

What is the Panel Study of Income Dynamics?

The Panel Study of Income Dynamics (PSID) is the world's longest running nationally representative household panel survey. Each year, the PSID obtains a variety of information from families and individuals regarding employment, wages, income, wealth, marriage, fertility, health behaviors, and much more. The study began in 1968 and collected information from over 18,000 individuals residing in nearly 5,000 families in the United States. Data on the same families and their descendants were collected on an annual basis until 1997, and have been collected biennially since. As of 2009, the PSID sample size had grown to almost 9,000 families and over 24,000 individuals. Over the years, many countries have realized the importance of the PSID data and have formed their own studies allowing for cross-national, comparative research. The PSID is directed by faculty at the University of Michigan and is sponsored primarily by the National Science Foundation (NSF), which has recognized the PSID as one of the most significant scientific advances it has ever funded.

What Supplements are collected by the PSID?

In addition to the main interview files, the PSID collects three supplemental data files:

- Child Development Supplement (CDS)
- Transition into Adulthood (TA)
- Disability and Use of Time (DUST)

The CDS comprises three waves of data collected in 1997, 2002, and 2007. It incorporates both standard survey questionnaire and time diary methodological approaches. In 1997, the age of the sample ranged from 0-12. Subsequent waves continue to interview children under age 18. The CDS collects data from the child, primary and secondary caregivers, absent parents, teachers, and school administrators. The focus of the CDS is on child development. The questionnaire includes indicators of development spanning physical health, emotional wellbeing, academic performance, cognitive ability, social relationships (peer and family), and many more. The questionnaire is then supplemented with a detailed time diary.

The TA has been implemented biennially since 2005 and is designed to capture those individuals 18 and older who have aged out of the CDS but are not yet new household heads in the core PSID. The TA uses telephone interviews to collect information on development and the transition from adolescence to adulthood. The TA includes topics such as time use, psychological functionality and well-being, marriage, family, responsibility, employment, and education along with career aspirations, physical health, social context, religiosity, and general outlook on life. The preliminary 2009 TA (wave 3) data file is currently available only as a SAS data file and is not yet available via the PSID Data Center. The final release of the TA 2009 data and user guide are currently scheduled for February 2012.

The DUST collects data on 400 older couples taken from the PSID sample in 2009. These data also incorporate telephone interview and time diary methodologies. The primary focus of this supplement is to examine time use and well-being among older couples. Respondents are interviewed twice and asked to keep a time diary for one regular weekday and one weekend day. In addition to these topical supplements, the PSID has

Validation and Calendar Methods Studies geared toward assessing the quality of data collected by the PSID. The Validation Study focuses on the quality of economic data collected by the PSID both cross-sectional and panel. The Calendar Methods Study compares the quality of retrospective reports of social and economic variables across the traditional interview and event history calendar methods.

What does the 2009 PSID offer to family researchers?

The PSID gathers data on families, both as individuals and households, and has done so for over four decades resulting in more than 3,000 peer-reviewed publications. The 2009 wave of the PSID provides data on the following:

- Employment, wages, and other sources of income
- Marital status and fertility
- Education
- Housing characteristics, including mortgage costs and foreclosures
- Expenditures, such as child care, food, and vehicle/transportation expenses
- Health characteristics, including health conditions, health behaviors, and health care costs
- Wealth and debt
- Philanthropy

In addition to the main interview file, all three topical supplements contain measures of development and well-being across various stages of the life course. Each topical supplement contains data that might be of interest to family researchers examining multiple stages of the life course.

What is new in the 2009 PSID?

To keep up with changing times, the PSID survey content is re-examined each year. New questions were added to the 2009 PSID, and some questions that were featured in the 2007 wave were either revised or omitted. A new question that was added to the 2009 PSID asked respondents about their overall life satisfaction. The 2009 wave also incorporated questions asking homeowners if they were behind on mortgage payments and whether they had faced foreclosure.

How do I access the PSID data?

Public-use data are available in SAS, SPSS, STATA, dBase, and ASCIL formats and can be obtained from the PSID website's [Data Center](#). The Data Center allows researchers to search, browse, and create customized longitudinal datasets based on their individual research needs. To protect the confidentiality of respondents, some data collected by the 2009 PSID are only made available to researchers who agree to a restricted use contract with the University of Michigan. Restricted use data for the PSID 2009 can only be requested by researchers who hold a full-time, permanent, doctoral-level faculty appointment. In addition, their research must be approved by a human subjects institutional review board. More detail regarding information on how to obtain restricted use data can be found [here](#).

How do I use the PSID data?

The [questionnaires & supporting documentation](#) page of the [Panel Study of Income Dynamics](#) website provides users with public access to the [2009 PSID questionnaire](#), as well as documents containing important information pertaining to the questionnaire. The [Question-By-Question Objectives \(QxQs\)](#) document describes each section of the questionnaire and provides users with definitions and examples for specific questions and sequences. A [user guide](#) supplies researchers with critical information regarding sample design, survey content, obtaining data, data quality, and more. Also available are a number of [tutorials](#) designed to help researchers create an analytic extract using the PSID Data Center and use the data to answer specific research questions. Lastly, two technical reports ([PSID Cross-sectional Individual Weights, 1997-2009](#) and [Construction and Evaluation of the 2009 Longitudinal Individual Family Weights](#)) contain significant information regarding sample weights used in the survey. These reports are available and should be utilized by researchers, considering the complex sampling methods of the PSID.

How do I use the PSID data?

For more information about the 2009 PSID, visit the Panel Study of Income Dynamics' main webpage at <http://psidonline.isr.umich.edu/Guide/documents.aspx>. Specific questions regarding the 2009 PSID can be submitted through the website's [help desk](#).

Suggested Citation

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