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<http://www.norc.org>

We are excited to announce that the 2021 cross-sectional data, along with the cumulative cross-sectional file for the General Social Survey (GSS), is now available ([/_layouts/15/FIXUPREDIRECT.ASPX?WebId=a5af9aac-0a72-40cb-a327-7e1d85de8c5f&TermSetId=ec502b38-8d3e-42a1-887b-92b533a1f164&TermId=c254170d-15b9-4da5-985d-77ef8095fe70](https://gss.norc.org/Get-Documentation(/_layouts/15/FIXUPREDIRECT.ASPX?WebId=a5af9aac-0a72-40cb-a327-7e1d85de8c5f&TermSetId=ec502b38-8d3e-42a1-887b-92b533a1f164&TermId=c254170d-15b9-4da5-985d-77ef8095fe70))). Due to challenges caused by the COVID-19 pandemic, GSS data users should carefully examine how a change they are observing in a trend over time may have been impacted by the methodological differences employed in 2020. To help users assess these differences, the methodological details and a note explaining how various issues related to total survey error may impact the interpretation of the results are posted alongside the data and are available at: [https://gss.norc.org/Get-Documentation\(/_layouts/15/FIXUPREDIRECT.ASPX?WebId=a5af9aac-0a72-40cb-a327-7e1d85de8c5f&TermSetId=ec502b38-8d3e-42a1-887b-92b533a1f164&TermId=dbe1a6b0-e65b-42ea-937a-241bcec75b9c\)](https://gss.norc.org/Get-Documentation(/_layouts/15/FIXUPREDIRECT.ASPX?WebId=a5af9aac-0a72-40cb-a327-7e1d85de8c5f&TermSetId=ec502b38-8d3e-42a1-887b-92b533a1f164&TermId=dbe1a6b0-e65b-42ea-937a-241bcec75b9c)). Additionally, the GSS team is working on improving the GSS Data Explorer to make it a better tool for users. The new version of the Data Explorer will be available this winter (2021), and the existing version will be discontinued. Check back here for future updates on the release of these data and the roll out of the new Data Explorer. Also, we encourage you to follow us on Twitter ([@GSS_NORC](https://twitter.com/GSS_NORC) (https://twitter.com/GSS_NORC)) Twitter handle as we will also be sharing updates there.



About the GSS

For more than four decades, the General Social Survey (GSS) has studied the growing complexity of American society. It is the only full-probability, personal-interview survey designed to monitor changes in both social characteristics and attitudes currently being conducted in the United States.

The General Social Survey

The General Social Survey (GSS) is a nationally representative survey of adults in the United States conducted since 1972. The GSS collects data on contemporary American society in order to monitor and explain trends in opinions, attitudes and behaviors. The GSS has adapted questions from earlier surveys, thereby allowing researchers to conduct comparisons for up to 80 years.

The GSS contains a standard core of demographic, behavioral, and attitudinal questions, plus topics of special interest. Among the topics covered are civil liberties, crime and violence, intergroup tolerance, morality, national spending priorities, psychological well-being, social mobility, and stress and traumatic events.

Altogether, the GSS is the single best source for sociological and attitudinal trend data covering the United States. It allows researchers to examine the structure and functioning of society in general, as well as the role played by relevant subgroups and to compare the United States to other nations.

The GSS aims to make high-quality data easily accessible to scholars, students, policy-makers, and others, with minimal cost and waiting.

The GSS has carried out an extensive range of methodological research designed both to advance survey methods in general and to insure that the GSS data are of the highest possible quality. In pursuit of this goal, more than 130 papers have been published in the GSS Methodological Reports series.

International Social Survey Program

The ISSP, a cross-national collaboration conducting scientific surveys on diverse topics relevant to social science, evolved out of bilateral collaboration between NORC and the German organization Zentrum für Umfragen, Methoden, und Analysen (ZUMA; now part of GESIS-Leibniz Institute of the Social Sciences). Starting in 1982, each organization devoted a small segment of their national surveys, ALLBUS and GSS, to a common set of questions. The ISSP was formally established in 1984 by Australia, Germany, Great Britain, and the United States, and it now has 42 member countries across five continents and collects data in 70 countries. Each country's designated ISSP institution may decide what survey vehicle to field for the ISSP module each year, as long as data collection follows an approved methodology. As the only U.S. member of the ISSP, NORC actively participates in ISSP's international network, working to establish a framework for international cooperation that promotes measurement consistency and strict quality standards to allow investigation of social change in a cross-national frame of reference. Recently, the NORC team was selected as convener of the ISSP 2023 Drafting Group on National Identity and Citizenship. NORC also chairs the ISSP's methods group on weighting, and it is a member of the methods group on nonresponse. For more information on the ISSP, please visit: www.issp.org (<http://issp.org/menu-top/home/>).

National Congregations Study

The [National Congregations Study](http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/) (<http://www.soc.duke.edu/natcong/>) is a hypernetwork sample of religious congregations collected in 1998, 2006, 2012 and 2018. In each of the four waves, the research has been done in conjunction with the GSS, documenting the work, programs, and activities of America's religious congregations. This survey was conducted by NORC in collaboration with Professor Mark Chaves at Duke University.

GSS Principal Investigators

The GSS and its PIs have been received awards from the American Association for Public Opinion Research, the American Sociological Association, the Eastern Sociological Society, the World Association for Public Opinion Research, and *American Demographics* and *Science* magazines.

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About NORC

NORC at the University of Chicago conducts research and analysis that decision-makers trust. As a nonpartisan research organization and a pioneer in measuring and understanding the world, we have studied almost every aspect of the human experience and every major news event for more than eight decades. Today, we partner with government, corporate, and nonprofit clients around the world to provide the objectivity and expertise necessary to inform the critical decisions facing society. [Learn more](http://www.norc.org/) (<http://www.norc.org/>).

GSS Board

Below is a list of GSS Advisors and Board members(*=current Board members). The GSS Board is governed by the Board charter.

GSS Board (1983 -)

Robert Abelson	Barbara Entwisle	Nancy Landale	Robert Schoeni
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William A. Darity	Christopher Jencks	Barbara Reskin	David Williams
Michael Dawson	Arne Kalleberg	John Robinson	Stephen Withey
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Louis Desipio	David Knoke	Ruben Rumbaut	James Wright
Paul DiMaggio	Frauke Kreuter	Robert Sampson	Robert Wuthnow
Gregory Duncan	Jon Krosnick	Nora Cate Schaeffer	Yu Xie
	Maria Krysan	Jason Schnittker	

Board of Methodological Advisors (1977-1983)

Duane Alwin	Norman Bradburn	Howard Schuman	Seymour Sudman
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Board of Advisors (1972-1983)

Herbert Blalock	Stephen Cutler	Otis Dudley Duncan	David Featherman
Philip Hastings	Herbert Hyman	David Knoke	Otto Larsen
Karen Mason	John Mueller	Norval Glenn	John Robinson
James Short	Stephen Withey		

History of the GSS

James A. Davis (1929-2016)

James A. Davis was the founder of the General Social Survey (GSS) and a GSS principal investigator from 1971 to 2009. When he won the 1992 American Association for Public Opinion Research (AAPOR) Award for Exceptionally Distinguished Achievement, he was cited for “his innovations in teaching, his prodigious scholarship, [and] his creation of the General Social Survey.”

Davis received a BS in journalism from Northwestern University in 1950. He then obtained his MA from the University of Wisconsin in 1952 and his PhD from Harvard University in 1955. In 1957, Davis came to the University of Chicago as an assistant professor and National Opinion Research Center (NORC) researcher. While he moved back and forth between Chicago, Dartmouth, and Harvard over the next 50 years (Chicago-Harvard-Chicago-Dartmouth-Chicago-Dartmouth-Harvard-Chicago), he never left NORC. From 1971 to 1975, he served as NORC’s director.

Also, in 1971 Davis developed an idea for a National Data Program for the Social Sciences. Reflecting the social indicators movement of that time, it called for the annual monitoring of social change across a range of important social matters, such as intergroup relations, gender roles, and civil liberties, and the distribution of those data to all interested researchers without cost or delay. The Russell Sage Foundation and the National Science Foundation supported the proposal—and so the GSS was launched in 1972.

As his winning of both the American Sociological Association (ASA) Teaching Award and the AAPOR Distinguished Achievement Award attests, Davis’s career has been marked by well-

deserved rewards. But for the real reward of survey research, Davis can speak for himself. As he noted in *Sociologists at Work*:

"There is a lot of misery in surveys, most of the time and money going into monotonous clerical and statistical routines, with interruptions only for squabbles with the client, budget crises, petty machinations for a place in the academic sun, and social casework with neurotic graduate students. And nobody ever reads the final report. Those few moments, however, when a new set of tables comes up from the machine room and questions begin to be answered; when relationships actually hold under controls; when the pile of tables on the desk suddenly meshes to yield a coherent chapter; when in a flash you realize you have found out something about something important that nobody ever knew before -- these are the moments that justify research."

Need Help?



(<http://gss.norc.org/contact>).

Been Asked to Participate?


Has NORC contacted you to participate in the General Social Survey? If so, be sure to check out our Survey Participants page to learn more about the GSS, how your responses will be used and why your voice matters!

[Respond to the GSS \(http://gss.norc.org/For-Survey-Participants\)](http://gss.norc.org/For-Survey-Participants)

GSS in the News

[How Adult Children Affect Their Mother's Happiness \(https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/05/make-your-mom-happier/618811/\)](https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/05/make-your-mom-happier/618811/)

Using the 2018 General Social Survey collected by NORC at the University of Chicago, I statistically modeled mothers' reported happiness against the number of children they have, and found that well-being increases as a woman has her first, second, and third child. The fourth child and beyond are associated with falling happiness. (To be precise, the optimal happiness point occurs at 3.14 kids, but getting that .14 of a child is a bit tricky.)

 [The Atlantic \(https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/05/make-your-mom-happier/618811/\)](https://www.theatlantic.com/family/archive/2021/05/make-your-mom-happier/618811/)
| 5.6.2021

[Barring women as leaders in church may be bad for their health, new study finds \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/barring-women-as-leaders-in-church-may-be-bad-for-their-health-new-study-finds/2021/04/19/771a2db2-a155-11eb-b314-2e993bd83e31_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/barring-women-as-leaders-in-church-may-be-bad-for-their-health-new-study-finds/2021/04/19/771a2db2-a155-11eb-b314-2e993bd83e31_story.html)

For this new study, Homan and her co-author, Amy Burdette, a professor of sociology at Florida State, wanted to see if sexism counters the health benefits of religion. To do this, they drew from two nationally representative sources of data: the General Social Survey and the National Congregations Study.



[The Washington Post \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/barring-women-as-leaders-in-church-may-be-bad-for-their-health-new-study-finds/2021/04/19/771a2db2-a155-11eb-b314-2e993bd83e31_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/religion/barring-women-as-leaders-in-church-may-be-bad-for-their-health-new-study-finds/2021/04/19/771a2db2-a155-11eb-b314-2e993bd83e31_story.html)

| 4.19.2021

[Americans are still spanking their kids. A new study shows how harmful that is. \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/on-parenting/spanking-study-twins-behavior-genetics/2021/04/08/53a7e1ee-961a-11eb-b28d-bfa7bb5cb2a5_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/on-parenting/spanking-study-twins-behavior-genetics/2021/04/08/53a7e1ee-961a-11eb-b28d-bfa7bb5cb2a5_story.html)

But spanking is still prevalent in American families, and legal in all states. Though it appears to be steadily falling out of favor among younger generations, the 2018 General Social Survey — a long-running biennial national survey of American adults — found that 66 percent of Americans agreed that “a good, hard spanking” is sometimes necessary to discipline a child.



[The Washington Post \(https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/on-parenting/spanking-study-twins-behavior-genetics/2021/04/08/53a7e1ee-961a-11eb-b28d-bfa7bb5cb2a5_story.html\)](https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/on-parenting/spanking-study-twins-behavior-genetics/2021/04/08/53a7e1ee-961a-11eb-b28d-bfa7bb5cb2a5_story.html)

| 4.12.2021

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