

## Introduction to the Secondary Longitudinal Studies from 1972-2000

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This module introduces users to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) secondary longitudinal studies conducted from 1972 through 2000. It provides users with basic information about the target populations, sample and study designs, and data collection years and sources for the National Longitudinal Study of 1972 (NLS-72), High School and Beyond (HS&B), and National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88).

The module also provides a broad overview of the topics for which data are available for analysis to help users answer the fundamental question: “Are NLS-72, HS&B, and/or NELS:88 data for me?” The subsequent secondary longitudinal studies datasets training modules contained within this system will discuss some of these topics in greater detail and address questions about how to effectively use the datasets for your analytic purposes.

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The NCES Secondary Longitudinal Studies Program was initiated in 1972. Prior to 1972, two major studies influenced the design of the initial study: Project Talent, a study of 400,000 ninth through twelfth graders in 1,300 schools initially surveyed in 1960; and the Equality of Educational Opportunity Study, a 1966 cross-sectional study of first-, third-, sixth-, ninth-, and twelfth- grade students.

Project Talent, called a “census” of young Americans’ talents and aptitudes, followed study participants one, five, and eleven years after expected high school graduation. The Equality of Educational Opportunity Study assessed the availability of equal educational opportunities to children using questionnaire responses and test scores to examine the interrelationships of school effects, race, and the influence of home background.

More information about the secondary longitudinal studies program can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) also influenced the Secondary Longitudinal Studies Program at NCES. NAEP began in 1969 and helped change the educational landscape by collecting nationally representative outcome data by assessing children across the country in major subject areas such as reading, mathematics, and science. More information about NAEP can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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In response to the mandate to “collect and disseminate statistics and other data related to education in the United States” and the need for policy-relevant, nationally representative longitudinal samples of elementary and secondary students, NCES instituted the secondary longitudinal studies program in 1972. The aim of this continuing program is to study the educational, vocational, and personal development of students at various stages in their educational careers and the personal, familial, social, institutional, and cultural factors that may affect that development.

The secondary longitudinal studies program consists of four completed studies: the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972 (NLS-72), the High School and Beyond (HS&B) longitudinal study of 1980, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88), and the Education Longitudinal Study of 2002 (ELS:2002). The High School Longitudinal Study of 2009 (HSLs:09) is ongoing.

Taken together, these studies can be used to describe the educational experiences of students from five decades—the 1970s, 1980s, 1990s, 2000s, and 2010s—and also provide bases for further understanding of the correlates of educational success in the United States.

This series of training modules will focus on the secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000, the first three longitudinal studies (NLS-72, HS&B, and NELS:88) shown here. Separate modules have been produced for the more recent studies (ELS:2002 and HSLs:09), which can be accessed from the landing page.

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The secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000 were designed to achieve five broad objectives.

The first objective is to provide longitudinal data about the critical transitions experienced by cohorts of students from secondary school, through college, and into their adult lives. For example, a major transition for high school seniors is the transition into postsecondary education and/or the workforce. For eighth graders, transitions include: junior high school to high school, decisions regarding course taking, dropping out of high school, and transitions into postsecondary education and/or the workforce.

The second objective is to obtain information about factors that influence these transitions, especially at the secondary level. Factors of interest include the student’s educational motivations, experiences, and achievement; the curriculum paths followed by the student, as well as other relationships and activities in or outside of school.

The third objective is to obtain information about the student and their educational experiences from multiple perspectives, including the students themselves, as well as their parents, teachers, school principals, and school transcripts. The secondary longitudinal studies integrate student, parent, teacher, school, and administrative data sources to more fully describe the education and life experiences of a given student.

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The fourth objective is to support analyses among distinct subgroups. NCES secondary longitudinal studies purposefully oversample selected subgroups (e.g., students from private schools and American Indian/Alaska Native students) so that data are representative of specific subgroups.

The fifth and final objective is to examine transition trends and outcomes over time. The secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000 are designed to be comparable with other NCES sponsored longitudinal studies to enable researchers to compare topics such as course taking, and many others, from one era to another.

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The National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, or the NLS-72, was the first secondary longitudinal study conducted by NCES. It began with a cohort of high school seniors in 1972 that were followed for 14 years through 1986. Although the NLS-72 restricted file contains 22,652 cases, the fifth follow-up (1986) sample contains a subsample of 14,489 cases.

HS&B (High School and Beyond), the second longitudinal study, was a dual-cohort study that surveyed the sophomore and senior classes of 1980. The sophomore cohort was initially followed through 1992. In 2013-14, with many in the cohort in their early 50s, this cohort was surveyed again. The senior cohort was followed through 1986. Although the HS&B sophomore and senior cohorts initially began with 30,030 and 28,240 cases respectively, only 14,825 cases (sophomore cohort) and 11,995 cases (senior cohort) were retained in the restricted files that are being released by NCES.

The National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) began in 1988 with a cohort of 8th-graders. Participants were followed through 2000 to collect data on both secondary and post-secondary experiences. NELS:88 was also the first NCES secondary longitudinal study that made it possible to follow students who dropped out of school between 8th grade and 12th grade – as the study began with 8th graders. Additionally, NELS:88 was also the first NCES secondary longitudinal study to refresh the sample at the 10th and 12th grades creating a sophomore and senior cohort. Although the NELS:88 restricted files contain 27,805 cases, it needs to be pointed out that NELS:88 is being released as three separate restricted files. They are: NELS:88/92 (base year through second follow-up) – approximately 27,000 cases; NELS:88/94 (base year through third follow-up – approximately 15,000 cases; and NELS:88/2000 (base year through fourth follow-up – approximately 12,000 cases).

It is important to note, that for the purposes of these modules, the restricted-use DVDs discussed are the restricted-use files that are currently being released by NCES. These files will only be available to restricted-use license holders. While NLS-72 and NELS:88 will include all cases ever surveyed, the HS&B sophomore and senior data files will be limited to the cohort samples: NLS-72, 22,652 cases; HS&B sophomore cohort, 14,825 cases; HS&B senior cohort, 11,995 cases; and NELS:88, 27,805 cases. These are the cases (students) that will appear on the restricted-use DVDs as ASCII and SAS syntax files.

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We will now examine each of the three secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000 in terms of their target populations, sample and study designs, data collection years and sources, and topics for which data are available for analysis. You can click on one of the survey titles above, which will take you directly to detailed information about the secondary longitudinal study of your choice. Or you can click the 'next' button to advance to the next slide within the module. At the end of each section of the module, you will be provided a return to list button that will return you to this objectives slide, from which you may either select another secondary longitudinal study detailed within the training module. There will also be a button that allows you to exit the module completely.

Also, be sure to view the section that summarizes the secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000, which can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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Planning for the National Longitudinal Study of the High School Class of 1972, or the NLS-72, began in 1968. NCES conducted a survey to determine the specific data needs of educational policy makers and researchers. Respondents expressed a need for data that would allow comparisons of student educational and vocational experiences with later outcomes. This identified need provided the impetus for NCES to begin planning for the first of an intended series of national longitudinal studies.

Accordingly, NLS-72 was designed to provide statistics on a national sample of students as they moved out of the American high school system into the critical years of early adulthood. Six rounds of data were collected between 1972 and 1986.

More information about NLS-72 can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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NLS-72 began with a nationally representative cohort of students who were high school seniors in the spring of 1972. A supplementary sample was added to the base year sample as part of the first follow-up in October of 1973. This added 4,450 more 1972 high school seniors from 257 additional schools to the sample that were unable to participate earlier.

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NLS-72, and all NCES secondary longitudinal studies, use a two-stage sample design. In the first stage, high schools were selected, and then in the second stage, students within those schools were selected.

In NLS-72, the target population was all public and private schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia which contained twelfth graders during the 1971-72 school year. The study excluded students from schools for the physically or mentally handicapped,

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those for legally confined students, and in special situations (such as vocational schools) where students were also enrolled in other high schools in the sampling frame.

In the first stage of sampling, schools were selected from the computerized school files maintained by the Office of Education and the National Catholic Education Association with a probability of selection proportional to the estimated number of senior students for the smallest strata (fewer than 300 seniors) and with equal probabilities for the remaining size strata. Next, schools were stratified by type of control (public or nonpublic), geographic region (Northeast, North Central, South, and West), grade 12 enrollment (three size categories), proximity to institutions of higher learning (3 distance categories), percent minority group enrollment (eight categories, public schools only), income level of the community (11 categories for public schools and eight categories for Catholic schools), and degree of urbanization (10 categories). Schools in low-income areas and schools with a high proportion of minority group enrollment were oversampled to ensure there would be enough schools in the sample to allow researchers to generate unbiased estimates.

From this stage of sampling, 1,200 eligible schools with a 12th grade were selected, and 1,061 schools responded.

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In the second stage of sampling, a fixed number of 18 students per school were randomly selected from rosters provided by the schools. Students were selected from 12th graders within the school, not by classroom.

The result of the sampling process was a sample of 16,683 12th graders representing 2,950,000 students. The supplementary sample from the first-follow up added 4,450 more 1972 high school seniors from 257 additional schools to the nationally representative base year sample.

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There were six data collection rounds (also referred to as waves or sometimes follow-ups) across NLS-72. In addition to the 1972 base year data collection efforts, follow-up surveys were conducted in 1973, 1974, 1976, 1979, and 1986. Postsecondary education transcripts were collected in 1984.

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The Base Year (BY) data collection included a student questionnaire, a student assessment, a Student's School Record Information Form (SRIF), and two school-related questionnaires.

The BY Student Questionnaire data provides analysts with information about sampled students' age, sex, racial/ethnic background, physical disability status, socioeconomic status of family and community, school characteristics, future education and work plans, school experiences, school performance, work status, and work performance and satisfaction.

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As part of the base year student assessment each sample member was asked to complete a 69-minute Test Book measuring both verbal and nonverbal ability. The assessment consisted of six tests: vocabulary, picture number, reading, letter groups, mathematics, and mosaic comparisons.

During the base-year, data were also obtained from a Student's School Record Information Form (SRIF) which detailed: the student's high school curriculum, Grade Point Average (GPA), credit hours in major courses, ability groupings, remedial-instruction record, involvement in federally supported programs, and scores on standardized tests.

Lastly, a School Questionnaire and one or two Counselor Questionnaires were also obtained for each participating high school.

More information about each of these NLS-72 data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The first follow-up was initiated by asking sample members where they were in October 1973 and what they were doing in regard to work, education, and/or training. Retrospective information on some base-year variables was requested from those 4,450 students added to the base year sample. It is important to note that Counselor Questionnaires were not obtained from the 257 schools added to the base year sample in 1973.

The second follow-up collected information similar to that of the first follow-up, asking where sample members were and what they were doing in 1974. In addition, a special retrospective survey was conducted to obtain key activity status information about prior time points from those who had not provided this information previously.

The third follow-up asked sample members to summarize their experiences since the previous collection.

More information about each of these NLS-72 data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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In 1979 the fourth follow-up included another experience summary for all sample members and two additional data collections. First, approximately 5,500 sample members were asked to complete a Supplemental Questionnaire in order to collect key work and education history that had been requested but not obtained in prior follow-ups. Second, a subgroup of 2,600 sample members were retested during the fourth follow-up on a subset of the base year student assessment.

In 1984, postsecondary education transcript data were collected for those students who reported some postsecondary attendance during the third follow-up student interview.

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In 1986, the fifth follow-up once again asked sample members to summarize their experiences since the previous collection. General information (i.e., career status, home ownership, and type of community) was collected, along with information detailing work experience, periods unemployed, education, other training, family formation, child care, and background was also collected as part of the fifth follow-up.

More information about each of these NLS-72 data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

This concludes the introduction to NLS-72. To return to the list of secondary longitudinal studies to make another selection, click the “Return to List” button. To exit the module completely, click the “Exit” button or you will automatically be advanced to the next slide within the module.

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In an attempt to successfully replicate the findings from NLS-72, NCES began a new study in 1980, the High School and Beyond (HS&B) study. The study design included two longitudinal cohorts of students resulting in two nationally representative cohorts: one of 1980 high school sophomores and one of 1980 high school seniors.

The sophomore cohort enabled researchers to observe the transition from 10th to 12th grades and to follow students who dropped out of school between 10th and 12th grades. The senior cohort enabled comparisons between high school seniors in 1972 with high school seniors in 1980.

Five rounds of data were collected between 1980 and 1992 for the sophomore cohort; while four rounds of data were collected between 1980 and 1986 for the senior cohort.

More information about HS&B can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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HS&B began with two nationally representative samples of 1980 high school sophomores and seniors. The samples included 30,030 high school sophomores and 28,240 high school seniors attending 1,015 high schools in 1980. It is important to note that the restricted-use files are limited to 14,825 sophomores and 11,995 seniors.

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HS&B, like NLS-72, used a two-stage sample design. In the first stage, high schools were selected, and then in the second stage, students within those schools were selected.

In HS&B, the target population was public and private high schools in the 50 states and the District of Columbia. In the first stage of sampling, schools were selected from the frame of the Common Core of Data (CCD) and the School Universe Computer file distributed by the Curriculum Information Center, Inc. (CIC) of Denver, Colorado. Public schools with high percentages of Hispanic students, Catholic schools with high

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percentages of minority students, alternative public schools, and private schools with high-achieving students were oversampled to ensure that there would be enough schools in the sample to allow researchers to generate unbiased estimates.

The study excluded students from schools for the physically or mentally handicapped, those for legally confined students, and in special situations (such as vocational schools) where students were also enrolled in other high schools in the sampling frame.

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In the second stage of sampling, a fixed number of 36 sophomores and 36 seniors from each of the 1,015 schools were randomly selected from rosters provided by the schools. Students were randomly selected within the school, not by classroom. Special efforts were made to identify sampled students who were twins or triplets so that their co-twins or co-triplets could be invited to participate in the study.

The result of the sampling process was a sample of 30,030 sophomores, representing 3.7 million 1980 high school sophomores, and 28,240 seniors representing 3.0 million 1980 high school seniors.

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There were five data collection rounds (also referred to as waves or sometimes follow-ups) for the sophomore cohort and four data collection rounds for the senior cohort across HS&B. In addition to the base year data collection efforts, follow-up surveys were conducted in 1982, 1984, and 1986 for both cohorts. The sophomore cohort had a fourth follow-up in 1992 and a high school transcript data collection in 1982. The postsecondary education transcripts were collected for the sophomore cohort in 1986 and 1992, and for the senior cohort in 1984.

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The Base Year (BY) data collection included a sophomore questionnaire, a senior questionnaire, Student Identification Pages, a student assessment (a series of cognitive tests for each cohort for vocabulary, reading, mathematics, science, writing, and civics education), a school questionnaire, a teacher comment checklist, and a parent questionnaire (mailed to a sample of parents from both cohorts).

The student questionnaires focused on individual and family background, high school experiences, work experiences, and plans for the future. The student identification pages included information that would be useful in locating the students for future follow-up surveys, as well as a series of items on the students' use of, proficiency in, and educational experiences with languages other than English.

The cognitive tests that were a part of the student assessment measured verbal and quantitative abilities in both cohorts. In addition, the sophomore test battery included achievement measures in science, writing, and civics, while seniors were asked to respond to tests measuring abstract and nonverbal abilities.

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More information about each of these HS&B data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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School questionnaires, which were filled out by an official in each participating school, provided information about enrollment, staff, educational programs, facilities and services, dropout rates, and special programs for handicapped and disadvantaged students. The teacher comment checklist provided teacher observations on students participating in the survey. The parent questionnaire elicited information about the effects of family attitudes and financial planning on postsecondary educational goals.

More information about each of these HS&B data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The first follow-up sophomore questionnaire documented secondary school experiences, especially shifts in attitudes and values since the base year, as well as work experiences and plans for postsecondary education. Also as part of the first follow-up, sophomore cohort sample members were retested using the base year student assessment.

The Second Follow-up Sophomore Questionnaire included background information, education, other training, military experience, work experience, periods unemployed, family information, income, and experiences and opinions.

The third and fourth follow-ups asked sample members many of the same questions as asked in previous follow-up surveys. Respondents were asked to update background information and to provide information about their work experience, unemployment history, education and other training, family information, income, and other experiences and opinions to summarize their experiences since the previous collection.

In 1992, members of the sophomore cohort were again asked to update background information and to provide information about their work experience, unemployment history, education and other training, family information, income, and other experiences and opinions to summarize their experiences since the previous collection.

Postsecondary education transcripts were collected for the sophomore cohort in 1986 and 1992, and for the senior cohort in 1984.

More information about each of these HS&B data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The same questionnaire was administered across all three follow-up data collections for the senior cohort. In addition to being asked to document their current status as of 1982, 1984 and 1986, sample members were asked questions about high school graduation status, occupation, postsecondary education and financial aid, military

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service, family status, income, activities and opinions, use of cigarettes and alcohol, voting behavior, and disabilities as part of the first, second, and third follow-up data collections. Additionally, postsecondary education transcripts were collected for the senior cohort in 1984.

More information about each of these HS&B data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

This concludes the introduction to HS&B. To return to the list of secondary longitudinal studies to make another selection, click the “Return to List” button. To exit the module completely, click the “Exit” button or you will automatically be advanced to the next slide within the module.

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NCES began the third secondary longitudinal study, the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88) with a cohort of 8th graders. By beginning with an 8th grade cohort, it was possible to follow students as they moved from middle schools into high schools. Questions like, “Who successfully made the transition, who dropped out of school, and who moved from private to public schools?” could be investigated using NELS:88 data.

The objectives of NELS:88 were to provide longitudinal data about critical transitions experienced by students; to integrate student, dropout, parent, teacher, and school data; to support analyses among distinct subgroups; and to link with previous longitudinal studies.

Critical transitions in NELS:88 include those of students from middle school to high school, dropping out of school, transitions to postsecondary education, and transitions to work.

Five rounds of data were collected between 1988 and 2000.

More information about NELS:88 can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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NELS:88 contains nationally representative samples of 24,599 eighth graders and the 1,057 eighth grade schools they attended in 1988. The sample was freshened in 1990 and 1992, when students were sophomores and seniors in high school.

In NELS:88, students are the basic unit of analysis, with data from schools, teachers, and parents serving as context. The study examines characteristics of the school itself, providing data on admissions and academic policies, school climate, and teacher compensation. The study examines students' school experiences, both in terms of their own reports and in terms of reports of teachers. The teachers' provide data on classroom instructional practices. Finally, the study provides data on the student's family and home experiences. This is done first by obtaining students' reports but is supplemented and enhanced by interviewing parents. While the previous longitudinal

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education studies have obtained some information from teachers and parents for subsamples of students, NELS:88 provides extensive information from these sources for all students.

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NELS:88 used a two-stage sample design. In the first stage 40,000 public and private schools serving approximately 3 million 8th graders in the 50 states and the District of Columbia were identified using the Common Core of Data (CCD) and the Quality Education Data (QED).

Next, schools were stratified by region (Northeast, South, North Central, and West), urbanicity (urban, suburban, and rural), and school type (public, Catholic, and other private). Schools with high proportions of African American and Hispanic students, as well as private schools, were oversampled to ensure there would be enough students in the sample to allow researchers to generate unbiased estimates. From this stage of sampling, 1,052 schools provided base year data.

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In the second stage of sampling, 24-26 eighth grade students were randomly selected from rosters provided by the schools. These students became the core sample for the school. After the initial 24-26 8th grade students were selected, Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic students were identified from rosters of non-selected students. For most schools, one to two Asian/Pacific Islander and Hispanic students were then selected and added to the sample. It is important to note that the NELS:88 sample excluded approximately 5% of students listed on school rosters because school personnel indicated that students with mental disabilities, physical disabilities, and language difficulties should not participate in the study.

Like the other secondary longitudinal studies, students were selected within the school. Thus the NELS:88 sample is clustered.

The result of the sampling process was a sample of 24,599 8th grade students representing approximately 3 million students.

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There were five data collection rounds (also referred to as waves or sometimes follow-ups) across NELS:88, each occurring in spring or summer of the specified year. In addition to the base year data collection efforts, follow-up surveys were conducted in 1990, 1992, 1994, and 2000. A high school transcript data collection was conducted in 1992 as part of the second follow-up, and a postsecondary transcript collection was conducted in 2000.

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The Base Year (BY) data collection included a student questionnaire and a student assessment.

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The BY Student Questionnaire data provides analysts with information about sampled students' background, language use, family, opinions about themselves, their plans for the future, their jobs and chores, school life, schoolwork, and activities.

As part of the base year student assessment each sample member was asked to complete an assessment consisting of four tests: Mathematics, Science, English, and Social Studies. The base year student assessment was the first of three assessment points across NELS:88. Subsequent student assessments were conducted as part of the first and second follow-ups in 1990 and 1992. It is important to note that in 1992 all tests were rescaled to the 1992 assessment, allowing academic gains to be calculated across the three NELS:88 assessment points.

In addition to these data collected directly from the sampled students, data collection was attempted for at least one parent and two teachers per sampled student. Both parent and teacher data are not nationally representative.

Lastly, data were collected from the principal of the school about the school the sampled student attended. Within NELS:88, the principal only provides information about characteristics of the school; not about themselves as principal. As such, information collected about the schools from the principals in NELS:88 is nationally representative of schools with an 8th grade.

More information about each of these NELS:88 data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The first follow-up (F1) data collection included a student questionnaire, a student assessment, and a teacher and principal questionnaire. By the first follow-up, students' pathways began to diverge. Because of this, specialized questionnaires were given to sample members, they were the In-school Questionnaire; Out-of-school Questionnaire; and New Student Questionnaire.

The second follow-up (F2) data collection included a student questionnaire, a student assessment, and parent, teacher and principal questionnaires. Four specialized questionnaires were distributed, the In-school Questionnaire; Out-of-school Questionnaire; New Student Questionnaire; and Early Graduate Questionnaire.

The third follow-up (F3) data collection utilized the Young Adult Questionnaire which asked sample members' about their family structure, high school completion/college enrollment, financial aid, college major/degree plans, employment, work related training, and life course.

The fourth follow-up (F4) data collection utilized the Adult Questionnaire which asked sample members' about their current activities, employment, job-related training, college enrollment, and family.

More information about each of these NELS:88 data collection efforts can be accessed by clicking the corresponding underlined screen text.

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The NELS:88 first follow-up sample is a “freshened” sample. It was formed by adding a small sample of 10th graders that were in tenth grade participating schools during 1990 but were not in the base year sampling frame (e.g., students who were out of the country or out of grade sequence). This freshening formed a nationally representative sample of 1990 10th graders in the sampled schools. NELS:88 was the first NCES study to ‘freshen’ its sample.

In addition to these freshened students, the NELS:88 F1 sample included students who were identified as ineligible in the base year (BYI) but became eligible in the first follow-up.

Lastly, it is important to note that as part of the first follow-up, and all subsequent follow-ups, dropouts were followed with certainty. NCES ensured that sufficient numbers of dropouts responded to the NELS:88 questionnaires, and in some cases additional questionnaires, to ensure that researchers could report findings regarding this subgroup.

This concludes the introduction to NELS:88. To return to the list of secondary longitudinal studies to make another selection, click the “Return to List” button. To exit the module completely, click the “Exit” button or you will automatically be advanced to the next slide within the module.

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Researchers are still using NLS-72, HS&B, and NELS:88 to examine critical transitions made by cohorts of students from secondary school, through college, and into their adult lives.

NLS-72 provided researchers with data to study the transition from the senior year of high school to postsecondary education and the world of work. The HS&B 12th grade cohort provided researchers with data to study the trends between 1972 and 1980 with two senior cohorts. The HS&B 10th grade cohort provided researchers with data for the last two years of high school and a first look at late high school dropouts. NELS:88, with freshened students, allowed researchers to follow three cohorts (8th graders, 10th graders, and 12th graders) as well as early and late high school dropouts.

Most cohorts were followed for at least 10 years (with NLS-72 sample members followed for 14 years; HS&B 12th grade cohort sample members followed for 6 years; HS&B 10th grade cohort sample members followed for 12 years; and NELS:88 sample members followed for 12 years) with new cohorts of secondary students started each decade across three consecutive decades.

It is also important to note that the inclusion of additional students across these secondary longitudinal studies through freshening enable comparisons across studies. For example, the NELS:88 8th grade cohort was freshened in the 10th and 12th grade to form a sophomore and a senior cohort, enabling comparisons of the senior classes of

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NLS-72 and HS&B with the NELS:88 senior cohort. Because of this freshening, NELS:88 data are also comparable to ELS:2002 at both the 10th and 12th grade levels.

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Within each cohort – be it NLS-72, HS&B 10th grade cohort, HS&B 12th grade cohort, or NELS:88 –respondents can be examined at a specific point in time (e.g., spring of 1972 for base-year of NLS-72). It should also be noted that each study's base year and sample freshened data points can be used for cross-sectional analysis.

Respondents from the secondary longitudinal studies from 1972-2000 can be followed across time. For example, an 8th grade sample member from NELS:88 can be followed through high school, postsecondary education, and the world of work.

Additionally, if a researcher chooses, he/she can look at seniors in the springs of 1972, 1980, 1982, and 1992 using data from the base year data collection of NLS-72, the HS&B 12th grade cohort base year data, first follow-up data from the 10th grade cohort of HS&B, and the second follow-up of NELS:88.

Taken together, these studies can be used to describe the educational experiences of students from three decades—the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s—and also provide bases for further understanding of the correlates of educational success in the United States. More information regarding the collective uses of the secondary longitudinal studies datasets can be accessed by clicking the underlined screen text, 'used.'

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The secondary longitudinal studies conducted from 1972-2000 collected a wealth of information across data collection rounds from multiple sources. To date, researchers have used these data to address many topics including: academic achievement and cognitive growth; coursetaking and grades; educational engagement, peer influence, and drug and alcohol use; school disengagement and dropout behavior; school violence and student misbehavior; school processes, structure, and effectiveness; issues of equity for various subgroups, students with disabilities, and neighborhood/community effects; educational and career expectations; postsecondary educational access and choice; postsecondary educational persistence and attainment; transition to the job market; family formation; and life goals and values.

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This module has provided you with an introduction to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) secondary longitudinal studies conducted from 1972 through 2000. It provided basic information about the target populations, sample and study designs, and data collection years and sources for the National Longitudinal Study of 1972 (NLS-72), High School and Beyond (HS&B), and National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988 (NELS:88).

Additionally, this module has highlighted topics for which data are available for analyses.

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Important resources that have been provided throughout the module are summarized in this slide along with the module's objectives for your reference.

The subsequent secondary longitudinal studies training modules discuss these topics in greater detail and address questions about how to effectively use the dataset for your analytic purposes.

You may now proceed to the next module in the series, or click the exit button to return to the landing page.