

Attachment B4

Questionnaire Changes for Year 3 of Interviewing in the National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG)

This addendum describes 4 revisions to the NSFG questionnaires effective for the third year of continuous interviewing and subsequent years (“Year 3 Changes”). It is divided into two sections:

- First, we describe 3 revisions that affect the NSFG questionnaires for both males and females (items 1-3);
- Second, 1 revision that affects only the female questionnaire (item 4).
- There are no proposed revisions affecting only the male questionnaire.

Therefore, all 4 changes affect females; 3 of the changes affect males. For each, we give a brief description of the change, a justification or “Rationale” for the change (with selected references), and then give the question wording.

We estimate that these questions will add about 1.5 minutes to the average interview length for females and males.

Average interview length for **females** will rise from 74.6 minutes in Year 2 to 76.1 minutes in Year 3—still under the original burden estimate of 80 minutes (1.33 hours). For **males**, these questions will increase average interview length from 54.2 minutes in Year 2 to 55.7 minutes in Year 3—still under the approved burden estimate of 60 minutes (1 hour). (See A.12 for additional burden information.)

REVISIONS FOR BOTH MALE & FEMALE INSTRUMENTS

1. Brief description

Add 1 item to the education series asking for date of Bachelor’s degree (Female Section A and Male Section A).

Rationale

This question will ask all respondents who have a Bachelor’s degree or higher for the date when their Bachelor’s degree was awarded. Currently, we collect month and year of high school degree. Collecting the month and year when the Bachelor’s degree was received would significantly strengthen the usefulness of the NSFG for life course analyses used by researchers in NICHD and ASPE’s grant research programs, and by the NSFG staff at NCHS. In particular, it would provide information regarding the timing and rate of fertility relative to educational attainment (i.e., college degree). Past findings have shown that educational attainment is related to the timing of births for both mothers and fathers (1), as well as to the number of biological children ever had (2,3). Completion of college is also associated with increased economic well-being for both parents and children. The effect on interview time is minimal. Based on Cycle 7 responses, we estimate that 20% of respondents will get the question, at 25 seconds per applicable respondent, for 0.08 minutes total addition to average interview length.

References

1. Weeden J, Abrams MJ, Green MC, & Sabini J. 2006. Do High-Status People Really Have Fewer Children: Education, Income, and Fertility in the Contemporary U.S. *Human Nature* 17(4): 377-392.
2. Chandra A, Martinez GM, Mosher WD, Abma JC, Jones J. 2005. Fertility, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health of US Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth. *Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, Number 25*. December, 2005. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
3. Martinez GM, Chandra A, Abma JC, Jones J., Mosher WD. 2005. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women from Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. *Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, Number 26*. May, 2006. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.

Question

{ ASKED IF R HAS AT LEAST A BACHELOR'S DEGREE

EARNBA_M, EARNBA_Y

AF-12/AE-12. In what month and year did you get your Bachelor's degree?

ENTER month and year

2. Brief description

Add 3 items to ask about expectations for marriage and for cohabitation outside of marriage (Female Section C and Male Section TBD).

Rationale

In the Cycle 6 NSFG and in the first two years of continuous interviewing, the survey has included a question on marriage expectations among respondents who are cohabiting with an opposite-sex partner. The 3 new questions we propose to add for Year 3 of continuous interviewing will provide information for NCHS, NICHD, and OASPE on expectations to marry or cohabit among those who are not currently married or cohabiting. Expectations and attitudes regarding cohabitation are probably changing, given that cohabitation increasingly occurs before, or instead of, marriage. Results from the Toledo Adolescent Relationships Study (TARS) indicated that nearly a third of adolescents in their sample expected to cohabit in the future. (1) Among men and women 15 -44 years of age, over 40% cohabited prior to marriage. (2, 3) Although marriage continues to be desired across demographic groups, *expectations* regarding marriage vary across subgroups (e.g., race groups, socioeconomic statuses, single mothers). (1, 4, 5) In conjunction with the attitude items to be added this year (see #3 below), this new data will allow NCHS, NICHD, and ASPE staff and their grantees to better interpret the stunning rise in nonmarital fertility, which comprised about 39% of all births in 2006 (6). How many of these nonmarital births occur to cohabiting couples rather than women

living alone? Along with NSFG data on the stability of cohabitations, the implications of these births for child well-being can be assessed.

Similar questions have been asked in surveys focused on respondents younger than 30 years, such as the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY97) and the TARS. Given that there are no new nationally representative data tapping such central issues related to fertility and family change in the full reproductive-age range, the NSFG is the ideal vehicle for filling this gap. The effect on interview time is minimal. Based on Cycle 6 data, we estimate that about

- 50% of females 15-44 will be asked these 3 questions, adding about 22.5 seconds to interview length (50% * .75 minutes = .375 minutes).
- About 2/3 of males 15-44 will be asked these 3 questions, adding about ½ minute to the interview (67% * .75 minutes = .50 minutes).

References

1. Chandra A, Martinez GM, Mosher WD, Abma JC, Jones J. 2005. Fertility, Family Planning, and Reproductive Health of US Women: Data from the 2002 National Survey of Family Growth. Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, Number 25. December, 2005. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
2. Martinez GM, Chandra A, Abma JC, Jones J., Mosher WD. 2005. Fertility, Contraception, and Fatherhood: Data on Men and Women from Cycle 6 (2002) of the National Survey of Family Growth. Vital and Health Statistics, Series 23, Number 26. May, 2006. Hyattsville, MD: National Center for Health Statistics.
3. Lichter DT, Batson CD, Brown JB. (2004). Welfare Reform and Marriage Promotion: The Marital Expectations and Desires of Single and Cohabiting Mothers. *Social Service Review* 78(1): 2-25.
4. Manning WD, Longmore MA, Giordana PC. 2007. The Changing Institution of Marriage: Adolescents' Expectations to Cohabit and to Marry. *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69(3): 559-575.
5. Manning WD, Smock PJ. 2002. First Comes Cohabitation and Then Comes Marriage. *Journal of Family Issues* 23(8): 1065-1087.
6. Hamilton BE, Martin JA, Ventura SJ. "Births: Preliminary data for 2006." *National vital statistics reports* vol 56 no 7. Hyattsville, MD. National Center for Health Statistics. 2007

Questions { Asked if R is not currently married or cohabiting

COHCHANCE

CD-15/XX-1. Please look at Card 21. What is the chance that you will ever (again) live together with a (man/woman) to whom you are not married?

- No chance1
- A little chance2
- 50-50 chance3
- A pretty good chance4
- An almost certain chance5

{ Asked if R is not currently married or cohabiting

MARRCHANCE

CD-16/XX-2. Please look at Card 21. What is the chance that you will get married (again) someday?

- No chance1 (SKIP CD-17 PMARCOH)
- A little chance2
- 50-50 chance3
- A pretty good chance4
- An almost certain chance5

{ Asked if R says there’s any chance that she will (re)marry someday

PMARCOH

CD-17/XX-3. Please look again at Card 21. What is the chance that you will live together with your future (husband/wife) before getting married?

- No chance1
- A little chance2
- 50-50 chance3
- A pretty good chance4
- An almost certain chance5

3. Brief description

Add 4 items to the series of attitude questions related to fertility, parenthood, and contraception (Female Section I and Male Section J).

Rationale

Grantees of NICHD’s grant research program requested questions on attitudes toward cohabitation; the following questions are based on their suggestions. The questions will also be useful for ASPE’s research program on families, as well as NCHS statistical reports. Some studies have collected similar questions from samples of teens and young adults (NLSY and TARS, mentioned in #2), but not from a national survey collecting fertility information from the wide reproductive-age range available in the NSFG. The disassociation of childbearing from marriage is continuing (1), with childbearing to unmarried women rising to record high levels (39% of all births in 2006). Only for age groups 25-29 and above do marital births outnumber nonmarital births (2) and these are precisely the ages that previous studies do not interview. Further, cohabitation is seen by young respondents as both an alternative and a precursor to marriage (3). Therefore, it is important to capture attitudes towards nonmarital childbearing, cohabitation, and marriage, especially given the relevance to NICHD and ASPE programming. The 4 proposed questions seek to quantify the social climate in which individual decisions are made to marry and bear children.

The question about *attitudes toward childbearing in cohabitation* is important because the majority of the increase in nonmarital childbearing in the United States has occurred within cohabiting unions. We already ask respondents their views on whether it is acceptable “for an unmarried female to have a child.” The new questions would ask specifically about childbearing by a cohabiting couple. Given that over 40% of single

mothers are cohabiting (4), it is important to measure the acceptability of childbearing within cohabitation. The entire age range of the NSFG is necessary as responses to these questions may vary according to the respondent's fertility and union histories.

The question about *knowledge of happy marriages* stems from qualitative work with participants in a Healthy Marriage program (5) where many respondents from economically disadvantaged backgrounds lived in environments where "successful" or enduring marriages were uncommon. It has been suggested that the lack of successful marital role models in disadvantaged communities affects marital behaviors. (6) Empirical work supports the notion that social networks and social contexts influence decisions related to union formation and fertility (7, 8). This new question will assess whether NSFG respondents are embedded in social networks with marital role models by asking if they are aware of successful marriages in their networks. This measure, capturing the notion of being embedded in a network with successful marriages, could further explain the rise in cohabitation alongside the "retreat" from marriage.

The questions about *cohabitation as a way to prevent divorce* are based on Manning and Smock's work, which strongly supports the idea that among dating and cohabiting young adults cohabitation is viewed as a means to prevent divorce. Qualitative studies have revealed that low income cohabiting respondents delay or avoid marriage until they are assured that their marriage will be successful, (i.e., not end in divorce). (9, 10) To better understand the reasons for cohabitation or for not marrying, we will gauge attitudes regarding the cohabitation as it relates to divorce.

These attitude questions regarding nonmarital childbearing, cohabitation, and marriage will be asked of respondents of all ages in the NSFG; especially, given that cohabitation is becoming increasingly more common among older adults (11). We estimate that the effect on interview length by adding these four questions for all respondents is an approximate increase of 1 minute.

References

1. Manning WD, Longmore MA, Giordano PC. "The changing institution of marriage: Adolescents' expectations to cohabit and to marry," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 69: 559-575. 2007.
2. Hamilton BE, Martin JA, Ventura SJ. "Births: Preliminary data for 2006." *National vital statistics reports* vol 56 no 7. Hyattsville, MD. National Center for Health Statistics. 2007.
3. Smock PJ, Manning WD, Porter M. "Everything's there except money: How economic factors shape the decision to marry among cohabiting couples," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 680-696. 2005.
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5. Manning WD, Smock PJ. "Measuring and modeling cohabitation: New perspectives from qualitative data," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67: 989-1002. 2005.
6. Wilson WJ. *The Truly Disadvantaged*. University of Chicago Press. 1987.
7. Rindfuss RR, Choe MK, Bumpass LL, Tsuya NO. "Social networks and family change in Japan," *American Sociological Review* 69:838-861. 2004
8. South SJ, Crowder KD. "The declining significance of neighborhoods? Marital transitions in community context," *Social Forces* 78(3): 1067-1099. 2000
9. Gibson-Davis CM, Edin K, MacLanahan S. "High hopes but even higher expectations: The retreat from marriage among low-income couples," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 67(5): 1301-1312. 2005.
10. Edin K., Kefalas MJ, Reed JM. "A peek inside the black box: What marriage means for poor unmarried parents," *Journal of Marriage and Family* 66(4): 1007-1014. 2004.
11. Brown SL, Lee GR, Bulanda JR. "Cohabitation among older adults: A national portrait," *Journal of Gerontology: Social Sciences* 61: S71-S79. 2006

Questions

{ ASKED OF ALL

GETALONG

IH-16/JG-16. Living together before marriage is a good way for a couple to make sure they get along.

- Strongly agree1
- Agree2
- Disagree3
- Strongly disagree.....4
- If R insists:* Neither agree nor disagree5

CHCOHAB

IH-17/JG-17. It is okay to have and raise children when the parents are living together but not married.

- Strongly agree1
- Agree2
- Disagree3
- Strongly disagree.....4
- If R insists:* Neither agree nor disagree5

PRVNTDIV

IH-18/JG-18. Living together before marriage may help prevent divorce.

- Strongly agree1
- Agree2
- Disagree3
- Strongly disagree.....4
- If R insists:* Neither agree nor disagree5

MARRFAIL

IH-19/JG-19. Marriage has not worked out for most people I know.

Strongly agree	1
Agree	2
Disagree	3
Strongly disagree.....	4
<i>If R insists: Neither agree nor disagree</i>	<i>5</i>

FEMALE INSTRUMENT ONLY REVISIONS

4. Brief description

Add two items to the series of questions asked of women who are at risk of pregnancy and not using contraceptives (Female Section E, EH Series). For those who say they are not trying to get pregnant, this item asks why the respondent is not using a contraceptive method. A similar question was asked in Cycle 6, but it applies to reasons for nonuse of contraceptives surrounding respondents’ unintended pregnancies. The existing question will be adapted and asked for all women currently at risk of unintended pregnancy, independently of their pregnancy history. This question is a “choose all that apply” type. Thus, a question will also be added asking for the main reason for not using contraceptives.

Rationale

These questions expand the ability of the NSFG to shed light on reasons women do not use contraceptives despite being at risk of pregnancy, when they are not seeking pregnancy. The NSFG’s ability to track and help understand unintended pregnancies and contraceptive behavior continues to be a critical service for all our sponsors, including NCHS, OPA, NICHD, ASPE, and CDCD’s DRH. In addition, it will inform the efforts of the National Campaign to Prevent Teen and Unplanned Pregnancy, an organization formed in 1996 to help reduce the number of teen pregnancies in the U.S., and recently expanded to include reduction of unwanted pregnancies as a goal.

Unintended pregnancies remain common (1) and are associated with negative health and developmental consequences for women and children. A substantial proportion of unintended pregnancies occur to women not using contraception at the time of conception. Studies of reasons for contraceptive nonuse have been conducted on small, non-representative samples or on restricted universes of women (2). Adding this question will yield estimates of reasons for contraceptive nonuse among women at risk of unintended pregnancy across all reproductive ages.

The effect on interview time would be minimal because the universe for whom it is asked would be small. (Approximately 6% of respondents will get the questions) (30 seconds per applicable respondent = 0.03 minutes total).

References

1. Finer LB and Henshaw SK. 2006. Disparities in Rates of Unintended Pregnancy in the United States, 1994 and 2001. Perspectives on Sexual and Reproductive Health 38(2): 90-96, June 2006.

2. Nettleman M, Brewer, J, and Ayoola, A. 2007. Reasons for unprotected intercourse in adult women: A qualitative study. Journal of Midwifery & Women's Health 52(2):149-151.

Question

{Asked of women who had intercourse in the month of interview, did not use contraception in the month of interview, are not sterile, do not want to become pregnant, and said no or don't know to whether their partner wants a pregnancy.

WHYNOUSING

EH-2c.

Please look at Card 43. Which of the following statements applies to you right now? You are not using birth control because...

- You do not expect to have sex.....1
- You do not think you can get pregnant.....2
- You don't really mind if you get pregnant.....3
- You are worried about the side effects of birth control....4
- Your male partner does not want you to use a birth control method.....5
- Your male partner himself does not want to use a birth control method.....6
- You could not get a method.....7
- (IF VOLUNTEERED:)Respondent is using a method.....8

{ Asked if more than 1 reason is reported in WHYNOUSING

MAINNOUSE

EH-2d.

Which one of these was the main reason that you are not using birth control?

[all response categories that respondent mentioned are displayed again]