

## Documentation for Breastfeeding Survey Data

August 2, 2010

### Overview

This document describes the breastfeeding data set collected by Dan Sacks and Betsey Stevenson. It provides an overview of the data collection effort and the survey instrument. It contains a data dictionary describing each of the variables in the data set.

### Data Collection

We collected data using the online surveying software provided by qualtrics.com. The survey can be seen, and taken, at this website: [wharton.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV\\_e2NOBSudMtPELFW&SVID=Prod](http://wharton.qualtrics.com/SE?SID=SV_e2NOBSudMtPELFW&SVID=Prod). We advertised the survey on the New York Times Freakonomics blog, and on Facebook.com, on March 12, 2010.<sup>1</sup> We began collecting survey responses immediately, and continued collecting them ever since. The data that we provide were downloaded on July 14, 2010, so they contain responses through then.

### Description of survey

The survey begins by gathering demographic information. It then asks about the number of children, and work leave arrangements following the birth of the respondent's last child. (All information in the survey about breastfeeding refers to the last child.) The survey then asks whether the child was ever breastfed, and continues with a series of questions probing why the respondent (or the respondent's partner) did/did not breastfeed, how long the breastfeeding lasted, and why the breastfeeding eventually stopped. The survey also asks about the age of the child when breastfeeding stopped, and about the intensity of breastfeeding: how much other feeding the baby received, and how much time the mother spent breastfeeding. We finish by asking about race/ethnicity and income. Throughout, we used skip patterns to make sure we didn't ask respondents nonsensical questions.

Many of the questions are open ended; for example, we asked people "Why did you stop breastfeeding?" We provided several possible options ("I saw no further benefit"), and allowed respondents to check as many as possible. We also let respondents write in other reasons. For all the variables like this, we created a categorical variable which indicates their response if they only gave one

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<sup>1</sup> The original blog post is here: <http://freakonomics.blogs.nytimes.com/2010/03/12/time-for-the-kids-a-teaser-and-a-bleg/>. The data contain a variable indicating whether the respondent took the poll through Freakonomics or through Facebook.

response. If they gave multiple, we indicate that in the categorical variable. A series of indicator variables then show whether an individual gave each of the possible reasons.

Note that for these indicators, and for all variables in the survey, a missing value indicates some kind of nonresponse – the individual did not answer the question. In some cases this may be legitimate (for example, if the respondent did not breastfeed, then the missing values for “Why did you breastfeed?” are legitimate); in other cases, they may not be legitimate. We do not distinguish between the two, however.

## Data dictionary and description of variables

### *Technical Variables*

Variable name:	Finished
Meaning:	Indicates whether an individual completed the survey; that is, whether she clicked through the last page.
Values:	0 Did not finish 1 Finished
Variable name:	nytimes
Meaning:	Indicates whether an individual followed the Freakonomics link or the Facebook link to the survey
Values:	0 Followed Facebook 1 Followed Freakonomics
Variable name:	time
Meaning:	Gives the time of day the respondent took the survey. This information is collected by the survey website, and it's not clear if it's local time or EST.
Values:	String variable giving time of day.
Variable name:	Date
Meaning:	Calendar date the individual took the survey.
Values:	Coded in Stata's date format as YMD.

### *Demographic and Socio-economic Variables*

Variable name:	highestEduc
Question text:	"What is the highest level of school you have completed or the highest degree you have received?"
Values:	1 Less than high school 2 High School graduate or equivalent 3 Some college but no degree 4 Associate degree (Academic, occupational, or vocational program) 5 Bachelor's degree 6 Master's of Business Administration (MBA) 7 Professional degree (Medicine) 8 Professional degree (other) 9 Professional degree (Vet) 10 PhD 11 Other Masters' degree 12 Professional degree (Law)
Variable name:	yearBirth
Question text:	"In What year were you born?"
Values:	year of birth (continuous variable)

Variable name: sex  
Question text: "What is your gender?"  
Values: 1 Male  
2 Female

Variable name: numChildren  
Question text: "How many children do you have?"  
Values: 1 None  
2 One  
3 Two  
4 Three or more

Variable name: yearLastChildBorn  
Question text: "In what year was your last child born?"  
Values: 1 None  
2 One  
3 Two  
4 Three or more

Variable name: maritalStatus  
Question text: "What is your current marital status?"  
Values: 1 Never Married  
2 Married  
3 Partnered  
4 Separated  
5 Divorced  
6 Widowed

Variable name: race  
Question text: "Which best describes your race/ethnicity?"  
Note: We allowed respondents to choose multiple options.  
Values: 1 White  
2 Black  
3 American Indian  
4 Asian or Pacific Islander  
5 Hispanic  
6 Other  
9 Multiple races given

Variable name: race\_White  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was white  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.  
Values: 0 Not white  
1 White

Variable name: race\_Black  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was black

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.

Values: 0 Not black  
1 Black

Variable name: race\_AmIndian

Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was American Indian

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.

Values: 0 Not American Indian  
1 American Indian

Variable name: race\_AsianPI

Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was Asian or Pacific Islander

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.

Values: 0 Not Asian or Pacific Islander  
1 Asian or Pacific Islander

Variable name: race\_Hispanic

Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was Hispanic

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.

Values: 0 Not Hispanic  
1 Hispanic

Variable name: race\_Other

Meaning: Respondent indicated her race was other

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no race information.

Values: 0 Not race other  
1 Race other

Variable name: income

Question: "Which category represents the total combined household income of all members of your FAMILY during the past 12 months?"

Note: We allowed respondents to choose multiple options.

Values: 1 Less than \$25,000  
2 \$25,000 to \$49,999  
3 \$50,000 to \$74,999  
4 \$75,000 to \$99,999  
5 \$100,00 to \$149,999  
6 \$150,000 to \$249,999  
7 \$250,000 to \$500,000  
8 More than \$500,000  
9 Prefer not to say  
99 Multiple responses given

Variable name: income25kto50k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income50kto75k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income75kto100k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income100kto150k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income150kto250k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income250kto500k  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: income500kOrMore  
Meaning: Respondent indicated her income was less than or equal to \$25,000.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Income not as indicated  
1 Income as indicated

Variable name: incomeNotSaying  
Meaning: Respondent preferred not to say her income.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no income information.  
Values: 0 Said income  
1 Preferred not to say income

### *Maternity/Paternity Leave Variables*

Variable name: numWeeksLeave  
Question: "How many weeks leave did you take before returning to work after the birth of your last child?"  
Values: 1 I didn't take any time off work  
2 Less than 2 weeks  
3 2 to less than 4 weeks  
4 4 to less than 6 weeks  
5 6 to less than 8 weeks  
6 8 to less than 12 weeks  
7 12 to less than 18 weeks  
8 18 to less than 26 weeks  
9 6 Months or more

Variable name: numHoursWorkAfterBirth  
Question: "After returning to work following the birth of your last child, how many **hours per week** did you work?"  
Values: 1 I haven't returned to work since the birth of my last child  
2 Less than 20 hours a week  
3 20 to less than 30 hours a week  
4 30 to less than 40 hours a week  
5 40 hours a week  
6 41 to 50 hours a week  
7 50 or more hours a week

Variable name: numWeeksLeaveSpouse  
Question: "How many weeks leave did your spouse/partner take before returning to work after the birth of your last child?"  
Values: 1 I didn't have a spouse or partner living with me at the time that my last child was born  
2 He/she didn't take any time off work  
3 Less than 2 weeks  
4 2 to less than 4 weeks  
5 4 to less than 6 weeks  
6 6 to less than 8 weeks  
7 8 to less than 12 weeks  
8 12 to less than 18 weeks  
9 18 to less than 26 weeks

Variable name: 10 6 Months or more  
numHrsWorkSpouse  
Question: "After returning to work following the birth of your last child, how many **hours per week** did your spouse/partner work?"  
Values: 1 My spouse/partner hasn't returned to work since the birth of our last child  
2 Less than 20 hours a week  
3 20 to less than 30 hours a week  
4 30 to less than 40 hours a week  
5 40 hours a week  
6 41 to 50 hours a week  
7 50 or more hours a week

### *Breastfeeding Information*

Variable name: breastfed  
Question: "Was your last child ever breastfed or given breastmilk?"  
Values: 1 Yes  
2 No

Variable name: hoursBreastfeeding  
Question: "Was your child ever breastfed or given breastmilk?"  
Values: 1 Yes  
2 No

Variable name: portionBreastmilk  
Question: "What portion of the child's feedings during the first 6 months consisted of breastmilk?"  
Values: 1 Less than a quarter  
2 A quarter to about half  
3 Half to three-quarters  
4 More than three-quarters

Variable name: exclusive  
Question: "Was the child ever exclusively breastfed?"  
Values: 1 Yes  
2 No

Variable name: stopAge  
Question: "How old was the child when he or she completely stopped breastfeeding or being fed breastmilk?"  
Note: There are no categories for "2 to less than 3 months old" or "10 to less than 11 months old"; this was an omission.  
Values: 1 1 month or less.  
2 1 to less than 2 months old  
3 3 to less than 4 months old  
4 4 to less than 5 months old  
5 5 to less than 6 months old  
6 6 to less than 7 months old



- 7 7 to less than 8 months old
- 8 8 to less than 9 months old
- 9 9 to less than 10 months old
- 10 11 to less than 12 months old
- 11 12 to less than 18 months old
- 12 18 to less than 24 months old
- 13 Older than 24 months.

Variable name: ageFedOther  
 Question: "How old was the child when he or she was first fed something other than breastmilk or water?"  
 Values: 1 1 month or less.  
 2 1 to less than 2 months old  
 3 2 to less than 3 months old  
 4 3 to less than 4 months old  
 5 4 to less than 5 months old  
 6 5 to less than 6 months old  
 7 6 to less than 7 months old  
 9 7 to less than 8 months old  
 9 8 to less than 9 months old  
 10 More than 9 months old

Variable name: formula  
 Question: "Was the child ever regularly supplemented with formula?"  
 Values: 1 Yes  
 2 No

Variable name: hoursBreastfeeding  
 Question: "How many **hours per day** would you estimate that you or your partner spent breastfeeding or pumping during the first 6 months?"  
 Values: 1 Less than 1 hour per day  
 2 1 to less than 2 hours per day  
 3 2 to less than 3 hours per day  
 4 3 to less than 4 hours per day  
 5 4 to less than 5 hours per day  
 6 5 to less than 6 hours per day  
 7 More than 6 hours per day  
 8 Don't know

Variable name: reasonNot  
 Question: "What were the **most important** reasons why the baby was not breastfed?"  
 Note: We allowed respondents to select multiple reasons.  
 Values: 1 Didn't think that there was much of a benefit for the baby  
 2 The baby had trouble latching  
 3 Thought that breastfeeding would be/was painful  
 4 Time commitment required for breastfeeding was too difficult  
 5 Too difficult  
 6 Was not comfortable with the idea of breastfeeding

7 Other (write in)  
9 Multiple reasons given

Variable name: not\_noBenefit  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because she saw no benefit.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: not\_troubleLatching  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because she had trouble latching.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: not\_painful  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because she thought it was/would be painful.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: not\_noTime  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because the time commitment was too difficult.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: not\_tooDifficult  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because it was too difficult.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: not\_notComfortable  
Meaning: Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed because she saw not comfortable with the idea of breastfeeding.  
Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.  
Values: 0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name:	not_other
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she didn't breastfeed for some other reason
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for not breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for not breastfeeding given 1 Reason for not breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	text_reasonsNotOther
Meaning:	String variable giving whatever the respondent's written-in reason for not breastfeeding.
Values:	String variable.
Variable name:	reasonWhy
Question:	"What were the <b>most important</b> reasons why the baby was breastfed?"
Note:	We allowed respondents to select multiple reasons.
Values:	1 Health benefits for the baby 2 Intelligence benefits for the baby 3 Important way to bond with the baby 4 Enjoyed the time with the baby 5 Health benefits for the mother 6 Convenience 7 Other (write in) 9 Multiple reasons given
Variable name:	why_healthBenefits
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she breastfed for the health of the baby.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given 1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	why_healthBenefits
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she breastfed for the health of the baby.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given 1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	why_intelligenceBenefits
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she breastfed for the intelligence of the baby.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given 1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	why_bonding
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she breastfed in order to bond with the baby.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: why\_enjoyedTime

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she breastfed because she enjoyed it.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: why\_convenience

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she breastfed out of convenience.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: why\_other

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she breastfed for some other reasons.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: text\_reasonsWhyOther

Meaning: String variable giving whatever the respondent's written-in reason for breastfeeding.

Values: String variable.

Variable name: reasonStop

Question: "What were the **most important** reasons why the baby stopped being breastfed?"

Note: We allowed respondents to select multiple reasons.

Values: 1 Baby is still being breastfed/offered breastmilk  
2 Baby was mostly eating solids  
3 Didn't think that further breastfeeding was much of a benefit for the baby  
4 The baby had trouble latching  
5 Breastfeeding was painful  
6 Time commitment required for breastfeeding was too difficult  
7 Had trouble finding a place to pump at work  
9 Was uncomfortable pumping at work  
10 Had trouble pumping  
11 Too difficult  
12 Was not comfortable with the idea of breastfeeding  
13 Other (write in)  
99 Multiple reasons given

Variable name:	stop_stillBreastfeeding
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she has not stopped and is still breastfeeding
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_eatingSolids
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she has stopped breastfeeding because the baby began eating solids.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_noFurtherBenefit
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she stopped breastfeeding because she saw no further benefit.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_troubleLatching
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she stopped because the baby had trouble latching.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_painful
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she stopped because it was too painful.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_noTime
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she stopped because she had too little time.
Note:	This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.
Values:	0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given 1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated
Variable name:	stop_noPlaceToPumpAtWk
Meaning:	Respondent indicated that she has stopped because she has no place at work to pump.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: stop\_uncomftPumpingAtWk

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she stopped because she was uncomfortable pumping at work.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: stop\_troublePumping

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she stopped because she had trouble pumping.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: stop\_tooDifficult2

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she has stopped because breastfeeding is too difficult.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: stop\_notComftWithIdea

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she stopped because she was not comfortable with the idea of breastfeeding.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: stop\_other

Meaning: Respondent indicated that she has stopped for some other reason.

Note: This variable is missing if and only if the respondent provided no reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: 0 Some other reason for stopping breastfeeding given  
1 Reason for stopping breastfeeding as indicated

Variable name: text\_reasonsStoppedOther

Meaning: String variable giving whatever the respondent's written-in reason for stopping breastfeeding.

Values: String variable.