

U.S. Department of Labor  
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### NLSY97 Arrest and Incarceration Event History Arrays Available

Users interested in arrest and incarceration event histories for NLSY97 respondents now have arrays of these event histories available for analysis. These arrays consist of created monthly variables that document the number of arrests and incarcerations in each month, starting at the respondent's 12<sup>th</sup> birthday. Using these arrays, researchers can extract the status of a respondent at a point in time or over time. These arrays are constructed to be similar to NLSY97 event history arrays in other domains, such as employment, schooling, marriage, cohabitation, and fertility.

Also available are arrest and incarceration summary data sets, created to provide summary measures of the respondent's arrest and incarceration history. The arrest summary dataset includes the first arrest date reported, the total number of arrests (both dated and undated). The incarceration summary variables include the first entry date into incarceration, the total number of separate incarceration spells, the age at first incarceration, the length of the first incarceration, and longest incarceration, as well as whether the respondent was currently incarcerated at the date of the last interview.

Here is a list of variables (by variable name per NLS Investigator) for the new arrest and incarceration variables:

**ARREST\_STATUS\_year.month.** This array lists the respondent's number of arrests on a monthly basis. It starts in January 1992 (the month in which the oldest NLSY97 respondent turned age 12) and ends in April 2010. Arrests and incarcerations that occurred before the respondent turned 12 will not be included in this array.

**ARREST\_FIRST.** Earliest arrest date as reported by the respondent. If the respondent did not provide an arrest date but was arrested, this variable is set to "-3."

**ARREST\_TOTNUM.** Total number of arrests as reported by the respondent.

**ARREST\_MISSNUM.** Total number of rounds (question years) that the respondent refused to answer the question on number of arrests since the date of last interview.

**ARREST\_DATED.** Total number of arrests with arrests dates (including missing months). This should equal the number of arrests in ARREST\_STATUS array.

**ARREST\_UNDATED.** Total number of arrests without dates (ARREST\_MISSINGDT plus ARREST\_MISSINGYR)

**ARREST\_MISSINGDT.** Number of arrest dates with missing month and missing year.

**ARREST\_MISSINGYR.** Number of arrest dates with missing year.

**INCARC\_STATUS\_year.month.** The array consists of monthly incarceration status variables that cover the period of January 1992 through April 2010.

**INCARC\_FIRST.** Earliest entry date into incarceration as reported by the respondent.

**INCARC\_TOTNUM.** Total number of separate incarcerations reported by the respondent.

**INCARC\_AGE\_FIRST.** Age of respondent when first incarcerated.

**INCARC\_LENGTH\_FIRST.** Months respondent was incarcerated the first time incarcerated.

**INCARC\_LENGTH\_LONGEST.** Months respondent was incarcerated during longest incarceration.

**INCARC\_TOTMONTHS.** Total months respondent has spent incarcerated.

**INCARC\_CURRENT.** Respondent is currently incarcerated (yes or no) at date of last interview.

*Note about missing/imputed values for arrest:* Dates have been imputed for skipped arrests from round 7 onwards. In the main questionnaire, for respondents who reported four or more arrests since date of last interview, only the first and last arrests were dated. For the arrest arrays, the middle arrest dates were imputed as being evenly

spaced between the first and last arrest dates. Where first or last arrest year or month was missing, it was imputed on a case-by-case basis, based on last interview date and known arrest-date information. If respondents could not provide the arrest month, then it was imputed using the month of the middle of the period since the last interview date. If respondents could not provide arrest month in round 1, the missing month was set to June.

*Note about missing/imputed values for incarceration:* If entry and exit months/years for incarcerations were missing, they were imputed using known/given prior and future arrest date information as well as prior and future interview dates. For example, if a respondent indicated being actively incarcerated in one interview and then not being incarcerated in the next interview, with no given exit date, the exit date was given as the mid-month between the interviews. If, instead, the respondent had a listed re-arrest date that was earlier than the next interview date, the mid-month between re-arrest and when the respondent was last known to be incarcerated (the prior interview date) was used. Incarceration dates are given only in month/year. Hence, a 1-day and a 30-day incarceration could both be marked as extending from the same month to the same month, if the 30-day one started on the 1<sup>st</sup>, and the respondent was released before the next month. For the summary values, any incarceration starting and ending on the same month is counted as a one-month incarceration. All longer incarcerations are equally inclusive, counting both the entry month and exit month as full months. These incarcerations could be almost an entire month shorter, depending on exact entry/exit dates.

### NLSY97 Survey to Become Biennial

The National Longitudinal Survey of Youth 1997 (NLSY97) is changing

to an every-other-year data collection schedule, beginning with round 16. NLSY97 respondents were interviewed annually in rounds 1 through 15, starting with the 1997 survey year and ending with the 2011 survey year. Round 16 data collection will commence in 2013.

This interview schedule shift follows a pattern similar to the NLSY79, which was an annual survey for 16 rounds (1979-1994) before becoming biennial in 1996. With this change, NLSY97 data collection will take place in odd years, and the NLSY79 data collection (main, child, and young adult) will continue to take place in even years.

Question content for the biennial survey will remain similar to what was collected in the annual surveys.

### NLSY Topic Highlight: Risk Preference Variables

Several risk preference or risk tolerance variables have been added to NLSY datasets in the most recent survey releases. These variables join other risk-related variables from past survey rounds. Some variables are asked of multiple cohorts, thus allowing for inter-cohort analysis. Users can access risk variables at [www.nlsinfo.org/investigator](http://www.nlsinfo.org/investigator). Following are descriptions of the variables and the cohort datasets where they can be found.

**“Income gamble with current job” questions.** These questions were taken from the Health and Retirement Study (HRS) and are found in the 1993, 2002, 2004, and 2006 NLSY79 survey years. (See reference numbers R43958.00–R43960.00, R73533.00–R73535.00, R80471.00–R80473.00, and T02791.00–T02793.00.):

- “Suppose that you are the only income earner in the family, and you have a good job guaranteed to give you your current (family) income every year for life. You

are given the opportunity to take a new and equally good job, with a 50-50 chance that it will double your (family) income and a 50-50 chance that it will cut your (family) income by a third. Would you take the new job?”

- “Suppose the chances were 50-50 that it would double your (family) income and 50-50 that it would cut it in half. Would you still take the new job?”
- Suppose the chances were 50-50 that it would double your (family) income and 50-50 that it would cut it by 20 percent. Would you still take the new job?”

**“Income gamble with new job” questions.** These three questions were developed from the German Socio-Economic Panel Study (SOEP) and were presented in the 2010 survey year to NLSY79 respondents, young adult respondents who were 18 years or older, and NLSY97 respondents (see T30945.00 through T30947.00 for the NLSY79 cohort, Y24290.00 through Y24292 for the young adult cohort, and YTEL-77 through YTEL-79 for the NLSY97 cohort).

- “Suppose that you are the only income earner in the family, and that you have to choose between two new jobs. The first job would guarantee your current total family income for life. The second job is possibly better paying, but the income is also less certain. There is a 50-50 chance the second job would increase your total lifetime income by 20 percent and a 50-50 chance that it would cut it by 10 percent. Which job would you take: the first job or the second job?”
- “Suppose the chances were 50-

50 that the second job would increase your total lifetime income by 20 percent and 50-50 that it would cut it by 15 percent. Would you take the first job or the second job?"

- "Suppose the chances were 50-50 that the second job would increase your total lifetime income by 20 percent, and 50-50 that it would cut it by 5 percent. Would you take the first job or the second job?"

**"Now or later price versus worth" questions.** These questions (adapted from the Brabant Surveys, which were initiated in The Netherlands in the 1950s) were asked of NLSY79 respondents in 2006. (See T09605.00 through T09616.00.):

- "Suppose you have been given an item that is either worth nothing or worth \$10,000. Tomorrow you will learn what it is worth. There is a 50-50 chance it will be worth \$10,000 and a 50-50 chance it will be worth nothing. You can wait to find out how much the item is worth, or you can sell it before its value is determined. What is the lowest price that would lead you to sell the item now rather than waiting to see what it is worth?"
- "If you received [amount quoted by respondent in previous question], what percentage (0-100) of this would you save for the future rather than spend in the next 12 months?"

The respondents then answered a variation of these questions, where the item is either worth nothing or worth \$1,000, rather than \$10,000.

**"Willingness to Take Risks" Self Ratings questions.** NLSY79 and

NLSY97 respondents answered these questions (developed from the SOEP) for the first time in the 2010 survey year. (See T30945.00 through T30950.00 for the NLSY79 and YTEL-80 through YTEL-81~000008 for the NLSY97.)

- "Are you generally a person who is fully prepared to take risks or do you try to avoid taking risks? Rate yourself from 0 to 10, where 0 means 'unwilling to take any risks' and 10 means 'fully prepared to take risks.'"
- "How would you rate your willingness to take risks in the following areas? [while driving, in financial matters, in respondent's occupation, with respondent's health, in respondent's faith in other people, in romantic relationships, in making major life changes, and in placing bets]. For each situation, rate your willingness from 0 to 10..."

**"Enjoy taking risks" question.** Both the NLSY79 Child and NLSY79 Young Adult respondents rate themselves (using a 4-point scale ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree) on the statement "I enjoy taking risks." These variables are available for the 1994-2010 survey years. (See C13689.00 in the Child and Y11612.00 in the Young Adult for examples.)

### NLS Terms to Know: PAPI and CAPI

PAPI is an acronym for Paper-and-Pencil Interview, and CAPI stands for Computer-Assisted-Personal Interview. Prior to the mid-1990s, NLS interviewers conducted interviews using the traditional PAPI data collection method. In 1993, the NLSY79

field efforts switched to a CAPI approach, using a survey instrument that had been loaded onto a laptop computer. The NLS Young Women and Mature women surveys (the female components of the original cohort surveys) followed suit and began using CAPI instruments in 1995. The NLSY97 main surveys were administered using CAPI instruments from the first interview (1997) on, although some PAPI instruments were used for some NLSY97 screening interviews and for administering the household income update.

The introduction of CAPI allowed for more complex questionnaire programming, bounded interviewing, timely in-field corrections, and faster data dissemination. CAPI also reduced the number of skip-pattern errors, providing greater accuracy in giving the right questions to the correct universe of respondents. Thus, data users may notice a drop in invalid skips, when comparing code blocks of CAPI-collected variables to PAPI-collected variables across NLS survey years.

### Data Collection and Release Schedule

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

- NLSY97 Survey. Data from rounds 1 through 14 of the NLSY97 are now available. These data were collected in the 1997 through 2010 survey years. Round-15 data collection has been completed and is scheduled for release in the summer of 2013. Round-16 NLSY97 fielding will begin in 2013.
- NLSY79 Main Survey. Data from rounds 1 through 24 of the NLSY79 are available. These data were collected in the 1979

through 2010 survey years. Round-25 data collection began in the latter part of 2012, with round-25 data scheduled for release in 2014.

- NLSY79 Child Survey and NLSY79 Young Adult Survey. Both of these surveys are fielded during approximately the same timeframe as the main NLSY79 survey. Data from survey years through 2010 are now available. The current round of data collection for the child and young adult surveys began in the latter part of 2012.

Each cohort's dataset includes a merger of all previously released rounds from that cohort. All public NLS data can be accessed free of charge at [www.nlsinfo.org/investigator](http://www.nlsinfo.org/investigator), which features data from the active cohorts listed earlier, as well as the four NLS original cohorts: older men, mature women, young women, and young men.

### Fifteen Years of Past Newsletters Available Online

Issues of NLS News from the past 15 years (a total of 61 issues) can be found as PDF files at [www.bls.gov/nls/nlsnews.htm](http://www.bls.gov/nls/nlsnews.htm). BLS publishes quarterly newsletters about the NLS, featuring information about all seven NLS cohorts, including data releases, variable spotlights, errata reports, user questions, NLS-related research citations, and other NLS news items. Hard-copy editions were mailed to NLS users until 2009, when the newsletter became available exclusively as an online publication.

To subscribe to email message alerts that link users to the current NLS News online (as well as provide timely details about other NLS information), use the subscription form at [www.bls.gov/nls/nls\\_subscribe.htm](http://www.bls.gov/nls/nls_subscribe.htm).

### Working with NLS Data? — Let Us Know!

Does your research use NLS-related data? If so, we are interested in your work. We regularly collect information about NLS-related research from journal and newspaper articles, conference presentations, dissertations, theses (including master's theses and undergraduate honors theses), reports, and working papers and add it to our Annotated NLS Bibliography. We learn about this research through Internet searches, conferences, and bibliographies from papers. However, we may have missed hearing about your research. Check the author listings in the NLS Annotated Bibliography ([www.nlsbibliography.org](http://www.nlsbibliography.org)), to see if we cite your most recent research. (While there, check to see if the current listings are accurate. We want to get them right.) You can submit information about your research through our online bibliography link, or you can send an email to [usersvc@postoffice.chrr.ohio-state.edu](mailto:usersvc@postoffice.chrr.ohio-state.edu). Thank you for helping us make the Bibliography a more comprehensive tool for students, researchers, and policymakers.

### Frequently Asked Questions

The NLS staff encourages researchers to contact NLS User Services at [usersvc@chrr.osu.edu](mailto:usersvc@chrr.osu.edu), (614) 442-7366, with any questions and/or problems encountered, while accessing and using NLS data or documentation. Every effort will be made to answer inquiries. Following are some recent questions and answers that may be of general interest to NLS users:

*Q1. I am trying to find an NLSY97 variable that gives the unemployment rate for the local labor market. Is this available through NLS Investigator?*

A1. The unemployment rate variables are available only on the restricted-

access geocode data set and are not publicly available through NLS Investigator. Applications for obtaining access to NLS geocode data can be found at [www.bls.gov/nls/geocode-app.htm](http://www.bls.gov/nls/geocode-app.htm).

*Q2. In NLS Investigator, is it possible to display all the variables for a cohort in a given survey year?*

A2. NLS Investigator is designed to search for specified variables or topically related variables. The system is limited to displaying a maximum 5,000 variables; this means that a data extract of all variables for a given survey year generally is not feasible. Instead, NLS Investigator allows users to choose a survey year as the first search criteria, then limit the search button by clicking the add button and entering a second criterion, such as an "area of interest" or a "word in title" search. This usually will get the variable list down to a manageable size.

*Q3. I have been actively using the following NLSY97 variables for the 1997-2007 survey years: CV\_FIRST\_COHAB\_MONTH (Date of first cohabitation in an continuous month scheme) and CV\_FIRST\_MARRY\_MONTH (Date of first marriage in a continuous month scheme). I'm trying to find these same variables for 2008 through 2010. Have they been renamed?*

A3. These variables, like many other NLSY97 created variables, have been converted to XRND variables, and the question names now begin with "CVC\_" rather than "CV\_." XRND means "across round," which reflects data from a respondent's most current interview round. This allows users to find the information all in one variable, rather than needing to gather that information from each round.

*Q4. For the NLSY79 survey, I was trying to figure out roughly what*



*portion of interviews pre-1998 were conducted at respondents' homes, but I could not find any variables that indicated this. Is this information available?*

A4. The NLSY79 survey round currently in the field (2012 survey year) is collecting data on where the interview takes place. These data are scheduled for release in 2014. This information has not been collected in previous rounds. Previous rounds include information indicating a personal versus telephone interview, but not where the interview took place.

*Q5. In the NLSY79 Child Survey, is there information about children or youth living in boarding schools and living separately from parents? What about the young adult survey?*

A5. For the child survey, children must be living with their mothers to be interviewed, so we did not collect information from any children living separately. For information about where young adult survey participants live, see the constructed variable titled "TYPE OF RESIDENCE R LIVES IN," which indicates the general residence type in which the respondents were living at the time of the interview. There is no specific category for boarding school; the category most related would be "dormitory, fraternity or sorority."

*Q6. By my count, there were 1,048 cases in the NLSY97 without a parent interview. Why did these cases have no parental interview? Also, do we get any more information about parents during any other survey year?*

A6. The 1,048 cases without a parent interview occurred because the parent, for one reason or another, refused to take the parent interview or the NLSY97 respondent was an independent youth. We do not have the specifics as to why the parent refused. Regarding information about parental

information in later rounds, yes, the childhood retrospective section (see childhood retrospective area of interest in NLS Investigator) was introduced in round 6 and provides additional retrospective information about parents and other background information. The retrospective section is not limited to those respondents lacking a parental interview.

*Q7. This is a question about ASVAB/AFQT scores available through the NLSY79. If a respondent was enlisted in the military, does the NLSY79 database include their ASVAB/AFQT scores from their stint in the military along with the scores they received from taking the ASVAB as part of the survey?*

A7. The only scores available are the scores from the ASVAB taken in conjunction with NLSY79 survey.

*Q8. For my research, I am comparing three NLS cohorts: the NLS Older Men, the NLS Young Men, and the NLSY79. Are there differences in the weighting procedures for these cohorts? If so, how will these differences affect my analysis?*

A8. The weighting for the NLSY79 and the older men and young men (the male components of the original cohorts) are very similar and should not concern most researchers. There are a few small differences. The NLSY79 stratifies the respondents based on age, race, and income in 1978. The original cohorts did not stratify based on income but instead on education. Also, the original cohorts handle out-of-scope noninterviews (deceased, institutionalized, moved outside the United States) slightly differently than the NLSY79. For example, in the NLSY79, if a respondent moved out of the country, the respondent would still be considered in-scope, while in the original cohorts this would be viewed like a dropped respondent. From the viewpoint of most researchers, these

are trivial differences that make no substantial difference to the results.

## 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 at [www.nlsbibliography.org](http://www.nlsbibliography.org) for a comprehensive listing of NLS-related research.):

Allen, Douglas W. and Margaret F. Brinig. "Child Support Guidelines and Divorce Incentives." *International Review of Law and Economics* 32,3 (September 2012): 309-316. [NLSY79]

Altonji, Joseph G., Prashant Bharadwaj, and Fabian Lange. "Changes in the Characteristics of American Youth: Implications for Adult Outcomes." *Journal of Labor Economics* 30,4 (October 2012): 783-828. [NLSY79, NLSY97]

Arkes, Jeremy. "Longitudinal Association Between Marital Disruption and Child BMI and Obesity." *Obesity* 20,8 (August 2012): 1696-1702. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY79]

Artz, Benjamin. "Does the Impact of Union Experience on Job Satisfaction Differ by Gender?" *Industrial and Labor Relations Review* 65,2 (2012): 225-243. [NLSY79]

Black, Sarah R. and Daniel N. Klein. "Early Menarcheal Age and Risk for Later Depressive Symptomatology: The Role of Childhood Depressive Symptoms." *Journal of Youth and Adolescence* 41,9 (September 2012): 1142-1150. [Children of the NLSY79]

Buckles, Kasey S. and Elizabeth L. Munnich. "Birth Spacing and Sibling Outcomes." *Journal of Human Resources* 47,3 (Summer 2012): 613-642. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY79]

- Carlson, Daniel L. "Deviations From Desired Age at Marriage: Mental Health Differences Across Marital Status." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74,4 (August 2012): 743-758. [NLSY79]
- D'Onofrio, Brian M., Carol A. Van Hulle, Jackson A. Goodnight, Paul J. Rathouz, and Benjamin B. Lahey. "Is Maternal Smoking During Pregnancy a Causal Environmental Risk Factor for Adolescent Antisocial Behavior? Testing Etiological Theories and Assumptions." *Psychological Medicine* 42,7 (July 2012): 1535-1545. [NLSY79, NLSY79 Young Adult]
- Higgins, George E., David N. Khey, B. Cherie Dawson-Edwards, and Catherine D. Marcum. "Examining the Link Between Being a Victim of Bullying and Delinquency Trajectories Among an African American Sample." *International Criminal Justice Review* 22,2 (June 2012): 110-122. [NLSY97]
- Hofferth, Sandra L. Joseph H. Pleck, and Colleen Vesely. "The Transmission of Parenting from Fathers to Sons." *Parenting: Science and Practice* 12,4 (2012): 282-305. [NLSY79 Young Adult]
- Hutcherson, Donald T., II. "Crime Pays: The Connection Between Time in Prison and Future Criminal Earnings." *The Prison Journal* 92,3 (September 2012): 315-335. [NLSY97]
- Jokinen-Gordon, Hanna. "Still Penalized? Parity, Age at First Birth and Women's Income in Later Life." *Journal of Women and Aging* 24,3 (2012): 227-241. [Mature Women]
- Larson, Matthew and Gary Sweeten. "Breaking Up Is Hard to Do: Romantic Dissolution, Offending, and Substance Use During the Transition to Adulthood." *Criminology* 50,3 (August 2012): 605-636. [NLSY97]
- Leech, Tamara G. J. "Subsidized Housing, Public Housing, and Adolescent Violence and Substance Use." *Youth and Society* 44,2 (June 2012): 217-235. [NLSY79 Young Adult]
- Mason, Katherine. "The Unequal Weight of Discrimination: Gender, Body Size, and Income Inequality." *Social Problems* 59,3 (August 2012): 411-435. [NLSY97]
- Mohanty, Madhu Sudan and Aman Ullah. "Why Does Growing up in an Intact Family during Childhood Lead to Higher Earnings during Adulthood in the United States?" *American Journal of Economics and Sociology* 71,3 (July 2012): 662-695. [NLSY79]
- Mukhopadhyay, Sankar. "The Effects of the 1978 Pregnancy Discrimination Act on Female Labor Supply." *International Economic Review* 53,4 (November 2012): 1133-1153. [Young Women]
- Noonan, Mary Christine and Jennifer L. Glass. "The Hard Truth about Telecommuting." *Monthly Labor Review* 135,6 (June 2012): 38-45. [NLSY79]
- Raley, R. Kelly Yujin Kim, and Kimberly Daniels. "Young Adults' Fertility Expectations and Events: Associations With College Enrollment and Persistence." *Journal of Marriage and Family* 74,4 (August 2012): 866-879. [NLSY97]
- Reagan, Patricia B., Pamela J. Salsberry, Muriel Z. Fang, William P. Gardner, and Kathleen Pajer. "African American/White Differences in the Age of Menarche: Accounting for the Difference." *Social Science and Medicine* 75,7 (October 2012): 1263-1270. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY79]
- Sipsma, Heather L., Jeannette R. Ickovics, Haiqun Lin, and Trace Kershaw. "Future Expectations Among Adolescents: A Latent Class Analysis." *American Journal of Community Psychology* 50,1-2 (September 2012): 169-181. [NLSY97]
- Tach, Laura and Sarah Halpern-Meekin. "Marital Quality and Divorce Decisions: How Do Premarital Cohabitation and Nonmarital Childbearing Matter?" *Family Relations* 61,4 (October 2012): 571-585. [NLSY79]
- Vaske, Jamie, Jeffrey T. Ward, Danielle Boisvert, and John Paul Wright. "The Stability of Risk-seeking from Adolescence to Emerging Adulthood." *Journal of Criminal Justice* 40,4 (July-August 2012): 313-322. [NLSY79 Young Adult]
- Wein, Lawrence M., Yan Yang, and Jeremy D. Goldhaber-Fiebert. "Assessing Screening Policies for Childhood Obesity." *Obesity* 20,7 (July 2012): 1437-1443. [Children of the NLSY79]
- Wildsmith, Elizabeth, Jennifer S. Manlove, Susan Marie Jekielek, Kristin Anderson Moore, and Lisa A. Mincieli. "Teenage Childbearing Among Youth Born to Teenage Mothers." *Youth and Society* 44,2 (June 2012): 258-283. [Children of the NLSY79, NLSY79, NLSY79 Young Adult]



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