

#90-13

**Some National Comparisons
of Adopted and Nonadopted Children**

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Sharon -

Here is a new
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Peggy
(updated cover)

1981 CHILD HEALTH SUPPLEMENT
TO THE
NATIONAL HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEY

SAMPLE

- PROBABILITY SAMPLE OF U.S. CHILDREN LIVING IN HOUSEHOLDS
- AGE RANGE: 0-17
- RANDOM SELECTION OF ONE CHILD PER FAMILY
- COMPLETION RATE: 93%
- N = 15,416
- N = 693-1,089 PER SINGLE YEAR OF AGE

METHOD

- IN-PERSON INTERVIEWS BY CENSUS INTERVIEWERS WITH INFORMED PARENT OR GUARDIAN, USUALLY THE BIOLOGICAL MOTHER (82%) OR BIOLOGICAL FATHER (10%)

1981 CHILD HEALTH SUPPLEMENT
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NATIONAL HEALTH INTERVIEW SURVEY

CONTENT

- DETAILED SPECIFICATION OF CHILD'S
FAMILIAL RELATIONSHIP TO ADULTS AND
OTHER CHILDREN IN HOUSEHOLD
- MARITAL HISTORY OF BIOLOGICAL MOTHER
- PARTIAL RESIDENTIAL HISTORY OF CHILD
- CURRENT CONTACT WITH OUTSIDE PARENT, IF ANY
- CURRENT CHILD CARE ARRANGEMENTS
- ADEQUATE SET OF SES, ETHNIC, AND MARITAL
DESCRIPTORS FOR CURRENT ADULT HH MEMBERS
- BROAD RANGE OF CHILD HEALTH, BEHAVIOR,
AND SCHOOL PERFORMANCE MEASURES

CHILD DEVELOPMENT
INDICATORS

MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR

- 1) WHETHER CHILD HAS EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST FOR TREATMENT OF AN EMOTIONAL, MENTAL, OR BEHAVIOR PROBLEM (AGES 3 - 17)
- 2) WHETHER CHILD RECEIVED OR WAS SEEN AS NEEDING PSYCHOLOGICAL HELP IN LAST YEAR (AGES 3 - 17)
- 3) BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (AGES 4 - 17)

ACADEMIC ACHIEVEMENT

- 4) WHETHER CHILD HAS EVER HAD TO REPEAT A GRADE IN SCHOOL (AGES 6 - 17)
- 5) STANDING IN CLASS RATING (AGES 6 - 17)

PHYSICAL HEALTH

- 6) HEALTH STATUS RATING (AGES 0 - 17)
- 7) NUMBER OF DAYS MISSED FROM SCHOOL DUE TO ILLNESS IN LAST YEAR (AGES 6 - 17)

TABLE A-1.

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF
U.S. CHILDREN AGED 0-17 LIVING
IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAMILIES, 1981

<u>FAMILY TYPE (PARENTS IN HOME)</u>	<u>NUMBER OF CASES IN SURVEY</u>	<u>POPULATION PROJECTION</u>	<u>WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES</u>
MOTHER AND FATHER	10,386	42.6 MILLION	67.5%
MOTHER ONLY	2,759	11.6 MILLION	18.3
MOTHER AND STEPFATHER	1,084	4.5 MILLION	7.1
FATHER AND STEPMOTHER	216	979 THOUSAND	1.6
FATHER ONLY	265	946 THOUSAND	1.5
▶ ADOPTIVE PARENT(S) (NO BIOLOGICAL RELATIVE)	358	1.3 MILLION	2.0
GRANDPARENT(S) OR OTHER RELATIVE(S)	293	1.1 MILLION	1.7
OTHER	55	216 THOUSAND	0.3
TOTALS	15,416	63.1 MILLION	100.0%

TABLE A-2.

NUMBER AND PROPORTION OF
ADOPTED CHILDREN AGED 0-17 LIVING
IN DIFFERENT TYPES OF FAMILIES,
UNITED STATES, 1981

FAMILY TYPE	NUMBER OF CASES IN SURVEY	POPULATION PROJECTION (IN THOUSANDS)	WEIGHTED PERCENTAGES	
			OF ADOPTED CHILDREN	OF ALL CHILDREN
TWO ADOPTIVE PARENTS	298	1,080	85.9%	1.71%
ONE ADOPTIVE PARENT	47	142	11.2%	0.22%
- ADOPTIVE MOTHER ONLY	38	113	9.0	0.18
- ADOPTIVE FATHER ONLY	9	28	2.2	0.04
ADOPTIVE PARENT AND STEPARENT	13	36	2.9%	0.06%
- ADOPTIVE MOTHER AND STEPFATHER	8	21	1.7	0.03
- ADOPTIVE FATHER AND STEPMOTHER	5	16	1.2	0.02
TOTALS	358	1,258	100.0%	1.99%

TABLE B-1.

DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE OF FAMILIES
IN WHICH ADOPTED AND NON-ADOPTED
CHILDREN RESIDE
U.S. CHILDREN AGED 0-17, 1981

FAMILY CHARACTERISTICS	ALL ADOPTED CHILDREN (N = 358)	ALL NON- ADOPTEDS (N = 15,058)	TOTAL SAMPLE (N = 15,416)
<u>ETHNIC COMPOSITION</u>			
PROPORTION WHITE (NON-HISPANIC)	85%	74%	74%
PROPORTION BLACK	9	15	15
PROPORTION HISPANIC	3	9	9
<u>PARENT EDUCATION</u>			
AT LEAST ONE A COLLEGE GRADUATE	38%	21%	21%
NEITHER IS A HIGH SCHOOL GRADUATE	11	19	19
<u>FAMILY INCOME</u>			
\$25,000 OR MORE	53%	35%	36%
LESS THAN \$10,000	7	22	22
<u>WELFARE STATUS</u>			
PROPORTION RECEIVING AFDC	<1%	8%	8%
<u>MOTHER'S AGE</u>			
PROPORTION WITH MOTHERS AGED 40 AND OVER	58%	26%	26%
PROPORTION WITH MOTHERS UNDER 30	2	28	27

**Characteristics of Adopted and
Non-Adopted Children Under 18, 1981**

<u>Child and Family Characteristics</u>	<u>Adopted Children</u>	<u>All Non-Adopteds</u>	<u>White Children Born Out-of-Wedlock, Raised by Biological Mothers*</u>
	<u>Percent Distribution</u>	<u>Percent Distribution</u>	<u>Percent Distribution</u>
Total	100%	100%	100%
<u>Parent Education</u> (More Educated Parent)			
Some college or more	58%	40%	21%
High school grad. only	31	41	51
Less than high school grad.	11	19	29
<u>Family Income</u>			
\$25,000 or more	53%	35%	14%
\$10,000-\$24,999	39	43	30
Less than \$10,000	7	22	56
<u>Welfare Status</u>			
Families receiving AFDC	<1%	8%	32%
<u>Mother's Age</u>			
40 or over	58%	26%	12%
30-39	40	47	31
Under 30	2	27	57

TABLE 1.

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

ADOPTED IN INFANCY VS. RAISED BY BOTH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED IN INFANCY</u> (N = 115)	<u>RAISED BY BOTH BIO PARENTS</u> (N = 3,553)	<u>OBSERVED DIFFERENCE</u> (IN STANDARD DEVIATION UNITS)	<u>ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>				
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	13%	5%	- .28*	- .29*
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	10%	3%	- .29*	- .30*
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (MEAN SCORE)	51.3	48.4	- .30*	- .40**
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>				
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	7%	12%	.14	.06
STANDING IN CLASS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	48.5	51.0	- .25	- .35*
<u>PHYSICAL HEALTH</u>				
HEALTH STATUS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	51.7	50.9	.08	.02
SCHOOL ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS (MEAN DAYS LOST IN LAST YEAR)	5.3	4.2	- .14	- .16

TABLE 2.

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

ADOPTED IN INFANCY VS. BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK, RAISED BY MOTHER

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED IN INFANCY</u> (N = 115)	<u>RAISED BY BIOLOGICAL MOTHER</u> (N = 201)	<u>OBSERVED DIFFERENCE</u> (IN STANDARD DEVIATION UNITS)	<u>ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>				
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	13%	15%	.07	.07
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	10%	11%	.02	.04
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (MEAN SCORE)	51.3	54.4	.31*	.05
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>				
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	7%	26%	.53**	.25
STANDING IN CLASS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	48.5	47.5	.10	-.19
<u>PHYSICAL HEALTH</u>				
HEALTH STATUS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	51.7	45.4	.63**	.21
SCHOOL ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS (MEAN DAYS LOST IN LAST YEAR)	5.3	6.0	.10	.13

TABLE 3.

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY VS. RAISED BY BOTH BIOLOGICAL PARENTS

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY</u> (N = 47)	<u>RAISED BY BOTH BIO PARENTS</u> (N =3,553)	<u>OBSERVED DIFFERENCE</u> (IN STANDARD DEVIATION UNITS)	<u>ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>				
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	42%	5%	-1.30***	-1.29***
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	23%	3%	- .82***	- .81***
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (MEAN SCORE)	58.6	48.4	-1.02***	-1.11***
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>				
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	30%	12%	- .50**	- .51**
STANDING IN CLASS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	43.1	51.0	- .79***	- .84***
<u>PHYSICAL HEALTH</u>				
HEALTH STATUS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	51.5	50.9	.07	.02
SCHOOL ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS (MEAN DAYS LOST IN LAST YEAR)	2.4	4.2	.25	.21

TABLE 4.

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY VS. BORN OUT OF WEDLOCK, RAISED BY MOTHER

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY</u> (N = 47)	<u>RAISED BY BIOLOGICAL MOTHER</u> (N = 201)	<u>OBSERVED DIFFERENCE</u> (IN STANDARD DEVIATION UNITS)	<u>ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>				
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	42%	15%	- .95 ^{***}	- .92 ^{***}
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	23%	11%	- .53 [*]	- .47 [*]
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (MEAN SCORE)	58.6	54.4	- .42	- .65 ^{**}
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>				
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	30%	26%	- .11	- .32
STANDING IN CLASS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	43.1	47.5	- .44	- .67 ^{**}
<u>PHYSICAL HEALTH</u>				
HEALTH STATUS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	51.5	45.4	.61 ^{**}	.26
SCHOOL ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS (MEAN DAYS LOST IN LAST YEAR)	2.4	6.0	.49 [*]	.50 [*]

TABLE 5.

ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

ADOPTED IN INFANCY VS. ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED IN INFANCY</u> (N = 115)	<u>ADOPTED AFTER INFANCY</u> (N = 47)	<u>OBSERVED DIFFERENCE</u> (IN STANDARD DEVIATION UNITS)	<u>ADJUSTED DIFFERENCE</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>				
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	13%	42%	1.02 ^{***}	.99 ^{***}
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	10%	23%	.54 [*]	.51 [*]
BEHAVIOR PROBLEMS INDEX (MEAN SCORE)	51.3	58.6	.72 ^{***}	.71 ^{***}
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>				
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	7%	30%	.64 ^{***}	.57 ^{**}
STANDING IN CLASS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	48.5	43.1	.54 [*]	.48 [*]
<u>PHYSICAL HEALTH</u>				
HEALTH STATUS RATING (MEAN SCORE)	51.7	51.5	.02	- .06
SCHOOL ABSENCES DUE TO ILLNESS (MEAN DAYS LOST IN LAST YEAR)	5.3	2.4	- .40	- .37

TABLE 6.
WHITE ADOLESCENTS AGED 12-17:

<u>CHILD DEVELOPMENT INDICATORS</u>	<u>ADOPTED IN INFANCY</u>	<u>ADOPTED LATER</u>	<u>RAISED BY BIO MOTHER</u>
<u>MENTAL HEALTH AND BEHAVIOR</u>			
EVER SEEN A PSYCHOLOGIST OR PSYCHIATRIST (%)	14%	49%	16%
RECEIVED OR NEEDED HELP IN LAST YEAR (%)	11%	27%	15%
<u>ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE</u>			
EVER REPEATED A GRADE (%)	6%	34%	28%
ABOVE MIDDLE OF CLASS (%)	43%	25%	29%