

**THE SURVEY OF INCOME AND  
PROGRAM PARTICIPATION**

**THE SURVEY OF INCOME AND  
PROGRAM PARTICIPATION AS  
A SOURCE OF DATA ON CHILDREN  
AND FAMILIES: A COMPARISON OF  
ESTIMATES DERIVED FROM SIPP  
WITH ESTIMATES FROM OTHER  
SOURCES**

**No. 148**

**C. Winquist Nord and A. Rhoads  
Child Trends, Inc.**

**U. S. Department of Commerce BUREAU OF THE CENSUS**

The Survey of Income and Program Participation as a Source  
of Data on Children and Families: A Comparison of  
Estimates Derived from SIPP with Estimates from Other Sources

Introduction

The well-being of children is a topic of increasing concern to Americans (Eggebeen and Lichter, forthcoming; National Commission on Children, 1991; Danziger and Stern, 1990; Palmer et al., 1988). One reason for the burgeoning interest is the growing concentration of poverty among children. The Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP) is potentially a very useful source of information about children's economic well-being and about their families. Yet, only a few analysts have used SIPP to study children (e.g., McArthur et al., 1986; Watts, 1987; Bianchi and McArthur, 1991). Moreover, although the quality of overall poverty estimates derived from SIPP has been examined (Williams, 1987), an evaluation of child- and family-based estimates has not yet been performed.

This report presents estimates of the percent of related children under 18 in poverty by age and race, the percent of children under 6 who are poor or near poor by selected family and parental characteristics, and the percent of families receiving AFDC derived from the 1986 panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP). These estimates are compared with estimates derived from the March 1987 Current Population Survey (CPS), the 1986 National Integrated Quality Control System (NIQCS), and the 1988 Child Health Supplement of the National Health Interview Survey (CHS88). Possible explanations for observed differences in the estimates are discussed. A related paper presents a statistical profile of children in or near poverty and of children born to teenage mothers.

Prior to describing the results of the comparisons, however, a brief overview of the objectives of SIPP and its design are given along with a summary of earlier efforts to evaluate the quality of poverty and transfer benefit information from SIPP. Survey Objectives and Design

SIPP is an ambitious survey that, as its name implies, was designed to provide more accurate and detailed data on income and program participation of both persons and households in the United States and on the determinants of income and program participation. The data are collected to assist policymakers as they grapple with ways to reform welfare, improve entitlement programs, and otherwise monitor and influence the policies and programs designed to help the needy of this country.

The survey design for SIPP is complex, but very flexible. It calls for a new panel of respondents to be initiated every year. The first panel -- the 1984 panel -- was fielded at the end of 1983. Each panel is followed for approximately two-and-one-half years and respondents are interviewed every four months during that time period. Thus each panel is interviewed approximately 8 times or for 8 waves. In order to simplify the task of collecting the information, each panel is divided into four rotation groups. Data collection for each wave is spread out

across four months. Each month a different rotation group is interviewed. Respondents are asked to recall a variety of information about the four months preceding the interview. This four-month period is referred to as the reference period. Original plans called for a sample size of approximately 20,000 households. Budgetary constraints, however, forced panels after 1984 to be reduced to approximately 13,000 households per panel. Although the 1990 panel was increased to approximately 21,500 households, the 1991 panel was again reduced in size to approximately 14,000 households.

The first wave consists of a core questionnaire which gathers information about labor force participation, income, assets, and program participation in the previous four months, as well as other basic information. The remaining waves include both the core questionnaire and one or more topical modules that are asked periodically and contain more detailed questions about specific topics such as child support or education and training history.

SIPP's sample universe is the noninstitutionalized, resident population of the United States. Persons ineligible for the survey in addition to the institutionalized are U.S. citizens living abroad, crew members of merchant vessels, and Armed Forces personnel living in military barracks. Persons living in group quarters such as school dormitories or family-type living quarters on military bases, however, are included. Only persons 15 and older are interviewed, although some information is gathered about children under age 15.

Only persons included in the original (wave 1) sample and persons living in the same household as an original sample person are eligible for interviews in subsequent waves of SIPP. Every effort is made to follow original respondents who move to different locations. Because children under age 15 at the first interview and those born during the course of the interview are not respondents, they are not followed if they leave the household of an original respondent. Thus each month persons can enter or leave the SIPP population because of birth, death, entering or leaving the household of an original sample person, moving to military barracks or institutions, moving without leaving a forwarding address, or moving to a remote area with no telephone number.

The complexity of the design of SIPP and its reduced sample size have deterred many researchers from attempting to use the data, even though its use could potentially provide a better understanding of short-term spells of poverty, transfer income receipt, and other relatively volatile events in people's lives.

### Earlier Evaluation Efforts

Several reports have been written that evaluate the quality of estimates derived from SIPP. Most of these have relied on the 1984 or 1985 panels. As a result of these studies and other evaluation efforts of SIPP conducted by the Census Bureau, questionnaire design and processing procedures have been modified for subsequent panels in an effort to improve the quality of SIPP data. Thus the results of these earlier evaluation efforts may not be descriptive of the quality of

more recent panels.

John Coder and his colleagues performed an extensive review of the first longitudinal file constructed by the Bureau of the Census based on the first four waves of the 1984 panel (Coder et al, 1987). The longitudinal file contained information for a period of 12 months for each sample person. The time frame covered by this longitudinal file included months in 1983 and 1984. With regard to poverty, SIPP produced lower estimates of poverty among both blacks and whites compared with estimates from the CPS. Roberton Williams, using waves 2 through 5 of the 1984 SIPP panel to make estimates of poverty in the 1984 calendar year, also found that SIPP tended to understate poverty compared with the CPS (Williams, 1987).

Both Coder and Williams restricted their analysis files to persons with full-year information. Preliminary work by Williams indicates that persons with missing information in some months have higher than average monthly poverty rates. Thus their exclusion could account, in part, for the lower poverty estimates of SIPP compared with CPS.

#### Construction of Data Files and Variables Used in this Report

The 1986 panel of SIPP was used to construct data files containing information for the calendar year 1986. Thus, only data from the first four waves of the 1986 panel were used.

Table 1 depicts for each wave and rotation group the actual calendar months of interview and corresponding reference period.

As described earlier, people can move in and out of the sample being surveyed in any particular month. Thus the population surveyed from wave to wave changes. In order to include as stable a population as possible under these circumstances and to minimize the amount of missing data, particularly from questions asked only in Wave 2 in the detailed personal history module, for these analyses the sample was limited to persons who were survey participants during Wave 2, month 4 of the reference period<sup>1</sup>. Persons were selected for the sample used in this study if they met one of the following criteria at Wave 2, month 4:

CHILD	under the age of 18 and living in a household with a parent or guardian
PARENT	the "designated parent or guardian" of children under the age of 18 residing in the same household
SPOUSE	the spouse of a person meeting the parent or guardian criterion.
Two types	of data files were constructed for these analyses.

---

<sup>1</sup>Month 4 corresponds to May, June, July, or August of 1986, depending on the rotation group. See Table 1.

The first was child-based: one case per child with selected information from the parent and, if applicable, the spouse attached to the child's record. The second file was family-based: one case per parent (and spouse) with information on all relevant children attached. Even if a child turned 18 before the end of 1986, s/he was still included in the child file.

Similarly, children born after month 4 of Wave 2 were not included in the child file even though they were in the household during the 1986 calendar year. Because interviewing for month 4 of Wave 2 took place between May and August of 1986, we have defined the child population as of approximately the mid-point of the calendar year. Even though the child population was restricted in this manner, we did use the month-to-month family structure and income variables on the file to determine poverty as we describe below.

Several variables for measuring annual experience were created out of data collected on a monthly basis. These include poverty, receipt of AFDC or food stamps, annual income, and full-year (as opposed to current) employment status. In creating all of these variables, respondents' rotation groups were examined in order to obtain actual 1986 data from January through December. For poverty, AFDC and Food Stamp receipt, and income, annual variables were created for respondents missing four or fewer months of data out of the 12-month period. This resulted in a mere 0.2% missing data rate using either families or children as the analysis group. Persons missing four or fewer months of data were assigned the average of the amounts for all the months of valid data for the poverty and income variables. This type of adjustment was made to 3% of the families and 3% of children in the sample. Reciprocity variables were concerned only with the dichotomy of receiving the aid at least once during the 12-month period and never receiving the aid. Thus no adjustment was attempted; if a respondent did not receive the aid during any of the months for which data were available, s/he was assigned the non-reciprocity value for the variable.

Employment status across 1986 was treated differently. In determining part-year versus full-year employment, the weeks worked were summed for each month of valid data. If the total was greater than 0 but less than 50, the respondent was considered part-year. This procedure slightly overrepresented part-year employed and never employed people among cases with missing data. The CPS definition of full-time versus part-time workers is having worked full-time during a majority of the weeks worked during the year. To match that definition, the number of weeks worked full-time was compared to the total number of weeks worked in all months of available data, ignoring missing months. This decision should not have biased the results in any particular way.

## Results

### All Children Under 18

Annual Poverty: Although previous evaluation efforts had led us to expect that the SIPP estimates of related children under 18 in poverty would be lower than those of the CPS, we

obtained an estimate identical to that provided by the CPS -19.8% of related children under 18 in poverty (see Table 2). It is likely that our inclusion of persons with up to 4 months of missing income information accounts for the higher estimate of poverty using SIPP compared to earlier researchers. If this is correct, it highlights the inappropriateness of working with files that contain information only on persons interviewed throughout the year or, even worse, throughout the life of the panel.

Although our overall estimate of children in poverty is comparable with that derived from the CPS, a comparison of childhood poverty estimates by children's ages and race reveals some differences. Compared to the CPS, SIPP yields a slightly lower estimate of childhood poverty among white children, but a higher estimate of poverty among black children. The column in Table 2 labeled "SIPP/CPS" shows the extent to which the two surveys differ in their estimates. A 1.00 indicates that the two estimates are identical. A number less than one indicates that SIPP produces a lower estimate than the CPS. Conversely, a number greater than one indicates that SIPP produces a higher estimate than the CPS. Examining these ratios, it is readily apparent that among white children 14 to 17, the SIPP estimate of the proportion in poverty is lower than the CPS estimate (by about 3 percentage points or 12.8% versus 15.7%). Among black children aged 3 to 13, on the other hand, the SIPP estimate of the proportion in poverty is considerably higher than the CPS estimate (by about 10 percentage points).

The differences in the poverty estimates by race could occur either because of inaccurate estimates of the numerator or of the denominator in either SIPP or in the CPS. The population estimates derived from SIPP of the number of children under 18 for the total child population as well as by race are quite similar to those derived from the CPS. In keeping with the SIPP/CPS differences noted above, however, the estimates of the number of children in poverty differ by race with the SIPP estimate being lower compared to the CPS for whites and higher for blacks.

Table 3 notes potential sources of differences between the estimates derived from SIPP and those derived from the CPS. Because SIPP gathers income and family structure information every four months, the quality of the data should be better than data collected at a single point in time with a longer recall period as in the CPS. Moreover, our estimates of poverty based on SIPP use children's ages as of approximately mid-year 1986 and allow the composition of their families to change on a month-to-month basis. As indicated in Table 3, CPS estimates use children's ages and family structure as of March of the following year, 1987 in this case. To the extent that more income is recalled and reported, poverty estimates would be expected to be lower in the SIPP compared to the CPS. However, if family income fluctuates a lot on a month-to-month basis, the SIPP may identify more short-term spells of poverty than the CPS. Similarly, if family structure is volatile -- that is, if it changes often over relatively short periods, then the SIPP may identify more spells of poverty than the CPS that only uses family structure at a point in time. Robertson Williams (1987), using the 1984 SIPP panel, found that annual poverty rates were lower when family composition was allowed to vary compared to when family composition was fixed at a point in time. However, he was not looking at race/ethnic differences in poverty rates and, as noted above, he was only using information on people who were in the sample for the entire year.

It may be that at least part of the apparent overestimate of poverty among black children is actually not an overestimate at all, but rather is capturing true spells of poverty missed by the CPS. Because of budgetary constraints, we were not able to explore this possibility further within this project.

### Children Under 6

The well-being of very young children is of particular interest to many policy analysts. The fact that poverty rates among children under 6 are higher than poverty rates among older children is of great concern to many (National Center for Children in Poverty, 1990). Table 4 compares CPS and SIPP estimates of family structure, maternal education, maternal age at first birth, and AFDC receipt among all children under age 6, among poor children under age 6, and among near-poor children under 6, defined as children within 150% of the poverty line, but who are not poor.

With a few exceptions, the CPS and SIPP produce quite similar estimates with respect to family structure (see Table 4). For all children under 6, SIPP and CPS produce identical estimates of the proportion who are living with two parents -76%. For the smaller subpopulations, such as children living with single fathers, divorced or never married mothers, or other relatives the SIPP and CPS estimates do differ somewhat, but not dramatically in straight percentage point terms.

The SIPP family structure estimates continue, for the most part, to be quite similar to those in the CPS even when examining only poor children and near poor children. However, SIPP yields lower estimates of poor and near poor children living with single fathers and higher estimates of such children living with single, never-married mothers than does the CPS. The estimates for near poor children under 6 who are living with single fathers or with other relatives, however, appear suspiciously low compared to the CPS. It is likely that the smaller sample size of the SIPP in comparison with the CPS limits the extent to which specific subpopulations can be examined in detail.

SIPP yields higher estimates than the CPS of the proportion of children under 6 whose mothers began childbearing as teenagers (30% versus 24%). The CPS estimate for mother's age at first birth, however, is not based on the June Fertility supplement, but is calculated by subtracting the age of the mother's oldest child in the household from her current age. Thus, the CPS estimate almost certainly understates the proportion of teenage childbearers to the extent that oldest children are no longer in the household.

In summary, the estimates for children younger than six derived from SIPP are quite similar to those derived from the CPS, regardless of whether one examines the figures for all children under 6 or for the poor or near poor children. When there are discrepancies in the estimates, no clear pattern that might help to explain the differences is apparent. The smaller sample size of SIPP appears to make the estimates for rarer populations (e.g., near poor children under six living with single fathers) less reliable than those from the CPS.

## Families Receiving AFDC

Another population of interest to policymakers is the welfare population. The original intent of Aid to Families with Dependent Children (AFDC) was to help widows remain home to raise their children. However, since the program was initiated in 1935, the population receiving AFDC has changed dramatically. Widows represent only a small fraction of those who receive AFDC. Moreover, as more mothers have entered the labor force, the idea that taxpayers should pay for some mothers to stay home, while other mothers must juggle family and work responsibilities has been called into question. In 1988, Congress passed the Family Support Act which is intended to help welfare recipients become self-sufficient rather than receive aid over a long period of time. Researchers are very interested in the effects of the Family Support Act on the AFDC population. SIPP could be very useful for such research. To assess the usefulness of SIPP for such analyses, in Table 5 we compare estimates derived from SIPP with estimates derived from the National Integrated Quality Control System (NIQCS).

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, in conjunction with the states, maintains the NIQCS to help states identify errors in the determination of AFDC eligibility and amount of payment. The NIQCS consists of a sample of cases selected for review during the Federal fiscal year. The cases are representative of cases receiving AFDC, Food Stamps, or medicaid during the period. Although the NIQCS is limited in the amount and types of information that is collected, it does contain a random sample of approximately 67,000 recipient households and thus does provide reliable estimates of AFDC recipients and their basic demographic characteristics.

Although the time period covered is slightly different for the two data sets (October 1985 through September 1986 for the NIQCS compared with the calendar year 1986 for SIPP), this fact should not influence their estimates in any particular manner. Indeed, in general, the SIPP estimates are quite comparable to those from the NIQCS. The one area that is clearly dissimilar is the shelter arrangement of AFDC families. The explanation for these differences is most likely due to differences in the way that the types of shelter arrangements were defined. For example, to estimate whether the house was owned or being bought in SIPP, the responses by all persons in the household were examined and if one person responded affirmatively, the family was said to own or to be purchasing the house. Although the NIQCS reports families that own or are purchasing their homes, its estimate appears quite low. By combining the estimates for owns/buying and private (no subsidy), the overall estimate of private, unsubsidized housing is nearly equivalent with the SIPP and the NIQCS, 69.3% and 68.7%, respectively.

Although the NIQCS provides important basic information about AFDC recipients, it does have important gaps. For example, information on parent educational attainment is virtually useless because of extensive missing data. For this reason, we also made comparisons between SIPP estimates of AFDC families and estimates derived from the 1988 Child Health Supplement (CHS88) to the National Health Interview Survey (see Table 6). Again the time frame is different for the two surveys. The CHS88 data were collected in 1988, but the reference period for income



and employment was the previous year. As noted above, the SIPP estimates reported in this paper refer to the calendar year 1986. Even with the slightly different time frames, SIPP and CHS88 provide very similar estimates of the education level of the most educated parent. SIPP has more AFDC families with the most educated parent having some high school (33.4% versus 28.8%) compared to the CHS88.

Estimates of the labor force status of the parents in AFDC families provided by the SIPP and by the CHS88, however, differ substantially, with SIPP indicating greater labor force activity. Although the figures still differ when one examines the estimates for all families, the disparity is not nearly so large. It appears as if SIPP identifies more families as single parent families compared to the CHS88, particularly AFDC families. However, only weak support for this statement is gained by examining Table 7 which compares the family living arrangements of children as estimated using SIPP, the CPS, and the CHS88. Both SIPP and the CPS indicate that slightly over 23% of all children lived in single parent families. The CHS88, on the other hand, estimates that slightly less than 22% of all children lived in such a family.

With regard to the labor force status estimates, it is not clear which of the two surveys provides the more reliable data. SIPP was explicitly designed to collect program and participation data and so might be expected to obtain better estimates of the AFDC population. Moreover, since the respondents are interviewed every four months, their recollection of employment and income should also be better compared to the CHS88 where information is collected at one point in time. Thus we would expect that the SIPP data would be better. A comparison of the income estimates from the two surveys, however, are much more comparable than the employment information, especially at the low end. (see Table 6).

Limitation in Major Activity: Although SIPP is designed to obtain information about income and program participation, it also contains questions about disabilities. In particular, parents are asked whether any of their children living with them have a long lasting physical condition that limits their ability to walk, run, or play. The parents are also asked about long lasting mental or emotional problems that limit any of their children's ability to learn or to do regular schoolwork. Table 8 contrasts estimates derived from SIPP with those derived from the 1988 Child Health Supplement of the National Health Interview Survey (CHS88). The CHS88 was explicitly designed to obtain detailed health information about the nation's children. Not surprisingly, SIPP consistently underestimates the proportion of children under 18 who are limited in a major activity compared to the CHS88. The reports in SIPP appear to increase as family income increases, but regardless continue to underestimate limitations compared to the CHS88.

The large differences in the estimates derived from SIPP and the estimates derived from the CHS88 can be attributed primarily to the way in which the questions are asked in the two surveys. The CHS88 asks the respondents about a series of conditions that their child might have had. Thus parents are asked about repeated tonsillitis, frequent ear infections, diabetes asthma, pneumonia, deafness, and frequent or severe ear infections. About 30 conditions are specifically

named and the respondent is asked to recall if there are any others. After going through this list, the respondent has to say for each condition mentioned whether during the previous 12 months the condition limited or prevented the subject child from doing usual childhood activities, such as playing with other children or participating in games or sports. The mention of explicit conditions probably serves to stimulate the respondent's memory. Moreover, a chronic condition, such as repeated ear infections, that kept the child in bed or at home for a few days every few months would most likely receive a positive response on the limitation section of the question. In other words, the CHS88 questions probably result in the inclusion of both relatively minor, as well as more serious chronic limitations, whereas the SIPP items explicitly ask for long-term limitations that probably elicit only more serious health conditions from the respondents.

## Conclusion

Although earlier evaluations of SIPP estimates found that SIPP underestimates poverty compared to the CPS, we did not find that to be the case. We, however, included persons with up to four months of missing information in our analyses, whereas earlier efforts had only included cases with complete information for the period being examined. Overall, the estimates of childhood poverty derived from SIPP appear excellent, although we did note some differences in estimates by race. SIPP identifies more black children and fewer white children in poverty than does the CPS.

Several specific subpopulations of children and families were examined, including poor children under 6, near poor children under 6, and families receiving AFDC. Even within these smaller populations, estimates derived from SIPP were in a majority of instances comparable to estimates derived from the CPS and other sources. As the population became more narrowly defined, however, the estimates from SIPP did begin to deviate from the other sources. SIPP's smaller sample size relative to the CPS may hinder its usefulness in studying specific groups that occur relatively rarely in the population.

## REFERENCES

McArthur, E., Short, K., & Bianchi, S. (1986, October). Following children in the Survey of Income and Program Participation. (Survey of Income and Program Participation working paper series, no. 8612). Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Bianchi, S., & McArthur, E. (1991). Family disruption and economic hardship: The short-run picture for children. Current Population Reports. (Series P-70, No. 23). Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Coder, J. F., Burkhead, D., Feldman-Harkins, A., & McNeil, J. (1987, March). Preliminary data from the SIPP 1983-84 longitudinal research file. (Survey of Income and Program Participation working paper series, no. 8702). Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Danziger, S., & Stern, J. (1990). The causes and consequences of child Poverty in the United States. Prepared for UNICEF, International Child Development Center, Project on Child Poverty and Deprivation in Industrialized Countries.

Eggebeen, D. J., & Lichter, D. T. (1991). Race, family structure, and changing poverty among American children. American Sociological Review, 56 (December).

National Commission on Children. (1991). Beyond rhetoric: A new American agenda for children and families, Final report of the National Commission on Children. Washington, DC: GPO.

Palmer, J. L., Smeeding, T., & Torrey, B. B. (Eds.). (1988). The vulnerable. Washington, DC: The Urban Institute Press.

Watts, H. (1987). Survey of Income and Program Participation: Using the SIPP to analyze family composition and income dynamics. Paper presented at the meeting of the American Statistical Association.

Williams, R. (1987, December). Measuring poverty with the SIPP and the CPS. (Survey of Income and Program Participation working paper series, no. 8723). Washington, DC: Bureau of the Census.

Table 1: Survey of Income and Program Participation (SIPP), 1986 Panel

Wave	Rotation Group	1986 Calendar Year											
		Jan	Feb	Mar	Apr	May	Jun	Jul	Aug	Sep	Oct	Nov	Dec
1	2	R4	I										
	3	R3	R4	I									
	4	R2	R3	R4	I								
	1	R1	R2	R3	R4	I							
2	2	R1	R2	R3	R4	I							
	3		R1	R2	R3	R4	I						
	4			R1	R2	R3	R4	I					
	1				R1	R2	R3	R4	I				
3	2					R1	R2	R3	R4	I			
	3						R1	R2	R3	R4	I		
									R1	R2	R3	R4	I
4	1								R1	R2	R3	R4	

Legend: R# - Reference Month 1, 2, 3, or 4  
 I - Interview Month

Table 2: Related Children Under 18: A Comparison of Annual Poverty Estimates Devised from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the March 1987 Current Population Survey.

RELATED CHILDREN UNDER 18	SIPP	CPS <sup>1</sup>	SIPP/CPS	
<b>Under 150% of Poverty Level</b>	<b>30.9%</b>	<b>30.4%</b>	<b>1.02</b>	
<b>In Poverty - - All Children</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>19.8%</b>	<b>1.00</b>	
Under 3 years	22.3%	21.1%	1.06	
3 to 5 years	23.6%	22.0%	1.07	
6 to 13 years	21.1%	20.5%	1.03	
14 to 17 years	12.8%	15.7%	0.82	
<b>In Poverty - - White Children</b>				
Under 3 years	16.7%	16.8%	0.99	
3 to 5 years	17.7%	17.6%	1.01	
6 to 13 years	14.4%	15.9%	0.91	
14 to 17 years	7.8%	11.4%	0.68	
<b>In Poverty - - Black Children</b>				
Under 3 years	48.5%	45.6%	1.06	
3 to 5 years	53.7%	44.6%	1.20	
6 to 13 years	54.1%	43.1%	1.26	
14 to 17 years	39.2%	38.1%	1.03	
<b>POPULATION ESTIMATES ('000s)</b>				
Total in Poverty	12,449	12,257	1.02	
Whites	7,065	7,714	0.92	
Blacks	4,831	4,039	1.20	
Total Under 186	2,871	62,009	1.01	
Whites		51,044	50,356	1.01
Black	9,736	9,467	1.03	
<b>FAMILIES WITH RELATED CHILDREN UNDER 18</b>				
In Poverty	16.8%	16.3%	1.03	

<sup>1</sup>March 1987 CPS data as reported in U.S. Bureau of the Census, 1988, "Poverty in the United States: 1986." Current Population Reports, P-60, No. 160, Tables 7 and 14. Washington, DC: GPO.

Table 3: Potential Sources of Differences Between Estimates of Annual Poverty Derived from SIPP and CPS.

SIPP	CPS
Poverty estimates based on income, age, and family structure at each month of the calendar year.	Poverty estimates based on income in prior calendar year, but age and family structure are measured at the time of the March survey of the following year. For example, 1986 poverty estimates for children under 18 are based on income for 1986, but family structure and age in March of 1987.
Income is measured as money income before taxes. It includes lump-sum payments or one-time payments, but excludes educational assistance. Value of non-cash benefits such as employer provided health insurance, food stamps, and Medicaid are excluded.	Income is measured as money income before taxes. However, lump-sum payments are excluded, but educational assistance is included. Value of non-cash benefits is excluded.
Four-month recall period on income and receipt of transfer benefits.	One year recall period on income and receipt of transfer benefits.
Not possible to have negative amounts for self-employment income.	Possible to have negative amounts for self-employment income.
We allowed up to 4 reference months to be missing when we calculated income and poverty. For persons with up to four months missing, we used the average of the information on income and poverty from all other available months to estimate the information for the missing months. About 3% of children and 3% of families were missing up to 4 months of information.	Not a longitudinal survey, therefore issues of attrition do not arise.
We included foster children (approximately 3% of children were foster children).	Foster children are excluded from published tabulations on related children.
We included in the child population persons under 18 who were parents <u>if</u> they lived with their parents.	Excludes from child population persons under 18 with own children.
For child file, included only cases with a designated parent or guardian. For family file, person had to be a designated parent or guardian or the spouse of a designated parent or guardian to be included in the file.	Used published data on related children under 18 or families with related children under 18.
Age was measured as of Wave 2, month four (that is, the month prior to the Wave 2 interview). Thus age was measured between May and August, depending on the rotation group.	Age measured as of March 1987.

Table 4: Familial Characteristics of Related Children Under 6: A Comparison of Estimates Derived from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation with Estimates Derived from the March 1987 Current Population Survey.

Related Children Under Age 6	All Children Under 6			Poor Children Under 6			Near Poor Children < 6		
	SIPP	CPS	SIPP/CPS	SIPP	CPS	SIPP/CPS	SIPP	CPS	SIPP/CPS
<b>Family Structure</b>									
Two Parents	76.0%	76%	1.00	38.6%	42%	.92	79.6%	76%	1.05
Single Mother	20.9%	20%	1.05	58.1%	53%	1.10	19.4%	19%	1.02
-Divorced	4.4	5	.88	10.6	10	1.06	4.1	5	.82
-Never Married	10.6	9	1.18	31.2	27	1.16	10.3	8	1.29
-Separated	5.0	5	1.00	14.3	13	1.10	2.7	4	.68
-Widowed	0.1	1	.10	0.0	1	--	0.7	1	.70
Single Father	1.4%	2%	.70	1.8%	3%	.60	0.2	2%	.10
Other Relatives	1.4%	1%	1.40	2.1%	2%	1.05	0.3%	2%	.15
Non-Relatives	0.8%	<1%	.80	0.4%	1%	.40	13%	1%	1.30
<b>Mother's Education</b>									
No High School	5.0%	6%	.83	10.9%	17%	.64	9.4%	9%	1.04
Some High School	14.3%	14%	1.02	35.3%	30%	1.18	18.7%	19%	.98
High School Grad.	46.7%	45%	1.04	45.0%	41%	1.10	52.7%	50%	1.05
Some College	18.2%	18%	1.01	7.2%	10%	.72	15.0%	16%	.94
College Graduate	15.8%	17%	.93	1.6%	2%	.80	4.2%	6%	.70
<b>Mother's Age at First Birth</b>									
Under Age 20	29.9%	24%	1.25	56.7%	47%	1.21	42.3%	36%	1.18
20 or Older	70.1%	77%	.91	43.3%	54%	.80	57.7%	64%	.90
<b>AFDC Receipt</b>									
Yes	13.9%	14%	.99	48.5%	52%	.93	8.5%	13%	.65

Note: CPS numbers are rounded so that differences in estimates are only approximate.

Source: Unpublished tabulations prepared by Child Trends, Inc., using the March 1987 Current Population Survey and the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation.



Table 5: Characteristics of Families Receiving AFDC: A Comparison of Estimates Derived from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the National Integrated Quality Control System's Data for Fiscal Year 1986.

	SIPP	QCS <sup>1</sup>	SIPP/QCS
AFDC Families Receiving Food Stamps	88.3%	80.7	1.09
AFDC Families by Persons in Household			
One	0.0%	0.6%	.0
Two	16.9	22.9	.74
Three	25.7	27.8	.92
Four	21.9	21.6	1.01
Five	14.8	12.8	1.16
Six	7.9	6.9	1.14
Seven or More	12.8	7.4	1.73
AFDC Families by Shelter Arrangement			
Owns/buying	21.4%	4.9%	4.37
Private (no subsidy)	47.9	63.8	.75
Public Housing	16.5	9.6	1.72
Rents (free)	5.0	5.3	.94
Rents (subsidy)	9.2	10.7	.86
Shares group quarters	-	1.9	-
Unknown	-	3.9	-
AFDC Family by Race/Ethnicity of Natural/Adoptive Parent			
White	46.1%	39.7	1.16
Black	35.1	40.7	.86
Hispanic	15.8	14.4	1.10
Other	3.1	5.0	.62
Age Distribution of Children Receiving AFDC			
Total Number	6,770,297	7,162,036	.95
Average Age	7.5 yrs	7.9 yrs	.95
Under 3	19.9%	21.9%	.91
3-5	19.8	21.1	.94
6-8	20.8	7.8	1.17
9-11	15.8	14.6	1.08
12-14	11.2	13.0	.86
15-17	11.	10.5	1.13
18	0.6	0.8	.75
AFDC Families by Age of Youngest Child			
0-2	38.6%	38.1%	1.01
3-5	22.8	22.5	1.01
6-11	25.6	24.1	1.06
12-15	9.2	10.6	.87
16-18	3.7	3.8	.97
unknown	-	.8	-

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Family Support Administration, undated.

\*Characteristics and Financial Circumstances of AFDC Recipients, 1986.\*

Table 6: Selected Characteristics of All Families and AFDC Families: A Comparison of Estimates Derived from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation and the 1988 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey.

	All Families			AFDC Families		
	SIPP	CHS	SIPP/ CHS	SIPP	CHS	SIPP/ CHS
<b>Education of Most Educated Parent</b>						
Grade school only	4.4%	4.4%	1.00	11.1%	11.9%	.93
Some high school	10.7%	92%	L16	33.4%	28.8%	1.16
High school graduate	38.9%	37.6%	1.03	41.0%	43.4%	.94
Some college	22.3%	23.3%	.96	12.5%	13.6%	.92
College graduate	10.5%	13.3%	.79	1.5%	1.7%	.88
Graduate school	13.2%	12.2%	1.08	0.5%	0.7%	.71
<b>Parent Labor Force Status</b>						
<b>Two-parent Family</b>						
Father employed, mother not in labor force	22.8%	25.8%	.88	2.8%	12.4%	.23
Father unemployed, mother not in labor force	0.9%	0.9%	1.00	1.2%	2.8%	.43
Both currently employed	40.0%	45.1%	.89	2.6%	8.4%	.31
Both in labor force, one or both unemployed	3.9%	4.0%	.98	2.9%	3.7%	.78
Mother in labor force, father not in labor force	2.0%	2.3%	.87	0.8%	3.2%	.25
Neither in labor force	2.0%	2.6%	.77	2.6%	10.8%	.24
<b>Single-parent family</b>						
Not in labor force	9.3%	6.9%	1.35	55.7%	40.5%	1.38
Currently employed	16.8%	11.1%	1.51	18.0%	11.4%	1.58
Currently unemployed	2.3%	1.3%	1.77	13.3%	6.8%	1.96
<b>Family Income</b>						
Less than \$5,000	5.5%	5.5%	1.00	31.4%	30.1%	1.04
\$5,000-\$9,999	9.9%	8.5%	1.16	39.8%	37.7%	1.06
\$10,000-\$14,999	8.9%	8.4%	1.06	9.8%	14.9%	.66
\$15,000-\$19,999	10.5%	10.9%	.96	5.1%	7.7%	.66
\$20,000-\$34,999	31.7%	30.2%	1.05	10.1%	6.6%	1.53
\$35,000 and over	33.4	36.5%	.92	3.8%	3.1%	1.23

Source: Unpublished tabulations produced at Child Trends, Inc., using the 1988 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey and the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation.

Table 7: Family Living Arrangements of Children Under 18: A Comparison of Estimates from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation, the March 1987 Current Population Surveys, and the 1988 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview.

FAMILY TYPE	SIPP	3/87 CPS <sup>1</sup>	CHS88 <sup>1</sup>
Two Parents	73.6%	74.2%	73.1%
Single Parent	23.2%	23.6%	21.9%
Mother	21.2%	21.1%	20.4%
Father	2.0%	2.5%	1.5%
Other Arrangement	3.4%	2.2%	5.0

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Bureau of the Census. 1987. "Marital Status and Living Arrangements: March 1986." Current Population Reports, Series P-20, No. 418, Table E. (Note that children living with non-relatives only were excluded.)

<sup>2</sup>Dawson, Deborah A. 1991. "Family Structure and Children's Health and Well-Being: Data from the 1988 National Health Interview Survey on Child Health." Journal of Marriage and the Family, 53 (3), 573-584, Table 1.

Table 8: Children Under 18 Who Are Limited in a Major Activity: A Comparison of Estimates from the 1986 Panel of the Survey of Income and Program Participation with Estimates from the 1988 Child Health Supplement to the National Health Interview Survey.

Percent of children under 18 limited in school, work, or play because of a chronic condition.

	SIPP	CHS88 <sup>1</sup>	SIPP/CHS88
Total	2.1%	3.9%	.54
Males	2.5%	4.6%	.54
Females	1.7%	3.2%	.53
Whites	2.0%	4.0%	.50
Blacks	3.1%	4.2%	.74
Family income:			
under \$10,000	2.8%	6.9%	.41
\$10,000-\$19,999	2.1%	4.9%	.43
\$20,000-\$34,999	2.1%	3.6%	.58
\$35,000 and over	1.7%	2.7%	.63

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 1989. "Current Estimates from the National Health Interview Survey, 1988." Vital and Health Statistics, Series 10, No. 173, Table 67.