

Subject: Notice of Release of Revised Sampling Weights

On April 22, 2003, the National Center for Health Statistics released revised sampling weights for the National Survey of Children with Special Health Care Needs, which was conducted from October 2000 to April 2002. Analysts must use sampling weights to produce estimates that are representative of the population at the national and state levels.

The original sampling weights were based in part on estimates from the Current Population Survey (CPS). The CPS estimates, in turn, were based in part on population projections from the U.S. Bureau of the Census. At the time, these projections were based on the 1990 Census because detailed counts from the 2000 Census were not yet available. Though the detailed microdata from the 2000 Census are still not available, sufficient information from the 2000 Census has now been released to indicate that the population projections differ from the actual population counts. This is especially true for some states and for some racial/ethnic groups.

The prevalence of children with special health care needs varies significantly by age, sex, race, and ethnicity. Therefore, NCHS concluded that the sampling weights should be revised to reflect the recently released Census 2000 counts for these demographic groups.

The revised sampling weights are available on-line at:

<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/about/major/slaits/cshcn.htm>

The entire household (household.zip), screener (screener.zip), and interview (interview.zip) datasets should be downloaded from this website. The revised weights have replaced the previous weights in these datasets.

(A dataset with just the revised weights is available. It has not been posted on-line because the names of the weight variables have not changed and this can pose problems when merging the revised weights into an existing dataset. Experienced programmers who are familiar with these limitations can request the dataset through the e-mail address listed below.)

Be sure that you are using the revised weights. After you have downloaded the entire dataset, look for the variable named VERSION. A dataset with the revised weights will have VERSION = 2. Alternatively, you could attempt to replicate Tables 32 and 33 in the Design and Operation report that is available on-line. The April 2003 version of this report used the revised weights for these tables.

Questions about the new weights may be addressed to slaits@cdc.gov. We recognize and apologize for any inconvenience this revision may cause to researchers who have already begun analyzing the data.