



Dear [Respondent Name],

Welcome to the 31st round of the NLSY79!

From your first interview, we have asked you to share your story. And you have. Over the years, you have updated us about your education and training, employment, marriages, children, preparations for retirement, and much more. We are always appreciative of your participation in the NLSY79!

Many of us are familiar with the proverb, “the best-laid plans of mice and men often go awry” which has its origins in the poem, *To a Mouse*, by poet Robert Burns. One’s life does not always go as planned, and while Burns’ poem laments loss, the unplanned can also lead to unexpected gains.

As you know, longitudinal studies like the NLS trace the sequences of events in people’s lives over time and follow not only the planned but the actual path respondent’s lives take. This feature allows us to better understand the impact that early experiences have on outcomes later in life and to see how the same life events affect individuals in different ways.

When we offer our thanks for your past participation, we always mention the many studies published using NLSY79 data. Research is important for policymakers because it can provide evidence-based knowledge to inform decisions and solutions. As just one example, researchers looked to individuals’ experiences during and after the Great Recession to better understand what outcomes we might expect when facing the recent pandemic. And for your age group now, the information we collect will help researchers to understand how people prepare for retirement and adjust to the unexpected challenges that often arise with our health, finances, family, and work as we age.


To date, over 4,000 journal articles, dissertations, and book chapters have been written using information from the NLSY79! Once research is complete, news organizations see the research and put that information out for the public. The awareness of issues facing yours and younger generations then becomes a catalyst for policy changes.


Finally, let me take a moment to again express my sincere thanks for your past participation in the NLSY79. Your willingness to offer your interview time is what keeps this important study going. It is my hope that once again you will grant us the privilege of speaking with you and sharing your unique story.


Sincerely,


Keenan Dworak-Fisher  
Director, National Longitudinal Surveys  
U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics

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 To learn more about the study, visit [www.bls.gov/nls/nlsy79.htm](http://www.bls.gov/nls/nlsy79.htm)

 To inquire about the study or your participation, email [NLSY79@norc.org](mailto:NLSY79@norc.org)

 To reach us by phone, call ###.###.####

 If you prefer to reach out via text, message ###.###.####. Please include your full name in the message.

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**Schedule Your Appointment Online!**

Enter your PIN [PIN] at:  
[nlsy79appointments.norc.org](http://nlsy79appointments.norc.org)

## WHY IS THIS STUDY IMPORTANT?

Thanks to your help, policymakers and researchers will have a better understanding of the work experiences, family characteristics, health, financial status, and other important information about the lives of people in your generation. This is a voluntary study, and there are no penalties for not participating or not answering all the questions. However, missing responses make it more difficult to understand the issues that concern people in your community and across the country. Your answers represent the experiences of hundreds of other people your age. We hope we can count on your participation again this time.

## WHO AUTHORIZES THIS STUDY?

The sponsor of the study is the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. The study is authorized under Title 29, Section 2, of the United States Code. The CHRR at The Ohio State University and NORC at the University of Chicago conduct this study under a contract with the Department of Labor. The U.S. Office of Management and Budget (OMB) has approved the questionnaire and has assigned 1220-0109 as the study's control number. This control number expires on **August 31, 2027**. Without OMB approval and this number, we would not be able to conduct this study.

## HOW MUCH TIME WILL THE INTERVIEW TAKE?

Based on preliminary tests, we expect the average interview to take about 73 minutes. Your interview may be somewhat shorter or longer depending on your circumstances. If you have any comments regarding this study or recommendations for reducing its length, send them to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, National Longitudinal Surveys, 2 Massachusetts Avenue, N.E., Washington, DC 20212.

## WHO SEES MY ANSWERS?

We want to reassure you that your confidentiality is protected by law. In accordance with the Confidential Information Protection and Statistical Efficiency Act, the Privacy Act, and other applicable Federal laws, the Bureau of Labor Statistics, its employees and agents, will, to the full extent permitted by law, use the information you provide for statistical purposes only, will hold your responses in confidence, and will not disclose them in identifiable form without your informed consent. All the employees who work on the survey at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and its contractors must sign a document agreeing to protect the confidentiality of your data. In fact, only a few people have access to information about your identity because they need that information to carry out their job duties. Some of your answers will be made available to researchers at the Bureau of Labor Statistics and other government agencies, universities, and private research organizations through publicly available data files. These publicly available files contain no personal identifiers, such as names, addresses, Social Security numbers, and places of work, and exclude any information about the states, counties, metropolitan areas, and other, more detailed geographic locations in which survey participants live, making it much more difficult to figure out the identities of participants. Some researchers are granted special access to data files that include geographic information, but only after those researchers go through a thorough application process at the Bureau of Labor Statistics. Those authorized researchers must sign a written agreement making them official agents of the Bureau of Labor Statistics and requiring them to protect the confidentiality of survey participants. Those researchers are never provided with the personal identities of participants. The National Archives and Records Administration and the General Services Administration may receive copies of survey data and materials because those agencies are responsible for storing the Nation's historical documents.

## WHERE CAN I FIND MORE INFORMATION?

To learn more about the survey, visit: [bls.gov/nls](https://bls.gov/nls).

To search for articles, reports, and other research based on the National Longitudinal Surveys, visit: [nlsbibliography.org](https://nlsbibliography.org).