



THE NATIONAL IMMUNIZATION SURVEY:

DEVELOPMENT OF STRATEGIES TO INCLUDE DEAF RESPONDENTS IN AN RDD TELEPHONE SURVEY

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Introduction

- The National Immunization Survey (NIS) is developing methods to make it possible for all sampled households to participate in this telephone survey.




The National Immunization Survey

- The NIS is sponsored by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.
- Interviews are conducted in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and 27 urban areas.
- 1.9 million telephone numbers are dialed each year.



Defining The Population

- What proportion of parents with a child between 18 months and 3 years of age live in a household that cannot be reached through voice communication using a telephone?

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- How many of these households could be reached through the use of a TTY (teletype) or TDD (telecommunications device for the deaf) machine?



Sources Explored

- National Information Center on Deafness, Gallaudet University
- National Association of the Deaf
- U.S. Census Bureau
- Department of Justice
- National Center for Health Statistics



Unanswered Questions

- Proportion of the U.S. population who are unable to communicate by voice using a telephone.
- Proportion of hearing impaired population who live alone or in a household where all household members are hearing impaired.
- Proportion of the hearing impaired population that have a child 18-35 months of age.
- Proportion of hearing impaired population that use a TTY.
- Proportion of hearing impaired population that do not use a TTY, but do use a computer.



Electronic Method to Detect TTYs?

- Auto Dialers are used in the NIS to screen out non-working and disconnected numbers before the sample is released.
- No similar technical approach to detecting TTYs could be determined.



Can Interviewers Identify TTYs?

- NIS interviewers routinely code fax machine and modem lines with a distinct event code.
- Interviewers who were calling a portion of the NIS sample in a Texas Pilot Test were trained to identify and code TTY machines.

TTY Results - Texas Pilot Test

- 12,043 telephone numbers were released.
- 64 of these numbers were coded as TTYs:
 - None of these could be verified as TTYs
 - 55 were fax machines or modem lines
 - 9 were always busy or just rang without being answered

Results (continued)

- The percentage of cases coded as TTYs far exceeded the number of TTYs that had been anticipated.
- This approach was abandoned.



Our Next Step: Self Identification

- Hearing-impaired respondents are invited to contact Abt Associates using the AT&T Relay Service.



Our Next Step: Self Identification

- A revised NIS advance letter which includes a postscript on how to contact the study using a TTY machine is being tested.
 - The first letters were mailed in October 1999.
 - About 125,000 will be sent over a period of four months.

NIS Advance Letter Postscript



If you prefer to contact us using a TTY, please call the AT&T Relay Service at 1-800-682-8786 and request that 1-800-247-1970 be called.



Conclusion

- The number of households that require special assistance is unknown.
- Efforts to proactively identify sampled households requiring special assistance were not successful.
- Current efforts will measure the number of respondents who use the AT&T Relay Service.