

The 2016 National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH) FAST FACTS

What is the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH)?

- The NSCH is a national survey which provides rich data on multiple, intersecting aspects of children's health and well-being – including physical and mental health, access to and quality of health care, and the child's family, neighborhood, school, and social context.
- In 2003, 2007, and 2011/12, the NSCH was conducted as a telephone survey by the [National Center for Health Statistics at the Centers for Disease Control](#) under the direction and sponsorship of the federal [Maternal and Child Health Bureau](#) (MCHB).
- In 2016, the NSCH was conducted again with several key changes. Among these changes, the 2016 NSCH was conducted by the US Census Bureau, consolidated content from two surveys (the NSCH and the [National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs](#)), and was administered via web- and mail- (paper) based instruments.
- From 2016 onward, the NSCH will be fielded annually.

What is the purpose of the National Survey of Children's Health?

- The NSCH is designed to produce national and state-level data on the physical and emotional health of American children 0 - 17 years old. Information is collected on factors related to the health and well-being of children, including access to and utilization of health care, receipt of care in a medical home, family interactions, parental health, school and after-school experiences, and neighborhood.
- Additionally, the NSCH provides baseline estimates for federal and state Title V Maternal and Child Health national outcome and performance measures, and data for each state's Title V needs assessment.

Who were the participants in the National Survey of Children's Health?

- Households were contacted by mail at random to identify those with one or more children under 18 years old. In each household, one child was randomly selected to be the subject of the survey.
- The survey oversampled children with special health care needs and children 0-5 years of age.
- A total of 50,212 surveys were completed nationally for children between the ages of 0-17 years. This was an Overall Weighted Response Rate of 40.7%
- Approximately 985 surveys were collected per state (state range: 638 to 1351).
- Survey results were weighted to represent the population of non-institutionalized children ages 0-17 who live in housing units nationally and in each state.

Who sponsors and conducts the National Survey of Children's Health?

- The Maternal and Child Health Bureau, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (MCHB, HRSA) provides the primary funding and direction for the National Survey of Children's Health. More information can be found here: <https://mchb.hrsa.gov/data/national-surveys>.
- Additional funding for specific questions on the 2016 survey was provided by:
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities (NCBDDD)
 - United States Department of Agriculture (USDA), Food and Nutrition Service
- The 2016 NSCH was conducted by the United States Census Bureau, Associate Director for Demographic Programs on behalf of the United States Department of Health and Human Services, HRSA/MCHB. The US Census Bureau oversaw the 2016 NSCH's sampling plan and administration by mail and online. They also collected the data and created the sampling weights

How are data for the survey collected?

- Households received a mailed invitation asking an adult in the household who is familiar with the child's health and health care (usually a parent) to go online to complete a short screener questionnaire. The screener asked participants to identify all children ages 0-17 living in the household.
- If a child (or children) lived in the household, participants who chose to respond online were then immediately directed to a more detailed, age-specific topical questionnaire.
- For households with more than one child, one was randomly selected to be the subject of the main questionnaire.
- All non-responding households received a reminder in the mail. A mailed paper-and-pencil screener was provided if the household did not respond to the first two web survey invitations.
- Participants could also request a mailed copy of the screener and main questionnaire if they did not wish to complete it online.

What topics are asked about in the survey?

- Child and family demographics
- Children's physical and mental health status, including health conditions and functional difficulties
- Health insurance status, adequacy and type of coverage
- Access to and use of health care services
- Medical home
- Transition to adult care
- Early childhood-specific information (0-5 years)
- Middle childhood and adolescent-specific information (6-17 years)
- Family health and activities
- Impact of child's health on family
- Parental perceptions of neighborhood characteristics
- Access to community-based services

What's new in 2016?

- Infant sleep position
- Concerns about the child's weight
- Food insecurity/insufficiency
- Behavioral treatment for ADD/ADHD
- Therapy services for children with Autism/ASD or developmental delays
- Additional transition to adult care items
- How often insurance meets child's needs for mental health services
- Time doctor spent with child
- Family resilience
- Healthy and ready to learn content (children age 3-5)
- Parental emotional support

The 2016 NSCH also includes several items which were previously in the NS-CSHCN. Some of these items include: types of functional difficulties, difficulties in accessing services, ER use, hours spent providing care for the child, etc. For more details regarding the content available in the 2016 NSCH, please see the [full-length 2016 NSCH instrument](#).

Are data from the survey available to the public?

- The Data Resource Center for Child and Adolescent Health (DRC) website (www.nschdata.org) provides quick, easy, hands-on access to 2016 NSCH survey data. The DRC's interactive data query (www.nschdata.org/browse/survey) allows users to instantly access the data and compare national and state-level findings among children of different ages, race/ethnicity, income levels, health status, and many more subgroups.
- Cleaned and labeled 2016 NSCH datasets in SAS, SPSS, and Stata formats will also be available from the DRC at no cost. These datasets include additional key indicators, available at the national and state level, created by DRC staff. You can request the datasets by completing a "Data Set Request Form" located on the [DRC website](#). For more information, contact info@cahmi.org.
- You can also access the [raw microdata files](#) in SAS via the Census Bureau.