

HEALTH AND RETIREMENT STUDY

Childhood Family and Childhood Health Aggregated Data

Data Description

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1. Introduction

These cross-wave aggregated data on Childhood Family and Childhood Health consist of information derived from public-release data collected in the Health and Retirement Study (HRS), which is funded under a cooperative agreement between the National Institute on Aging (NIA) and the Survey Research Center at the University of Michigan. The HRS is designed to study labor force, health, and family transitions of the U.S. population aged 51 and older, and the impact of those transitions on economic resources, claims on structured programs such as Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, and informal assistance and transfers to and from family members.

The National Institute on Aging provides funding (NIH U01 AGO9740) for collection of all HRS data, with supplemental support from the Social Security Administration. The Institute for Social Research (ISR) Survey Research Center (SRC) at the University of Michigan conducted the survey. Preparation of this cross-wave aggregated childhood family and childhood health file by members of the HRS Life History project team was supported by funding from the National Institute on Aging (R01 AG051142).

By downloading this freely provided data set, you agree to use its contents for research and statistical purposes only and to make no effort to identify the respondents. In addition, you agree to send the citation for any reports, theses, or publications you produce based on the data. See Registration and Downloading the Data (Section 8 of this document) for additional details.

Data alerts, new file notifications, and updates concerning this file will be placed on the HRS Data Alert web page <http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/alerts>.

2. General Information

The childhood family and childhood health data were aggregated using retrospective reports provided by HRS respondents or their proxy in different waves of biennial core panel interviews from 1992 to 2016. All information has previously been released for public use separately for each biennial wave and in different sections within each wave. Table 1 summarizes the Childhood Family Questions and shows the various waves and sections drawn on. Likewise, Table 2 summarizes the Childhood Health Questions and relevant waves and sections. As these two tables demonstrate, whereas parental education questions were present in the core from the beginning of the study in 1992, others questions were added to the core interview later. The childhood health and family measures were first introduced to the survey in 1998 and were included in the baseline interview in subsequent cohort enrollment years. Items on childhood background (family and health) were designed to be collected only once from each participant either when they first entered the study or in the core wave when the questions were asked for the first time. For most participants, this was when the questions were first introduced in the HRS (e.g., 1998 or 2008, see Table 1 and Table 2). In cases where respondents answered these childhood questions more than one time, responses from the first time they were asked have been

used. Over the course of data collection, the wording of some questions changed slightly. For simplicity, the codebook of the aggregated dataset uses the question wording from the 2016 HRS core and treats those questions as the same across waves. Further details appear below. All of the variables in the aggregated data are drawn from raw data, with the exception of parental education questions that come from the RAND HRS longitudinal file. For more information on the RAND HRS file, please refer to <https://www.rand.org/well-being/social-and-behavioral-policy/centers/aging/dataproduct.html>.

The Childhood Family and Childhood Health Aggregated Data file contains 74 variables and includes 38,654 respondents. Any respondents who were asked childhood family or health questions (including proxy responses) were included in the data.

2a. Childhood Family Data

The childhood family data were aggregated using respondents' (or proxies') retrospective reports on childhood family background, home life, and traumatic events that are available across waves starting from 1998 (see exceptions below). 18 measures were selected that cover childhood family. In the core surveys beginning in 1998, the HRS administered questions that gathered information on respondents' family background when they were growing up, from birth to age 16. These include five questions of subjective evaluation on childhood family financial situation and parental employment status. In 2000, a question about grandparents' co-residence was added to HRS Section B Demographics (Respondent). For respondents, who had any missing data in 1998, data were checked if they may have been included in a 1996 Experimental module because some questions had been administered there before they were included in the 1998 core interview.

In 2006, the HRS began gathering information on childhood traumatic events and family functioning as part of the psychosocial self-administered questionnaire. Because the questionnaire was left with participants at the end of the enhanced face-to-face interview for them to complete, the questionnaire is referred as the Leave Behind (LB). This includes nine questions for respondents' evaluation of their relationships with parents, maternal investment, and several childhood traumatic events. Participants who entered HRS after the 2012 wave are asked these questions off-year Life History Mail Surveys (LHMS). Data collected in these mail surveys are not included in this aggregated file. Over the course of data collection, the wording has slightly changed, which is treated as longitudinally consistent. For instance, "anything before 17" and "before 16" it treated as the same.

Parental educational attainment, specifically, highest grade of school completed by father and by mother, has been collected in the core surveys since 1992 and onward. For this aggregated data set, FAEDUC and MOEDUC are drawn from the RAND HRS longitudinal file variables RAFEDUC and RAMEDUC, respectively.

2b. Childhood Health Data

The childhood health data were aggregated using respondents' (or proxies') retrospective reports on health before age 16. This includes 26 variables from the core data that are related to childhood health conditions. The HRS began to gather detailed information about childhood health conditions on a subsample of the respondents in an off-year HRS Internet Survey in 2006 and 2007. In 2008, these questions were added to the HRS core interview in the Section B Demographic (Respondent) along with five questions on childhood concussion, disability, smoking, learning problems and any other conditions. As above, there were minor differences in question wording that are treated as longitudinally consistent. For example, in the Internet Survey, respondents were asked to report "before you were 17 years old did you suffer from ...". While, in the 2016 HRS core interview, respondents were asked "before you were 16 years old, did you have ..."

Subjective rating of health as a child (before age 16) has been collected in the HRS core interview since 1998. As above, for respondents, who had any missing data in 1998, data were checked if they may have been included in a 1996 Experimental module because this question had been administered there before it was included in the 1998 core interview.

Information on the duration of a health condition, including age it was first diagnosed and age it ended is available for 14 childhood health conditions: asthma, diabetes, respiratory disorder, speech impairment, allergy, heart trouble, ear problem, epilepsy, headaches, stomach problems, high blood pressure, depression, drug problem, and other psychological problems.

3. File Structure

The *Childhood Family and Childhood Health Aggregated Data* (Version 1.0) are at the respondent level. The data file contains one record for each respondent ($N = 38,654$) who provided at least one non-missing response to the included questions.

The data file is called AGGCHLDFH2016A_R, which stands for Aggregated Childhood Family and Health, with the "_R" indicating that the file is at the respondent level.

The HRS primary identification variables (IDs) are:

HHID HRS HOUSEHOLD IDENTIFIER

PN HRS PERSON NUMBER IDENTIFIER

Records in the data files are sorted by HHID PN. Identification variables are stored in character format. For further information about HRS identification variables and merging data, see <http://hrsonline.isr.umich.edu/modules/meta/2016/core/desc/h16dd.pdf>.

4. Distribution Files

The *Childhood Family and Childhood Health Aggregated Data* set is packaged for distribution in a .ZIP file. Extract the data file, the program statement file that matches your analysis environment, the data description (this file), and the codebook file. If you have problems when

downloading this data set or in extracting its contents, please contact the HRS Help Desk (hrsquestions@umich.edu).

The following extensions are used for the six different types of distribution files:

- .DA for data files
- .SAS for SAS program statements
- .SPS for SPSS program statements
- .DO for Stata DO statements
- .DCT for Stata dictionary statements
- .TXT for codebook files

For example,

- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.DA contains ASCII data
- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.SAS contains corresponding SAS program statements
- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.SPS contains corresponding SPSS program statements
- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.DO contains corresponding Stata DO statements
- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.DCT contains corresponding Stata dictionary statements
- AGGCHLDFH2016A_R.TXT contains the ASCII codebook

5. Program Statements

5a. Using the Files with SAS

To create a SAS system file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset -- .SAS program statement files and .DA data files.

To create a SAS system file, load the *.SAS file into the SAS Program Editor. If the *.SAS file is located in "c:\AggChldFH\sas" and the data file is located in "c:\AggChldFH\data", you can run the file as is. A SAS system file (*.SD2 or *.SAS7BDAT) will be saved to directory "c:\AggChldFH\sas".

If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SAS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

5b. Using the Files with SPSS

To create an SPSS system file for a particular dataset, two file types must be present for that dataset -- .SPS program statement files and .DA data files.

To create an SPSS system file, open the *.SPS file in SPSS as an SPSS Syntax File.

If the *.SPS file is located in "c:\AggChldFH\spss" and the data file is located in "c:\AggChldFH\data", you can run the file as is. An SPSS system file (*.SAV) will be saved to directory "c:\AggChldFH\spss".

If the files are not located in the specified directories, you will need to edit the *.SPS file to reflect the proper path names prior to running the file.

5c. Using the Files with Stata

To use Stata with a particular dataset, the following three file types must be present for that dataset -- .DCT files, .DO files, and .DA data files.

Files with the suffix .DA contain the raw data for Stata to read. Files with the suffix .DCT are Stata dictionaries used by Stata to describe the data. Files with the suffix .DO are short Stata programs ("do files") which you may use to read in the data. Load the .DO file into Stata and then submit it.

If the *.DO and *.DCT files are located in "c:\AggChldFH\stata" and the data file is located in "c:\AggChldFH\data", you can run the .DO file as is.

If the files are not located in these directories, you must edit the *.DO and *.DCT files to reflect the proper path names before you run the files.

Note that the variable names provided in the .DCT files are uppercase. If you prefer lower case variable names, you may wish to convert the .DCT files to lower case prior to use. You may do this by reading the .DCT file into a text or word processing program and changing the case. For instance, in Microsoft Word, Edit, Select All, Format, Change Case, lowercase.

6. Linking Respondents across Time

Respondent records in the *Childhood Family and Childhood Health Aggregated Data* can be linked to respondent records from 2016 and prior waves by HHID and PN. The core sub-household identifiers can be used to link household data with the cross-sectional respondent level data.

7. Documentation: Codebook

The Childhood Family and Health Aggregated Data codebook is provided as an ASCII text file. Each variable has its own codebook entry that includes variable name, label, variable type (e.g., character, numeric), and the question wording from the 2016 HRS. Variable names are a short version of their labels.

For example:

MOVFIN	MOVE DUE TO FINANCIAL DIFF
RESP	RESPIRATORY DISORDER BEFORE AGE 16

For each variable, we indicate the waves of data collection that were used in creating the variable. For example, MOVFIN, is a variable that was created using variables from HRS 1998 through HRS 2016, (and lastly 1996 Module).

To protect the confidentiality of the information that respondents provide, a variable on fathers' occupation has been masked. The 2010 U.S. Census codes have been used to code the occupation data:

FJOB FATHER USUAL OCC WHEN R AGE 16 – MASKED

8. Registration and Downloading the Data

8a. Registration

HRS data are available for free to researchers and analysts on the HRS web site. In order to obtain public release data, you must first register. Once you have completed the registration process, a username and password will be sent to you via e-mail. Your username and password are required to download data files.

Registered users receive user support, information related to errors in the data, future releases, workshops, and publication lists. The information you provide will not be used for any commercial use, and will not be redistributed to third parties.

8b. Conditions of Use

By registering, you agree to the Conditions of Use governing access to the Health and Retirement Study's public release data. You must agree to:

- not attempt to identify respondents
- not transfer data to third parties except as specified
- not share your username and password
- include specified citations in work based on HRS data
- provide information to us about publications based on HRS data
- report apparent errors in the HRS data or documentation files
- notify us of changes in your contact information

For more information concerning privacy issues and conditions of use, please read "Conditions of Use for Public Data Files" and "Privacy and Security Statement" at the Public File Download Area of the HRS Web site.

8c. Publications Based on Data

As part of the data registration process, you agree to include specified citations and to inform HRS of any papers, publications, or presentations based on HRS data. Please send a copy and full citation of any publications you produce based on HRS data to hrrpublications@umich.edu.

8d. Changes to Cross-Wave Childhood Health and Family Aggregated Data, Version 2

Reading format for FAEDUC and MOEDUC were corrected.

9. If You Need to Know More

This document is intended to serve as a brief overview and to provide guidelines to using the *Childhood Health and Childhood Family Aggregated Data*. Additional information about the HRS can be obtained from the HRS web site. If you have questions or concerns that are not adequately covered here or on our web site, please contact us at hqsquestions@umich.edu. We will do our best to provide answers.

9a. HRS Website

Health and Retirement Study public release data and additional information about the study are available at <http://hrs.isr.umich.edu/>.

9b. Contact Information

For specific questions, please contact the helpdesk at hqsquestions@umich.edu.

The HRS mailing address and fax are:

Health and Retirement Study
The Institute for Social Research
426 Thomson Street
Ann Arbor, MI 48106-1248
FAX: (734) 647-1186

Table 1. Childhood Family Questions Asked in HRS

Question	W1 1992	W2 1994	W3 1996	W4 1998	W5 2000	W6 2002	W7 2004	W8 2006	W9 2008	W10 2010	W11 2012	W12 2014	W13 2016
Rate family financial situation - SES			M	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Move due to financial difficulty			M	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Family get financial help in childhood			M	A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Father unemployed during childhood				A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Father usual occupation when R age 16 - masked				A	A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Live with grandparents during childhood			M		A	B	B	B	B	B	B	B	B
Father's years education													
Mothers' years education													
Mother work during childhood								B	B	B	B	B	B
Good relationship with mother									LB	LB	LB		
Good relationship with father									LB	LB	LB		
Amount time/attention from mother									LB	LB	LB		
Effort from mother									LB	LB	LB		
Amount mother teach about life									LB	LB	LB		
A year of school over again before 18								LB	LB	LB	LB		
Trouble with police before 18									LB	LB	LB		
Family problems caused by parents' drinking and drugs								LB	LB	LB	LB		
Physical abused by parents before age 18								LB	LB	LB	LB		

Notes: A = Section A: Coverscreen (Respondent); B = Section B: Demographics (Respondent); M = Section V: Modules (Respondent); LB = Section LB: Leave Behind (Respondent). Parental educational attainment, FAEDUC and MOEDUC are taken from RAND HRS.

Table 2. Childhood Health Question Asked in HRS

Question	W1 1992	W2 1994	W3 1996	W4 1998	W5 2000	W6 2002	W7 2004	W8 2006	Int 2006	Int 2007	W9 2008	W10 2010	W11 2012	W12 2014	W13 2016
Rate health as child			M	A	A	B	B	B			B	B	B	B	B
Childhood-missed school											B	B	B	B	B
Measles before 16											B	B	B	B	B
Mumps before 16											B	B	B	B	B
Chicken pox before 16											B	B	B	B	B
Difficulty seeing before 16											B	B	B	B	B
Parents/guardians smoke											B	B	B	B	B
*Asthma before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Diabetes before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Respiratory disorder before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Speech impairment before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Allergic condition before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Heart trouble before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Ear problems before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Epilepsy or seizures before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Headaches or migraines before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Stomach problems before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*High BP before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Depression before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Drugs/alcohol before 16											B	B	B	B	B
*Other psych problems before 16											B	B	B	B	B
Childhood-concussion / head injury												B	B	B	B
Childhood disability												B	B	B	B
Childhood-smoking												B	B	B	B
Childhood-learning problems												B	B	B	B
Childhood-any other conditions												B	B	B	B

Notes: A = Section A: Coverscreen (Respondent); B = Section B: Demographics (Respondent); M = Section V: Modules (Respondent); Int 2006 and Int 2007 = Internet Survey 2006 and 2007. For 14 health conditions marked with * we provide information about age first diagnosed and age at end of the condition.