathered data on the frequency and quantity of alcohol consumption. For more information, refer to the *NLS Handbook* or the appropriate cohort’s *User’s Guide*.

Survey Instruments: Questions on alcohol use are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

<i>Related User’s Guide Sections</i>	<i>Main Areas of Interest</i>	<i>Supplemental Areas of Interest</i>
4.5.4 Cigarette Use	Family Process Measures	Expectations
4.5.6 Drug Use	Substance Use	Health
4.7 Health		

4.5.2 Attitudes

The NLSY97 *Youth Questionnaire* collects information about the respondents' attitudes toward the justice system and toward their parents in each round. The round 1 *Youth Questionnaire* also asked about respondents' attitudes toward school and perceptions of their peers and themselves. In some cases, the round 1 *Parent Questionnaire* asked similar questions of the responding parent.

Justice System

In the self-administered section of each survey, a series of questions focuses on the respondent's beliefs about the criminal justice system. The survey first queries respondents about their perceived odds of being arrested if they stole a car. Supposing that he or she had in fact been arrested for stealing a car, the respondent was then asked to report his or her perceived odds of being released without charges, being released with only a fine, and serving time in jail.

Parents

The NLSY97 obtains a great amount of detail about the respondent's relationship with his or her parents in each interview. Complementary information was gathered from the responding parent in round 1. This section also collects information about the relationship the respondent's parents have with each other. Users should note that "parent" in these descriptions generally refers to the respondent's parent or parent-figure and not only to biological parents; exceptions are clearly stated.

The universes of respondents who answered these questions and the parents to whom the questions referred changed after round 1. Table 1 presents the universes and reference parents for each of the groups of parent questions; the content of the questions is then described after the table.

A related question not listed in Table 1 collects information about the person (e.g., biological mother, brother or sister, boyfriend/girlfriend, teacher or school counselor, no one) the respondent would choose to go to if he or she had an emotional or personal relationship problem. This question is asked of all respondents in rounds 1–4.

4.5.2 Table 1. Universe and Reference Parents for Parent Attitude Questions

Question topic	Round 1		Rounds 2-5	
	Respondent universe	Reference parents	Respondent universe	Reference parents
1. Contact with absent parents	All respondents with absent parents	Absent bio or adoptive mother and father	- All respondents with absent parents - Respondents born 1983–84 in R5	Absent bio or adoptive mother and father
2. Parent's supportiveness/ permissiveness (not round 5)	All respondents	Resident parents/ parent-figures; absent parents in contact in past 12 months	All respondents	Resident parents/ parent-figures; absent parents in contact since last interview
3. R's opinion of parent	Respondents born in 1982–84	Resident parents/ parent-figures; absent parents in contact in past 12 months	- Respondents born in 1982–84 - All respondents in R5	Resident parents/ parent-figures
4. Parent's knowledge and behavior toward R	Respondents born in 1982–84	Resident parents/ parent-figures; absent parents in contact in past 12 months	- Respondents born in 1982–84 - Respondents born in 1983–84 in R5	Resident parents/ parent-figures
5. Parent relationship behaviors (not round 4)	Respondents born in 1982–84	Both bio parents, if reside with R, or bio parent R lives with and spouse/partner	Respondents born in 1983 or 1984	Both bio parents, if reside with R, or bio parent R lives with and spouse/partner
6. Contact between R's biological parents (not rounds 4–5)	Respondents born in 1982–84 living with only bio dad or not living with either bio parent	Bio parents	Respondents born in 1983 or 1984 living with only one or neither bio parent	Bio parents

Youth Questionnaire. The following list of question topics includes numbers that refer to the question groups in Table 1.

(1) *Contact with absent parent.* In round 1, the survey first determined the specific month and year that the NLSY97 respondent last lived with any absent biological mother or father or adoptive mother or father. Each round established whether the most recent contact with that parent was within a month, a week, or a day. A number of questions then focus on the respondent's contact with the absent parent during the past 12 months (round 1) or since the last interview (rounds 2–5). For each of these absent parents, the respondent is asked the following questions:

- Number of times youth contacted or tried to contact absent parent by mail or phone
- Number of times youth received a card, letter, or phone call from absent parent
- Number of times youth visited absent parent without spending the night
- Number of times youth stayed overnight at the absent parent's home

(2) *Parent's supportiveness and permissiveness.* This series first asks whether the respondent feels that each parent is supportive of him or her. A second question gathers information on whether the parent is

permissive or strict about making sure the respondent did what he or she was supposed to do. This series was not included in round 5.

- (3) *Respondent's opinion of parent.* For a group of younger respondents, additional data are collected on the respondent's opinion of each parent. Respondents state whether they think highly of the parent, want to be like him or her, and enjoy spending time with him or her.
- (4) *Parent's knowledge and behavior toward respondent.* Information about the parent's behavior toward the respondent, collected from a group of younger respondents, includes how often the parent does each of the following:
- Praises the respondent for doing well
 - Criticizes the respondent or the respondent's ideas
 - Helps the respondent to do things important to the respondent
 - Blames the respondent for his or her problems
 - Makes plans with the respondent and cancels for no good reason

In addition, the survey gathers data on the respondent's opinion of how well his or her parent knows the respondent's close friends, the parents of the respondent's close friends, the people the respondent is with when not at home, and the respondent's teachers/school activities. Specific questions in this series vary among surveys.

- (5) *Parent relationship behaviors.* These questions ask about the frequency with which each parent displays the following behaviors:
- Blames his or her partner for problems
 - Criticizes his or her partner or the partner's ideas
 - Encourages his or her partner to do things that the partner considers important
 - Expresses affection or love for his or her partner
 - Is fair and willing to compromise when they disagree
 - Screams and yells at his or her partner when angry

This series was not included in round 4.

- (6) *Contact between respondent's biological parents.* These questions determine the frequency of contact between the respondent's biological parents and the level of friendliness or hostility in their relationship. This series was not included in rounds 4–5.

Several question series about the respondent's parents were added in round 5 for older respondents born in 1980–82. The first questioned how often the respondent asked his or her parent for advice or help on education/training/job decisions and on friendships or close personal relationships. Another series asked about the parent's knowledge concerning the respondent's goals and aspirations in life, values and spiritual

beliefs, friends, and what the respondent is really like as person. In addition, these respondents were asked how often their family gathers to celebrate family events like birthdays, holidays, weddings, etc. A follow-up question asked the respondent to rate the importance of attending these events to him or her.

Parent Questionnaire (round 1). The NLSY97 also asked two of these series of questions in the parent survey. First, if the youth was born in 1982, 1983, or 1984, the responding parent described the frequency with which his or her spouse or partner displayed the behaviors listed in #5 above. If the responding parent was one of the youth's biological parents and the other biological parent did not reside in the household, the responding parent answered the second set of questions (in #6 above) about the frequency of contact with the other parent and the friendliness or hostility of their relationship.

Created Variables. Child Trends, Inc., has created a number of scales based on the variables described in this section. The following are available:

- (1) Parents' Marital Relationship–Youth Report (FP_YMFRELAT, FP_YFMRELAT); all rounds. This pair of scales uses the variables described in question topic 5 in Table 1 above. One scale summarizes the residential mother's relationship with the residential father; the other describes the father's relationship with the mother.
- (2) Parents' Marital Relationship–Parent Report (FP_PPRELAT); round 1 only. This scale uses the set of comparable parent questions on relationship quality to measure the responding parent's perception of the relationship with his or her spouse.
- (3) Parent-Youth Relationship–Youth Report (FP_YMSUPP and FP_YFSUPP in all rounds; FP_YNRMSUPP and FP_YNRFSUPP in round 1 only). Using the data collected in topics 3 and 4 in Table 1 above, this set of scales indicates the quality of the youth's relationship with each of the parents referred to in the questionnaire.
- (4) Parenting Styles–Youth Report (FP_YMPSTYL, FP_YFPSTYL, FP_YNRMPSTYL, FP_YNRFPSTYL); all rounds. Based on the supportiveness/permisiveness questions (see topic 2 in Table 1 above), this set of scales describes the parenting styles of the parents/parent-figures referred to in the questionnaire.
- (5) Parental Monitoring–Youth Report (FP_YMMONIT and FP_YFMONIT in all rounds; FP_YNRMMONIT and FP_YNRFMONIT in round 1 only). This set of scales describes the awareness of the youth's activities for up to four parents/parent-figures (see topic 4 in Table 1 above).

Interested researchers should consult *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services, for more information on the above scales. In addition, this appendix describes statistical analyses performed by Child Trends on the scales and on four related groups of round 1 variables: (1) the contact between the youth respondent's separated biological parents as reported by the youth (see topic 6 in Table 1 above); (2) the similar contact questions answered by the responding parent; (3) the sources of personal/emotional support question addressed to youth respondents; and (4) the supportive/permisive questions asked of all youth respondents.

Peers

Youth Questionnaire. A series of questions in the round 1 survey asked respondents about their perception of their peers' activities and behavior. Respondents who were enrolled at the time of the survey were asked to estimate the percentage of peers in their grade involved in the activities listed below; respondents who were not enrolled were asked the same questions about the percentage of peers in their grade when last enrolled.

- Belong to a gang that participates in illegal activities
- Cut classes or skip school
- Do volunteer work
- Ever use marijuana, inhalants, or other drugs
- Get drunk at least once per month
- Go to church or religious services on a regular basis
- Participate in organized sports, clubs, or school activities
- Plan to go to college
- Smoke cigarettes

Respondents who were age 15 or older were also asked to state the percentage of their peers they believed to have ever had sexual intercourse.

School

Youth Questionnaire. The round 1 NLSY97 survey attempted to ascertain the impact that school has had on the feelings of well-being experienced by various youths. To this end, respondents who were enrolled at the time of the survey were asked to agree or disagree with the following statements regarding their school's environment and their teachers:

- Discipline is fair
- Disruptions by other students get in the way of my learning
- I feel safe at this school
- Students are fairly graded
- Teachers are good
- Teachers are interested in the students
- There is a lot of cheating on tests and assignments

Self

Youth Questionnaire. In round 1, a series of questions designed to elicit information on the respondent's attitude about him- or herself was asked of respondents born in 1982, 1983, and 1984. These respondents were asked whether they strongly disagreed, disagreed, agreed, or strongly agreed with the following statements:

- I hardly ever expect things to go my way
- I rarely count on good things happening to me
- I'm always optimistic about my future

- In uncertain times, I usually expect the best

The round 1 NLSY97 survey asked the same youths questions similar to those found in Achenbach’s *Youth Self Report*. For each behavior, respondents were asked how well the statement described them over the past six months (not true, somewhat or sometimes true, or often true). The separate questions asked of male and female respondents are listed in Figure 1.

4.5.2 Figure 1. Youth Descriptors of Attitude toward Self

Female respondents	Male respondents
You lie or cheat	You lie or cheat
Your school work is poor	You don’t get along with other kids
You have trouble sleeping	You have trouble concentrating or paying attention
You are unhappy, sad, or depressed	You are unhappy, sad, or depressed

The round 4 self-administered section of the survey included a series that addressed respondents’ mental health. The questions asked how often they felt the following ways during the last month before the interview: very nervous, calm and peaceful, downhearted and blue, happy, or so down in the dumps that nothing could cheer them up. Respondents answered all, most, some, or none of the time for each feeling.

Parent Questionnaire (round 1). Parents were also asked a set of questions similar to Achenbach’s *Youth Self Report*. For each NLSY97 youth born in 1983 or 1984, the responding parent was asked how well each statement described the youth’s behavior in the past six months.

Created Variables. Child Trends, Inc., created the following scales based on the Achenbach questions in the round 1 youth and parent questionnaires:

- (1) Behavioral and Emotional Problems Scales–Youth Report (FP_YYFBEHS, FP_YYMBEHS). This pair of scales, one for male and one for female respondents, summarizes the data collected by the Achenbach *Youth Self-Report* variables described above.
- (2) Behavioral and Emotional Problems Scales–Parent Report (FP_PYFBEHS, FP_PYMBEHS). Based on the comparable Achenbach questions in the parent survey, this pair of scales measures behavioral and emotional problems separately for male and female youths.

Child Trends, Inc., also created a mental health scale (FP_YMNTHLTH) based on the round 4 series described above. This scale summarizes the responses into a score indicating whether the respondent has positive mental health or has emotional problems.

Codebook Supplement Appendix 9, available from NLS User Services, provides interested researchers with more information. In addition to describing the creation procedures for these scales, the appendix summarizes statistical analyses performed by Child Trends on these variables.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: The Children of the NLSY79 age 10 and older (including the Young Adults) have answered questions about their attitudes toward their school and themselves, about their relationship with their parents, and about their parents' relationship with each other. Users should note, however, that the wording of these questions is not identical to the NLSY97. For more information, consult the *NLS Handbook*.

Survey Instruments: Questions from the *Youth Questionnaire* are found in the self-administered (YSAQ), peers (YPRS), and schooling (YSCH) sections in round 1 and the self-administered section (YSAQ) in rounds 2, 3, and 4. In the round 1 *Parent Questionnaire*, these questions are found in sections P6 and PC12.

<i>Related User's Guide Sections</i>	<i>Main Areas of Interest</i>	<i>Supplemental Areas of Interest</i>
4.2.4 School Experience	Attitudes	Marriage & Cohabitation
4.2.5 School & Transcript Surveys	Family Process Measures	Parent Current Status
4.5.3 Autonomy & Parental Control	Illegal Activity & Arrest	Parent Retrospective
4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency & Arrest		

Reference

Achenbach, T. M. *Manual for the Youth Self-Report and 1991 Profile*. Burlington, VT: University of Vermont Department of Psychiatry, 1991.

4.5.3 Autonomy & Parental Control

Both the NLSY97 respondents and their responding parents have been asked about the level of autonomy or parental control that determines the rules, if any, regarding the youth's activities. These questions allow for an opportunity to compare the respondents' and their parent's perceptions about rule setting and discipline.

Youth Questionnaire. In each round, respondents born in 1983 or 1984 are questioned about the person or persons who make decisions concerning their activities, including how late they may stay out at night, the kinds of TV shows or movies they may watch, and who they are allowed to “hang out” with. For each rule that is reportedly made only by the respondent's parents or jointly by the parents and the respondent, a follow-up question asks about the number of times the respondent broke the rules in the last 30 days. Information is also collected on what action the parent(s) would take if they found out that the respondent had violated the rules, as well as which person would be most likely to handle a rule violation.

Parent Questionnaire (round 1). Responding parents of youths born in 1983 or 1984 were asked a set of autonomy and control questions similar to those found in the *Youth Questionnaire*, allowing comparison of youth and parent perceptions. For each rule detailed above, the responding parent was first surveyed on who makes that particular rule. Follow-up questions asked about the number of times the youth broke the rules in the last 30 days if the rule was made only by the parent or jointly by the parent and the youth. The responding parent was also asked to state the person who would most likely handle a rule violation.

Created Variables. Child Trends, Inc., has created several indexes based on the variables described in this section. The following are available:

- (1) Control/Autonomy Limit-Setting–Youth Report (FP_YHLIMITS); all rounds. This index is based on the questions asking who sets the limits on three different kinds of activities. The index indicates the youth's perception of the amount of control the parent exerts in setting limits.
- (2) Control/Autonomy Limit-Setting–Parent Report (FP_PHLIMITS); round 1 only. This comparable index uses the same questions asked of the responding parent to indicate the parent's perception of the amount of control exerted.
- (3) Control/Autonomy Limit-Breaking–Youth Report (FP_YHBROKED); all rounds. This index indicates whether the youth reported breaking any of the limits in the past 30 days.
- (4) Control/Autonomy Limit-Breaking–Parent Report (FP_PHBROKED); round 1 only. This comparable index reports whether the responding parent stated that the youth broke any limits in the past 30 days.

Interested users should consult *Codebook Supplement* Appendix 9, available from NLS User Services, for details on the above indexes. In addition, this appendix describes statistical analyses performed by Child Trends on these indexes and on several related variables: (1) who handles a limit violation, as reported by

the youth; (2) who handles a violation, according to the parent; and (3) the youth's report of the consequences expected if a limit is broken.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: The Children of the NLSY79 age 10–14 have provided information about who makes rules regarding their behavior, although not about the consequences of violating the rules. For more information, refer to the *NLS Handbook*.

Survey Instruments: Questions on autonomy and control are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*. In the round 1 *Parent Questionnaire*, this information was collected in section PC12.

Related User's Guide Section
4.5.2 Attitudes

Main Areas of Interest
Autonomy & Control
Family Process Measures

4.5.4 Cigarette Use

In round 1, all respondents were first asked whether they had ever smoked an entire cigarette; if so, they reported their age at that time. Respondents who answer don't know, or who refuse to answer this retrospective question, continue to receive the question in later rounds until a valid answer is given. If a respondent answers affirmatively to having ever smoked a cigarette, but cannot or will not provide the age at which they first smoked, they continue to receive the age question in subsequent rounds.

In rounds 2–5, respondents who have previously provided a valid answer to the question about having ever smoked a cigarette were asked whether they had smoked a cigarette since the date of last interview. Additional data were then collected in each round on the number of days they smoked during the 30 days prior to the interview. Finally, the respondents were questioned about the number of cigarettes they usually had on the days they smoked during those 30 days.

4.5.4 Table 1. Age Respondent First Smoked a Cigarette

Age	Male	Female	Total
≤ 10	397	234	631
11	223	150	373
12	372	331	703
13	352	383	735
14	378	422	800
15	322	351	673
16	257	265	522
17	273	195	468
18	201	179	380
19	130	94	224
20	53	33	86
21	18	25	43
22	1	2	3
Total	2977	2664	5641

Note: Universe is limited to respondents who reported ever smoking or smoking since the last interview. In rounds 2–5, respondents who had not smoked as of the previous round but did report having their first cigarette after that date were not directly asked their age at the time they first smoked. These respondents were assigned their age at the round 2–5 interview date (CV_AGE_INT_DATE) for this table. This table is based on KEY!SEX, YSAQ-360, and YSAQ-360C.

In addition, information was collected in round 1 regarding the respondent's perception of the effects of smoking on various health conditions; details can be found in section 4.7, "Health."

Created Variables. In each round, the response to the “ever smoked a cigarette” question is used as part of the Substance Use Index (FP_YYSUBSI) created by Child Trends, Inc.; see *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services, for more information and statistical analysis.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: The 1984, 1992, 1994, and 1998 surveys of the NLSY79 included questions on the quantity and frequency of cigarette use. Children of the NLSY79 age 10 and older (including the Young Adults) have provided this information in the 1988–2002 surveys. Detailed information on cigarette use was gathered from the Mature Women in 1989 and from the Young Women in 1991 and 1993; these respondents also stated whether they currently smoked in 1995–2001. Older Men provided retrospective smoking data in 1990. Consult the *NLS Handbook* or the appropriate cohort’s *User’s Guide* for further details.

Survey Instruments: Questions on cigarette use are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

<i>Related User’s Guide Sections</i>	<i>Main Areas of Interest</i>	<i>Supplemental Area of Interest</i>
4.5.1 Alcohol Use	Family Process Measures	Health
4.5.6 Drug Use	Substance Use	
4.7 Health		

4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency & Arrest

The NLSY97 survey questions on crime, delinquency, and arrest can be divided into two areas: questions about active participation and questions about perceptions of personal safety and other antecedents to delinquent behavior. This section focuses on the youth's participation in delinquent and criminal behaviors; other details can be found in section 4.6.4, "Household & Neighborhood Environment." The following information on delinquency, crime, and arrest is collected in the self-administered section of the youth instrument.

Within the criminal justice system, "delinquent" behavior is usually differentiated from "criminal" behavior on the basis of an offender's age. For example, a 12-year-old who has damaged property would likely be charged with a delinquent offense; an older youth might be charged with either a delinquent or criminal offense at the discretion of the judge. Since an offense is only classified as criminal or delinquent if the offender actually appears in court, a different distinction is made for the purposes of this discussion. The descriptions of delinquency in this section include behaviors, such as running away from home, which are unlawful for minors but not necessarily for those ages 18 and older. The discussions of crime and arrest in this section describe the questions on behaviors that are considered criminal activity for adults, even though a respondent who has committed one of these offenses may have actually been charged as a juvenile rather than an adult.

Delinquency

The first set of delinquency questions addresses the respondent's history of running away from home and staying away at least overnight. Data include the age when this first occurred, the total number of times the respondent has ever run away, and the total number of times he or she has run away since the date of last interview. In rounds 2–5, youths who were age 17 or older at the date of last interview or who were not living with any parents were skipped past the runaway questions.

Next, the respondents answer a series of questions on whether they have ever carried a handgun, defined as any firearm other than a rifle or a shotgun, and if they have carried one since the last interview (in rounds 2–5). The series continues by asking their age the first time they did so, the number of days out of the past 30 that they carried the gun, and whether they carried the gun to school during this period.

In a separate set of questions, respondents are surveyed on their involvement in gang activity. Those who belonged to a gang are asked to state the age when they joined the gang and their membership status in the previous 12 months (round 1) or since the date of the last interview (subsequent rounds). Those who did not belong to a gang during that time period state their age when they last belonged to a gang. Additional information on gang activity in the respondent's extended family, school, and neighborhood is found in sections 4.6.4, "Household & Neighborhood Environment," and 4.5.2, "Attitudes."

Crime

The survey asks about participation in and the intensity of various criminal activities in the previous year (round 1) or since the date of last interview (subsequent rounds). The types of criminal activities included are:

- Purposely damaged or destroyed property not belonging to the respondent
- Stole something worth less than \$50
- Stole something worth \$50 or more (including a car)
- Other property crimes, including fencing stolen property, possessing or receiving stolen property, or selling something for more than it was worth
- Attacked or assaulted someone
- Sold or helped to sell marijuana, hashish, or other hard drugs

Youths who stole something state whether they stole from a store, snatched someone's purse/wallet or picked someone's pocket, went into a locked building to steal something, or used a weapon during the act. Additionally, respondents who report stealing something worth \$50 or more are asked if they stole a car.

In round 1, follow-up questions about a particular activity (except stealing something worth less than \$50) determined the respondent's age the first time and the number of times he or she participated in the past 12 months. Respondents who reported no involvement during the previous 12 months were asked to state their age when they last participated in that criminal activity. If the respondent committed other property crimes, sold or helped to sell drugs, or stole something worth \$50 or more, he or she was asked about any monetary rewards in 1996—the total cash received or the total cash he or she would have received—from selling these items. Respondents who reported having sold or helped to sell drugs stated whether they were involved in selling marijuana or hashish, other hard drugs, or both, as well as the amount of income received from these sales.

Reference periods and question details shifted in round 2. In this survey, respondents were questioned about the number of times they participated in each activity since the date of last interview. However, respondents who answered "don't know" or "refused" in round 1 were again asked about criminal activities in which they had ever participated. Those who stole something (worth more or less than \$50) or participated in the other property crimes listed above were asked for the amount of any monetary rewards in the previous calendar year—the total cash received or the total cash he or she would have received—from selling these items. Respondents who reported selling or helping to sell drugs distinguished whether they were involved in selling marijuana or hashish, other hard drugs, or both, and listed the amount of income received from these activities. Rounds 3–5 followed the same pattern as round 2.

Arrests

NLSY97 youth respondents are asked whether they have ever been arrested by the police or taken into custody for an illegal or delinquent offense (not including arrests for minor traffic violations) and the total number of times this has happened. Round 1 then collected information on the number of arrests before the respondent's 12th birthday and the respondent's age at the first arrest. Further data were gathered on the respondent's most recent and first arrests. (If the respondent reported only one arrest, this information was collected as the respondent's most recent arrest; the first arrest data fields contain missing values.) Rounds 2–5 gathered the number of arrests since the last interview, including the month and year of the first arrest if it occurred during that time.

For the first and most recent arrests (round 1) or a continuous loop of all arrests (subsequent rounds), the respondent provides the month and year of the arrest and states whether the police charged him or her with an offense. A series of questions then determines the type of offenses with which the respondent was charged; he or she could enumerate multiple charges. The list of possible arrest charges includes assault, burglary, destruction of property, possession or use of illicit drugs, sale or trafficking of illicit drugs, a major traffic offense, and a public order offense.

For each offense with which they have been charged, respondents report whether they were convicted for or pled guilty to that offense. A follow-up question distinguishes whether the respondent went to juvenile court, adult court, both, or neither as a result of the charges. Respondents then describe the sentence. For those sentenced to jail, an adult corrections institution, a juvenile corrections institution, or a reform/training school, the surveys record the month and year they began their sentence and the month and year their sentence ended (if appropriate). Similar questions ask about the month and year community service or probation began and ended. If the respondent did not go to court, was not convicted of, and did not plead guilty to any charges, he or she states the arrest outcome: no further action, pre-court diversion program/counseling, appearance before a judge with no further action, or other.

Finally, a description of the questions on the attitudes of the respondent toward justice is found in section 4.5.2, "Attitudes"; the use of drugs by the respondent is described in section 4.5.6, "Drug Use"; and descriptions of survey questions on the safety of the respondent's household environment are found in section 4.6.4, "Household & Neighborhood Environment."

Created Variables. A Delinquency Index (FP_YYCRIMI), created for each round by Child Trends, Inc., sums the responses to the questions asking if the youth ever participated in various criminal/delinquent activities. More information and a statistical analysis of the index can be found in *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: Information on crime, delinquency, and arrest records was collected from the NLSY79 in a special self-report supplement during the 1980 interview. This supplement detailed respondents' participation in and income from criminal activities and their contacts with the criminal justice system. The 1988–2002 surveys of the Children of the NLSY79 asked those age 10 and older (including the Young Adults) to report on participation in various illegal activities. For more information, consult the *NLS Handbook* or the *NLSY79 User's Guide*.

Survey Instruments: Questions on crime, delinquency, and arrest are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

Related User's Guide Sections

4.5.2 Attitudes
4.5.6 Drug Use
4.5.7 Expectations
4.6.4 Household & Neighborhood Environment

Main Areas of Interest

Family Process Measures
Illegal Activity & Arrest

Supplemental Areas of Interest

Expectations
Household Characteristics
Income
Substance Use

4.5.6 Drug Use

In this section, all respondents are surveyed on their experience with marijuana, which is also referred to in the survey as “grass” or “pot.” In round 1, respondents were first asked whether they had ever used marijuana; if so, they reported the age at which they first used the drug. Respondents who answer don’t know, or who refuse to answer this retrospective question, continue to receive the question in later rounds until a valid answer is given. If a respondent answers affirmatively to having ever used marijuana, but cannot or will not provide the age at which they first used it, they continue to receive the age question in subsequent rounds. In rounds 2–5, respondents who have previously provided a valid answer to the question about having ever used marijuana were asked whether they had used marijuana since the last interview, even if only once. Each survey then collected additional information on the number of days the respondent smoked marijuana in the 30 days prior to the interview. Finally, questions determined the number of times the respondent used marijuana right before or during school or work in those 30 days.

4.5.6 Table 1. Age Respondent First Used Marijuana

Age	Male	Female	Total
≤ 10	71	22	93
11	57	23	80
12	151	121	272
13	238	171	409
14	331	337	668
15	363	307	670
16	319	279	598
17	336	246	582
18	265	221	486
19	135	133	268
20	60	61	121
21	18	24	42
22	1	—	1
Total	2345	1945	4290

Note: Universe is limited to respondents who reported ever using marijuana or using marijuana since the previous interview. In rounds 2–5, respondents who had not used marijuana as of the previous round but did report their first use after that date were not directly asked their age at first use. These respondents were assigned their age at the round 2–5 interview date (CV_AGE_INT_DATE) for this. This table is based on KEY!SEX, YSAQ-370, and YSAQ-370C.

The drug use questions in rounds 2–5 were more extensive than those in round 1. In addition to the series on marijuana use, the questionnaire asked about the use of any drugs such as cocaine, crack, heroin, or any other substance not prescribed by a doctor in order to get high or to achieve an altered state. Details collected include the respondent’s age when he or she first used any of these drugs and the number

of times since the last interview that the respondent took some drug or other substance. The number of times in the last 30 days that the respondent used a drug or other substance right before school or during school or work hours was also gathered. Additional questions on whether the respondent ever sold drugs are described in section 4.5.5, “Crime, Delinquency & Arrest.”

4.5.6 Table 2. Age Respondent First Used Cocaine/Other Drugs

Age	Male	Female	Total
≤ 10	28	16	44
11	15	9	24
12	36	33	69
13	50	63	113
14	53	51	104
15	75	75	150
16	102	89	191
17	127	99	226
18	126	108	234
19	78	70	148
20	52	49	101
21	20	9	29
22	1	—	1
Total	763	671	1434

Note: Universe is limited to respondents who reported ever using cocaine/other drugs or using cocaine/other drugs since the previous interview. First asked in round 2. In rounds 3–5, respondents who had not used cocaine/other drugs as of the previous round but did report their first use after that date were not directly asked their age at first use. These respondents were assigned their age at the round 3–5 interview date (CV_AGE_INT_DATE) for this. This table is based on KEY!SEX, YSAQ-372C, and YSAQ-372CC.

Created Variables. In each round, the response to the “ever smoked marijuana” question is used as part of the Substance Use Index (FP YYSUBSI) created by Child Trends, Inc. See *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services, for more details and statistical analysis.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: The NLSY79 first included drug use questions in 1980, when respondents stated the number of times they had ever smoked marijuana or used other drugs. In 1984, 1988, 1992, 1994, and 1998, NLSY79 respondents reported their age at first use, lifetime use, and frequency of use in the past 30 days. Children of the NLSY79 age 10 and older (including the Young Adults) have been asked about their use of various drugs in the past 3 months since the 1988 survey. For more information, refer to the *NLS Handbook* or the *NLSY79 User’s Guide*.

Survey Instruments: All the questions on drug use are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

Related User's Guide Sections

4.5.1 Alcohol Use

4.5.4 Cigarette Use

4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency &
Arrest

Main Areas of Interest

Family Process Measures

Substance Use

Supplemental Areas of Interest

Illegal Activity & Arrest

Income

4.5.7 Expectations

Both the NLSY97 respondents and their responding parents have been asked to state their beliefs about events that may occur in the youth's future. Since these questions were asked of both groups, researchers may be able to compare differences in their perceptions.

Youth Questionnaire. In round 1, respondents who were born in 1980 or 1981 were surveyed on their beliefs about the future. Asked to assess the probability that certain events would occur in a specified time period, the respondents were instructed to use a scale from 0 (impossible) to 100 (certain).

Expectations questions were included again in the round 4 survey. In this round, all respondents were asked to answer a similar series of questions. Table 1 lists the events and the time periods included in each round.

In round 5, respondents were randomly divided into four experimental groups of roughly equal size that were used to study response rate for this type of question. Instead of answering expectations questions in a single section (as in previous rounds), they encountered them separately in each appropriate topical section. Expectations about education were asked in the schooling section, expectations about pregnancy were asked in the fertility part of the self-administered section, etc. The variable SYMBOL!TXGROUP indicates the experimental group to which each respondent was assigned. A non-experimental group of respondents skipped these questions in the topical sections and instead were guided through the expectations section as in previous rounds.

Parent Questionnaire (round 1). Responding parents of youths born in 1980 or 1981 were asked to assess the probability that certain events, described in Table 1, would occur in the life of the youth within a specified time period.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: Respondents in the NLSY79, Children of the NLSY79, Young Women, and Young Men have all answered questions about their educational and employment expectations for the future; however, the specific questions and reference periods have varied widely. Users should consult the *NLS Handbook* or the appropriate cohort's *User's Guide* for more precise information.

Survey Instruments: These questions are found in the expectations section (YEXP) of the round 1 *Youth Questionnaire* and section PC11 of the round 1 *Parent Questionnaire*.

Related User's Guide Section
4.5.5 Crime, Delinquency & Arrest

Main Area of Interest
Expectations

Supplemental Areas of Interest
Ed. Status & Attainment
Fertility and Pregnancy
Illegal Activity & Arrest
School Experience
Substance Use
Time Spent at Work

4.5.7 Table 1. Topics of Expectations Questions

Event and Time Period	Youth, Round 1	Responding Parent, Rd 1	Youth, Round 4	Youth, Round 5
One year from the interview date				
Arrested (whether rightly or wrongly)	✓		✓	
Dead from any cause (e.g., crime, illness, accident)	✓			
Enrolled in a regular school	✓	✓	✓	
Pregnant or have gotten someone pregnant	✓		✓	✓
Seriously drunk at least once	✓		✓	
Victim of a violent crime	✓		✓	
Working for pay for > 20 hours per week and enrolled	✓	✓	✓	
Working for pay for > 20 hours per week and not enrolled	✓		✓	
Get married			✓	✓
Moved from current residence				✓
By the youth's 20th birthday				
Mothered or fathered a baby	✓	✓		
Dead from any cause (e.g., crime, illness, accident)	✓			
Received a high school diploma	✓	✓		
Served time in jail or prison	✓	✓		
By the youth's 30th birthday				
Earned a four-year college degree	✓	✓		✓
Working for pay for > 20 hours per week	✓	✓		
Five years from the interview date				
Arrested (whether rightly or wrongly)			✓	
Enrolled in a regular school			✓	✓
Pregnant or have gotten someone pregnant			✓	✓
Seriously drunk at least once			✓	
Victim of a violent crime			✓	
Working for pay for > 20 hours per week and enrolled			✓	

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Working for pay for > 20 hours per week and not enrolled			✓	
Get married			✓	✓
Across entire life				
Have any/have more children, how many				✓

Note: Round 1 youth who were born in 1980–81 were asked these questions; by round 4, all respondents were age-eligible.

4.5.8 Sexual Activity & Dating

Dating

In the self-administered section of the youth instrument, all respondents are asked whether they have ever been on a date or unsupervised social outing with a member of the opposite sex. Those who have are questioned on their age the first time they went on a date. Other questions include how often the respondent dated and the number of different people he or she went out with on a date in the past year (round 1) or since the last interview (subsequent rounds).

Intercourse and Pregnancy

In rounds 1 and 2, data on sexual activity were obtained from respondents who were at least 14 years old; all respondents were eligible in later rounds. These respondents are first asked if they have ever had sexual intercourse and if they have had intercourse since the last interview (in rounds 2–5). If a respondent reports ever having sexual intercourse, questions are asked about the first experience (e.g., the respondent's age, whether the respondent and the partner used birth control). Those who report not using any method of birth control are questioned on whether they wanted a pregnancy at that time. Rounds 2–5 also included a question that specifically asked whether respondents used a condom that first time. Additional information is collected about the respondent's total number of partners and the number of partners in the previous year (round 1) or since the last interview (subsequent rounds). Complementing information on the number of times that the respondent had sexual intercourse in the past 12 months (round 1) or since the last interview (subsequent rounds), the surveys gather the frequency of his or her birth control use during that same period. Rounds 2–5 also asked specifically about the frequency of condom use. Finally, these respondents state the method of birth control used most often.

Additional questions were included in the rounds 4–5 surveys concerning the respondent's first sexual experience. These questions asked for the month and year this experience occurred; the age of the respondent's partner at that time; the location where it occurred (e.g., family's home, partner's home, hotel); the time of day; the status of the relationship at that time (e.g., dating, living together, engaged); the ethnicity and race of the partner; whether they discussed birth control before that point; and, if they used birth control, the methods they used that first time.

The same respondents eligible for questions on sexual activity also answer questions on pregnancies in the self-administered section. This information on the respondent's pregnancies, including those that ended in miscarriage or abortion, is described in section 4.9.2. Additionally, information on the respondent's knowledge about pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases is found in section 4.7, "Health."

4.5.8 Table 1. Age Respondent First Had Sex

Age	Male	Female	Total
≤ 10	160	30	190
11	62	13	75
12	158	68	226
13	341	202	543
14	552	463	1015
15	619	659	1278
16	617	700	1317
17	400	479	879
18	255	322	577
19	86	125	211
20	34	38	72
21	10	11	21
22	1	1	2
Total	3295	3111	6406

Note: This table is limited to respondents who reported ever having sex. The universe for these questions was youths age 14 or older as of 12/31/96 in round 1 or 12/31/97 in round 2; 3,578 respondents were skipped out of these questions in round 1 and 1,693 respondents were skipped out in round 2 because of their age. All respondents were eligible starting in round 3. Table is based on CV_AGE_INT_DATE, KEYISEX, and YSAQ-300.

Created Variables. Child Trends, Inc., created these three variables for the round 4 data: if respondents had ever had sex by the round 4 interview (FP_SEXEVER), their age at first sex (FP_SEXAGE), and the round they first reported having had sex (FP_SEXYEAR). All are included in the main file data set; see the *Codebook Supplement Appendix 9*, available from NLS User Services, for more information and statistical analysis.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: Information on sexual activity was gathered from NLSY79 respondents in the 1983–85 surveys; data on contraception have been regularly collected since 1982. NLSY79 Children age 13 and older have reported on their sexual activity beginning in 1988. Children age 15 and older have also provided information on contraceptive use since 1994. For further details, consult the *NLS Handbook* or the *NLSY79 User's Guide*.

Survey Instruments: Questions on dating and sexual activity are found in the self-administered section (YSAQ) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

Related User's Guide Sections
 4.7 Health
 4.9.2 Fertility, Pregnancy &
 Children

Main Area of Interest
 Sexual Activity

Supplemental Areas of Interest
 Attitudes
 Fertility and Pregnancy
 Health

4.5.9 Time Use

In the round 1 series of questions on time use, respondents born in 1982, 1983, or 1984 assessed the amount of time in a typical week that they spent doing homework (if enrolled), taking extra classes or lessons, watching TV, and reading for pleasure. Youths born in 1980 who were not enrolled or employed were asked about the time they usually woke up, whether they went to any place on a regular basis, and the times that they left for and returned from that place.

In rounds 2 and 3, the time use series was addressed to respondents born in 1980 or 1981 who were not enrolled or employed. They were asked for the usual times that they got up, left their home, arrived home, and went to sleep on a typical weekday. Then the survey collected the main activities these respondents participated in and/or the places they went between waking and sleeping, as well as the number of hours spent at these places during a typical weekday. In the final question in this section, respondents reported the main activities or places where they spent time during the week before the survey.

Respondents were not asked time use questions in rounds 4 or 5.

Comparison to Other NLS Surveys: In 1981, NLSY79 respondents provided detailed data on their use of time in the past seven days. This section recorded time spent working, attending school or training programs, sleeping, watching TV, caring for children, and completing household chores. For more information, refer to the *NLS Handbook* or the *NLSY79 User's Guide*.

Survey Instruments: These questions are found in the time use section (YTIM) of the *Youth Questionnaire*.

Main Area of Interest

Time Use

Supplemental Areas of Interest

Health

School Experience