

# THE IMPORTANCE OF LONGITUDINAL SURVEYS

In a longitudinal study, the same people are interviewed periodically over time. This type of survey enables researchers to follow changes in people's lives and understand cause and effect relationships.

For example, a researcher might want to know how much of an earnings boost results from additional job training or completing a college degree. Other surveys that aren't longitudinal have shown that people who have received more training or education tend to have higher earnings, but this may confuse cause and effect: for example, an individual's family resources may cause them to have both more training and higher earnings. A longitudinal survey with the same participants can help disentangle

these effects by measuring what the individual earned before and after receiving the training.

The NLSY97 is special because it has collected information about you since young adulthood to show how you have changed and how your skills have developed. The survey gives researchers the extra information needed to understand how earlier events in your life affect things that happen later as you age and grow.

And you are special because you have been part of the NLSY97 since the beginning. If we interviewed someone else instead of you, we wouldn't be able to understand those important cause and effect relationships.



HOW YOU  
HAVE MADE  
AN IMPACT

# NLSY 97

Over the years, your answers have reflected the triumphs and challenges of your generation. Each time you complete your interview, you make your voice heard!

Your contributions have improved how researchers and policy makers understand the important issues that impact our nation's economy and labor market. Thank you for your continued participation!

*Please contact us with any questions or comments:*



Call: 877-504-1086

Text with your full name to: 312-835-1905

Email: [nlsy97@norc.org](mailto:nlsy97@norc.org)

Visit: [www.bls.gov/respondents/nls/](http://www.bls.gov/respondents/nls/)



## YOUR PARTICIPATION:

We ask about health issues that limit productivity, such as physical pain or emotional problems.

## DATA COLLECTED:

At age 29, **15 percent** of respondents reported some level of pain interfering with normal work within the four weeks prior to their interview.

## RESEARCH PUBLISHED:

Using NLSY97 health and employment data, researchers found that individuals who reported pain interfered with work at age 29 had an increased likelihood of subsequent labor force exit and later health-related work limitations.

Pooleri, Anand, Rishita Yeduri, Gabrielle Horne, Adrienne Frech and Dmitry Tumin. "Pain Interference in Young Adulthood and Work Participation." *PAIN* published online (30 August 2022): <https://doi.org/10.1097/j.pain.0000000000002769>



## YOUR PARTICIPATION:

We asked a series of depression-related questions in the NLSY97 COVID-19 supplemental survey.

## DATA COLLECTED:

**34 percent** of respondents reported three or more days of restless sleep in the week prior to their interview. **18 percent** said they had felt sad on three or more days in the week prior to their interview.

## RESEARCH PUBLISHED:

Using the NLSY97 COVID-19 data, researchers examined the relationship between parents' mental health and their children's schooling. They found that parents with children participating in remote learning were more likely to suffer from symptoms of depression than parents whose children were completing school in-person.

Lassi, Nicholas. "Remote Learning and Parent Depression During the COVID-19 Pandemic." *Educational Research Quarterly*, 46(2), 40-70: <https://eric.ed.gov/?id=EJ1370453>



## YOUR PARTICIPATION:

We ask about health limitations that impact general tasks.

## DATA COLLECTED:

In a recent interview, **6 percent** of NLSY97 participants reported that their health limits moderate activities. **8 percent** reported difficulty with several flights of stairs.

## RESEARCH PUBLISHED:

Researchers used NLSY97 health data and information on family environment during respondents' adolescence to learn whether family environment is related to adult health outcomes. They found that factors related to family environment were connected to the likelihood of physical health limitations in adulthood, but not to mental health.

Kelsey L. Corallo, Christopher P. Carr, Justin A. Lavner, Kalsea J. Koss, and Katherine B. Ehrlich. "The Protective Role of Parental Vigilance in the Link between Risky Childhood Environments and Health." *Social Science and Medicine* published online (5 December 2022): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.socscimed.2022.115593>



## YOUR PARTICIPATION:

We ask a series of questions used to measure the likelihood of depressive symptoms.

## DATA COLLECTED:

One question in the depression scale asks respondents about levels of effort to complete daily tasks. **21 percent** said everything felt like it took extra effort on three or more days within the past week.

## RESEARCH PUBLISHED:

Using NLSY97 health and work schedule data, researchers found that women given two weeks or less notice of their upcoming work schedule were more likely to suffer symptoms of depression than women with greater periods of notice.

Hawkinson, Colin B., Sarah B. Andrea, Anjum Hajat, Anita Minh, Shanise Owens, Kieran Blaikie, Jessie Seiler, Andrea R. Molino and Vanessa M. Oddo. "A Cross-sectional Analysis of Work Schedule Notice and Depressive Symptoms in the United States." *SSM - Population Health* published online (24 April 2023): <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ssmph.2023.101413>

