What is the 2006-2010 National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG)?
The National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG) is a nationally representative survey conducted and sponsored by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). The NSFG has been an important source of data on fertility and family in the United States and collected by NCHS since 1973, currently yielding seven cross-sectional cycles of data. More specifically, the survey has continually focused on the following factors that help explain group differences and trends:

- Family Life
- Marriage
- Divorce
- Adoption
- Contraceptive Use
- Infertility
- Sexual Activity
- Men’s and Women’s Health

The most recent cycle of NSFG data (2006-2010) differs from all six previous cycles in that it is a survey based on a nationally representative sample of the U.S. household population aged 15-44 years.

In October 2011, the NSFG publicly released the data for the seventh cycle of the NSFG. This data release contains information from in-person interviews with 12,279 women and 10,403 men 15-44 years of age resulting in a total sample of 22,682. The female pregnancy file contains records for 20,492 completed and current pregnancies.

What’s new in the 2006-2010 NSFG?
Substantive changes in the actual questionnaire between cycle six (2002) and the 2006-2010 NSFG are few. The major changes between the cycles are in the sampling design and administration of the data. In an effort to produce quality data more cost effectively and efficiently, the NSFG underwent a conversion from a periodic interviewing design to an interviewing design. As defined by the NSFG, interviewing is the “...ongoing collection of data over a four-year period.” The next planned release will contain data from the final 18 months of interviews and the combined data for all 48 months of interviewing. See [LINK](http://ncfmr.bgsu.edu) for additional information about NSFG continuous interviewing.

What does the NSFG offer family researchers?
The NSFG provides researchers with detailed information on relationship histories of sexual partners, cohabitation, and marriage. Further information on characteristics of previous and current partners is provided. The data include detailed items on pregnancies and births, including dates, outcomes, and planning status. Females are asked questions about adoption behaviors (and males are asked about adoption intentions). Detailed information regarding the use of family planning and infertility services by both male and female respondents is also available. In addition, data are provided on marriage and family attitudes, and males are asked about their fathering activities with residential and non-residential biological children. Questions regarding children include child care use (male and female respondents). The NSFG includes an extensive array of sociodemographic characteristics, including race/ethnicity, nativity, age, education, and employment.
The NSFG has restricted data available that were collected via the Audio Computer-Assisted Self Interviewing (ACASI). Items collected describe current and past sensitive/risky behaviors, including experiences with same-sex partners and abortions. For specific items, see Female Section J and Male Section K. Due to under-reporting, NSFG data on abortion should not be used for substantive research. Later this year, restricted access to a series of contextual (i.e., community environment) variables will be made available via the NCHS RDC, Census RDCs, or remotely from NCHS. To date, the list of these variables has not been finalized. Contact NSFG staff (nsfg@cdc.gov or rdc@cdc.gov) for more information.

**How do I use the 2006-2010 NSFG?**

Codebooks are available in two forms—the NSFG Webdoc and PDF files.

- The [Webdoc](#)—an online codebook documentation tool—allows for interactive access to the 2006-2010 NSFG codebook documentation for all public use files.
- Also available are [2006-2010 NSFG Codebooks](#) for public use files in PDF form. These codebooks are available separately for each type of file by section. There are also individual codebooks for all variable recodes and variable weights.

The NSFG contains about 600 recoded variables. These variable recodes are designed to facilitate research by providing variables frequently used by NCHS staff and other data users. NCHS strongly recommends researchers use the recoded variables whenever possible. Appendix 3 of the User’s Guide contains the full specification for all recodes. To determine if comparable codes exist between male and female respondents or across NSFG data years, Appendix 4 of the User’s Guide contains three crosswalks.

Analysts should note that unique weights and variance estimates are created to allow proper estimates for the different time periods. When weighted, the sample represents 15-44 year olds between 2006-2010. For more information on weights and variance estimation for the 2006-2010 NSFG, please see the User’s Guide. Examples of use of the weights are in Appendix 2 of the User’s Guide (p. 7). The NSFG recommends using weights in all analyses. Additionally, despite the availability of weights, annual estimates from the 2006-2010 NSFG should not be used because the sample is too small to produce reliable estimates.

**How do I access the data?**

NSFG public use data are accessible via Downloadable Data Files through the [Centers for Disease Control and Prevention](#) website. There are three ASCII data files associated with this latest data release including: Female Respondent Data File (one record per interviewed female); Female Pregnancy Data File (one record per pregnancy of interviewed females); and Male Respondent Data File (one record per interviewed male). Additionally, SAS, SPSS, and Stata program setup statements associated with all three files are available.

**Where can I learn more about the 2006-2010 NSFG?**

Visit the NSFG website for more information at [http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/nsfg.htm). An important place to start is reading the [User Guide](#).