

The National Longitudinal Surveys

Sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), NLS data collection and user services are provided, under contract, by CHRR at The Ohio State University and NORC at the University of Chicago. Funding for the NLSY79 Child/Young Adult survey is provided by the Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development.

NLS cohort topics include:

Demographic and family background, education, military experiences, job characteristics and training, labor market status and histories, marital and family characteristics, income and assets, transfers of time and money, retirement, geographic location and mobility, health, nutrition, and physical activity, fertility and parenting, sexual activity, attitudes and expectations, behaviors and perspectives, environmental characteristics, and civic engagement.

Additionally, NLSY79 Child and Young Adult surveys include:

Assessments of the quality of the home environment, cognitive development, temperament, and motor, social and emotional development.

How do I obtain NLS data?

National Longitudinal Surveys data are made available to researchers through the Investigator website at: nlsinfo.org/investigator. Investigator allows users to search for variables of interest for any NLS cohort, create simple tabulations of the data, extract data sets for analysis, and access documentation. NLS public data are immediately available and free of charge.

Where do I get more information?

Visit the NLS website at: nlsinfo.org for online access to questionnaires and other documentation, a searchable, annotated bibliography of NLS research, news releases, updates, information on obtaining restricted-access data, such as geocoded files, and much more.

Questions about NLS data should be directed to NLS User Services: usersvc@chrr.osu.edu or **614-442-7366**.

Questions about BLS publications and restricted-access NLS data should be directed to: NLS_info@bls.gov or **202-691-7410**.

NLS Director

Keenan Dworak-Fisher (BLS)
dworak-fisher.keenan@bls.gov

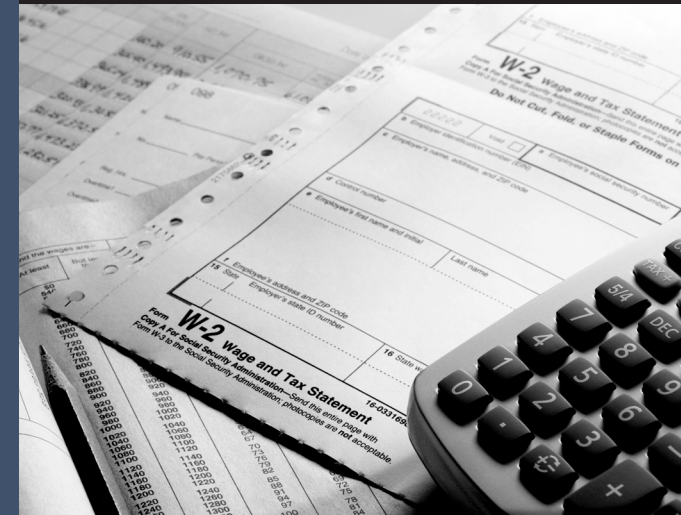
NLS Principal Investigator, NLSY79:
Deborah Carr (CHRR)
carrds@bu.edu

NLS Principal Investigator, NLSY79 CHILD/YA:
Elizabeth Cooksey (CHRR)
elizabeth.cooksey@chrr.osu.edu

NLS Principal Investigator, NLSY97:
Lowell Taylor (NORC)
lt20@andrew.cmu.edu

Using the NLS to Study INCOME & ASSETS

National Longitudinal Surveys



What are the National Longitudinal Surveys?

The National Longitudinal Surveys (NLS) are a set of surveys sponsored by the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) of the U.S. Department of Labor. The NLS has gathered information at multiple points in time on the labor market experiences and other significant life events of seven cohorts of men and women.

Which NLS cohorts have income and wages data?

The three ongoing NLS cohorts and the four original NLS cohorts (for whom data collection has ended) all have income and assets data.

1997 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

(NLSY97): Began in 1997 with 8,984 men and women born in 1980-84 (ages 12-17 in 1997). Sample members were interviewed annually from 1997 to 2011 and biennially thereafter. The 2021 interview was conducted with 6,713 men and women ages 36-42. In addition, a COVID-19 Supplement was fielded in 2021.

1979 National Longitudinal Survey of Youth

(NLSY79): Began in 1979 with 12,686 men and women born in 1957-64 (ages 14-22 in 1979). Sample members were interviewed annually from 1979-1994 and biennially thereafter. Oversamples of military and economically disadvantaged, non-black/non-Hispanic respondents were dropped in 1985 and 1991, leaving a sample size of 9,964. The 2022 interview was conducted with 6,413 men and women ages 57-66.

NLSY79 Child and Young Adult (CYA):

Began in 1986 with children born to female NLSY79 respondents. Biennial data collection consists of interviews with the mothers and interviews with the children themselves; from 1994 onward, children turning age 15 and older during the survey year have been administered a Young Adult questionnaire that is similar to the NLSY79 questionnaire. In 2016, interviewed NLSY79 mothers completed the Mother Supplement for children in the household at least part-time who were 0 to 13 years of age as of the end of 2016,

and children 12 and older were included in the Young Adult data collection. To date, more than 10,000 children have been interviewed in at least one survey round.

Older Men (OM): Began in 1966 with 5,020 men born in 1906-21 (ages 45-59 in 1966). Sample members were interviewed 12 times from 1966 to 1983. A final interview in 1990 was conducted with 2,092 respondents who were 69-83 years old, and 2,206 family members of deceased respondents.

Mature Women (MW): Began in 1967 with 5,083 women born in 1922-37 (ages 30-44 in 1967). Sample members were interviewed 21 times from 1967 to 2003. The final interview in 2003 was conducted with 2,237 women ages 66-80.

Young Men (YM): Began in 1966 with 5,225 men born in 1941-51 (ages 14-24 in 1966). Sample members were interviewed 12 times from 1966 to 1981.

Young Women (YW): Began in 1968 with 5,159 women born in 1943-53 (ages 14-24 in 1968). Sample members were interviewed 22 times from 1968 to 2003. The final interview in 2003 was conducted with 2,859 women ages 49-59.

Which NLS data elements are relevant to research on income and assets?

This list summarizes the major areas for which income and assets data are available; some questions asked on a very limited basis are not represented.

The following topics have been covered in varying detail for *all* of the cohorts.

- Salary and wages
- Income from farm or business
- Household total income
- Unemployment compensation
- Public assistance programs
- Market value of residence, farm, or business
- Income from inheritance, trusts, or estates

- Life insurance benefits or policies
- Types of retirement income, such as retirement plans, pensions, and Social Security
- Veterans' benefits, workers' compensation, other disability benefits
- Rent, mortgage, or other property loans
- Vehicles owned, amount owed

The following topics have been covered in varying detail in *select* cohorts.

- Military wages (NLSY79, CYA, NLSY97)
- Net worth (all except CYA)
- Poverty status (all except CYA, YM)
- Rental property income (NLSY97, OM, MW, YM, YW)
- Child support (NLSY79, CYA, NLSY97, MW, YW)
- Alimony (NLSY79, NLSY97, MW, YW), spouse received alimony (YM)
- Transfers of money from respondent to spouse or children (MW, YW)
- Allowance from parents, transfers from parents other than allowance (NLSY97)
- Claimed EITC on tax return (NLSY79, NLSY97)
- Cash advances, payday loans (CYA, NLSY97)
- Financial assistance from others (CYA, NLSY97, OM, MW, YM, YW)
- Employer sponsored retirement program, participation in employer plan (NLSY79)
- Retirement plan market value (NLSY97, NLSY79)
- Number of years included in pension (MW, YW)
- Income expectations once retired (OM), receiving retirement income (NLSY79)
- Bank accounts (NLSY79, NLSY97, OM, YM)
- Interest or dividends (NLSY79, NLSY97, OM, MW, YM, YW)
- Stocks or mutual funds (NLSY79, NLSY97), CDs, bonds, and bills (NLSY79, NLSY97, OM, YM)
- Business assets (NLSY79, NLSY97, OM)
- Value of personal items (NLSY79, CYA, NLSY97)
- Bankruptcy, debt owed (NLSY79, CYA, NLSY97)
- College loans (NLSY79, CYA, NLSY97), received financial aid (YM, YW)