
National Health
and Nutrition
Examination Survey

MEC
INTERVIEWERS
PROCEDURES
MANUAL

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(Revised January 2001)

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

AOM	Assistant Office Manager
BIA	Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis
CBC	Complete Blood Counts
LED	Lower Extremity Disease
CAPI	Computer-Assisted Personal Interviewing
CIDI	Composite International Diagnostic Interview
DEXA	Dual Energy X-ray Absorptiometry
DHHS	Department of Health and Human Services
DISC	Diagnostic Interview Schedule for Children
DM	Data Manager
DU	Dwelling Unit
OM	Office Manager
FM	Field Manager
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
HHANES	Hispanic Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
ISIS	Integrated Survey Information System
MEC	Mobile Examination Center
NCHS	National Center for Health Statistics
NHANES	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey
NHANES I	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey I
NHANES II	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey II
NHANES III	National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey III
NHES I	National Health Examination Survey I
NHES II	National Health Examination Survey II
NHES III	National Health Examination Survey III
SP	Sample Person
STD	Sexually Transmitted Disease

5. CONDUCTING THE MEC INTERVIEW

The MEC interview component consists of an interview and associated tasks that are performed before the start and at the conclusion of the actual interview. This chapter details the sequence of tasks that comprise the interview component.

5.1 Component Tasks

In your role as a MEC interviewer, you will be responsible for performing the following tasks:

1. Obtaining minor assent to participate in the study;
2. Obtaining minor assent for specimen storage and future research;
3. Logging in SPs;
4. Conducting the interview;
5. Distributing the Mental Health Parent Interview reminder notice;
6. Completing critical data items; and
7. Ending the interview.

You will conduct Tasks 3, 4, and 7 with each SP 8 years of age or older. You will distribute the reminder notice (Task 5) to SPs 8 to 15 years of age. Tasks 1 and 2 depend upon the age of the SP and whether or not the information was collected successfully by one of the NHANES field interviewers. Task 6 is completed for all SPs. Each of these tasks is described in more detail in the sections that follow.

5.2 Obtaining Minor Assent to Participate

Like all research studies, NHANES has established procedures for informing subjects of what participation in the study involves, including procedures for documenting that informed consent has been obtained. In NHANES, the field interviewers have primary responsibility for ensuring that informed consent to participate in the examination portion of the study is obtained prior to the SP's arrival at the

MEC. The SP's parent or guardian must give consent for minors aged 7-17 years AND the SP must also give his or her written assent to participate.

Because all SP's must sign the form in the **presence of an interviewer**, a small number of minors may arrive at the MEC without having completed the required assent form. If the child is not at home when the field interviewer obtains parental consent, the interviewers cannot leave the form for the child to sign and bring to the MEC. In this event, it is your responsibility as the MEC interviewer to obtain assent in the MEC before any examination procedures are performed. The MEC coordinator will determine whether minor assent is required for an SP at the time the SP arrives at the MEC and will inform you of the need to obtain assent. After greeting the SP and escorting him or her to the MEC interview room, proceed with obtaining assent as described in this section.

There are **two** separate SP Consent/Assent Brochures:

- A MEC Consent/Assent/Parental Permission Brochure for SPs 12 years or older and parents of SPs under 18; and
- A Child MEC Assent Brochure for SPs 7-11 years old.

The brochure consists of several pages of informational text and a Consent/Assent Form which is the last page of the brochure. The sequence of pages within the brochure and the placement of the consent/assent form as the last page ensures that the SP and/or the parent of the SP has read the text of the brochure before s/he signs the Consent/Assent form. The paragraphs that follow provide a specific explanation of each brochure and form.

The text of this brochure addresses 3 general topics:

- Questions and answers directed towards a general explanation of the structure and goals of the survey;
- Questions and answers directed towards the examination process, how they will be used, and the voluntary nature of the study; and
- An explanation of the health examination including the specific examinations SPs in each age group will receive and which exam results will be reported to the SP.

The brochure contains pictures of a diverse group of people in various interview and examination situations.

The **Consent/Assent and Parental Permission for the Examination at the Mobile Examination Center** is the back page of this brochure and is printed on 3-part paper. An example of the text of this appears on page 5-12.

The Form has several areas **for signatures**. Use the following guidelines to complete the assent and signature process **for SPs 12-17 years old**.

- Ask the SP to read the brochure. Introduce each section briefly and then wait while the SP reads the text. For example, introduce the first section of the brochure with a statement such as “This first page tells you about the purpose of the study.” If you have any doubt about the SP’s ability to read or understand the text, read the brochure to the SP.
- **Print** the name of the SP on the line provided.
- Have the **SP** read the statement, **sign** and date the form in the area labeled “**For the Survey Participant who is 12 Years Old or Older.**”
- If the SP does **not** wish to receive the results of the exam, s/he must check the box next to the statement provided.
- Sign your name on the line entitled “Signature of staff member” and date the form.
- “Witness (if required)” refers to any witness used during the consent process. For example, if a respondent cannot read, read the whole brochure to him/her in the presence of a witness. If a respondent cannot read or write, have a witness testify that the respondent has been read the form information and consents to participate in the examination. In both cases, print the full name of the witness on the appropriate line and date the form.
- Record the SPs 6-digit SP ID number.
- Return the completed form to the MEC coordinator.

Exhibit 5-1. SP Consent/Assent/Parental Brochure

**National Health
and Nutrition
Examination Survey**

From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Health Statistics

Examination Consent Brochure



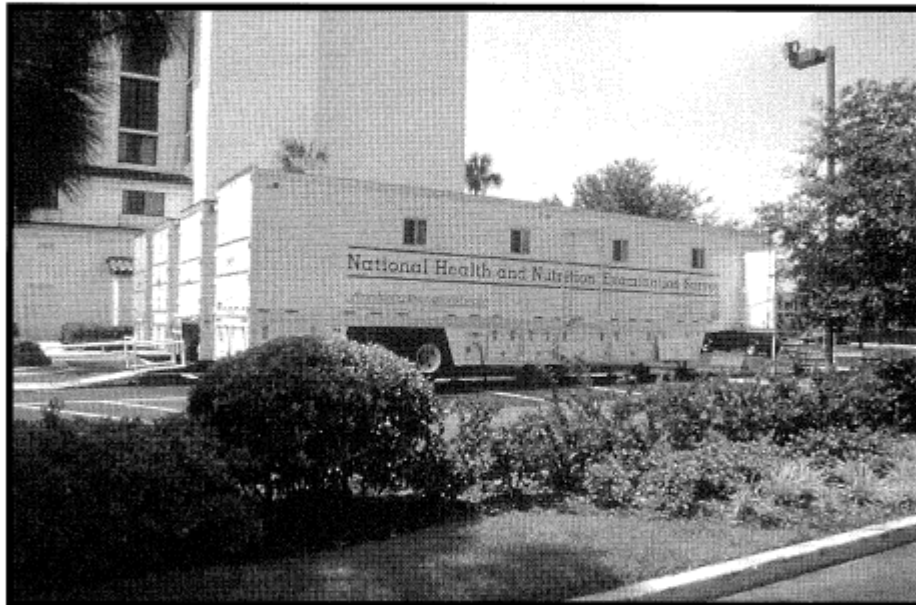
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics



What is the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)?

NHANES is a survey conducted by the National Center for Health Statistics (NCHS). NCHS is a part of the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.

We select a sample of people in towns and cities across the country to be part of the survey. Each year of the survey, we will examine about 5,000 people in 15 different sites. NHANES programs began in the early 1960s. The current survey began in 1999 and will now be an ongoing program. More than 130,000 persons have been part of past NHANES programs.



We have designed the study to learn about the health and diet of people in the United States.

Our survey is unique. It combines a home interview with health tests, which we do in mobile units. These special exam centers travel the country with a highly trained medical team. Our team conducts an exam that looks at special health topics. They use the most up-to-date methods and equipment for medical and dental exams, and other lab tests.

We will use the data gathered in this survey to assess the number of people with certain health problems — for example, diabetes and high blood pressure. We will look at diet and other habits that affect health, such as smoking and exercise. NHANES data will describe the health and nutrition of people of all ages. It will also help design health programs and services, and expand our knowledge about the health of people in the United States.

2

Why were you selected?

We picked you and your household in a carefully designed sample of people living in the United States. We cannot choose someone in your place because no one has the same health profile as you. Having you as part of our survey will help make our information complete. We will add the data from your interview and exam to that from all others who join in this study. That data will give us a big picture of our nation's health.

You may choose to take part in the survey and you may permit your child to join in. That is your choice. No penalties or loss of benefits will come from refusing to take part. You may refuse any part of the exam and are free to drop out anytime. Also, during the interviews you may choose not to answer any question.

What do you gain by taking part in the survey?

- Free health test results, perhaps some of major value to you
- The chance to help learn more about the health of the nation
- A cash payment to thank you for your time and effort

Are the data we collect confidential?

We respect your privacy. Public laws keep all information you give confidential.

We will hold all data we collect in the strictest confidence. We gather and protect all data in keeping with the requirements of Federal Laws: the Public Health Service Act (42 USC 242k) authorizes collection and Section 308(d) of that law (42 USC 242m) and the Privacy Act of 1974 (5 USC 552A) prohibit us from giving out information that identifies you or your family without your consent. This means that we cannot give out any fact about you, even if a court of law asks for it. However, if we find signs of child abuse during an exam, we will report it to the local department of social

services or appropriate law enforcement agency. We will keep all survey data safe and secure. When we allow researchers to use survey data, we protect your privacy. We assign code numbers in place of names or other facts that could identify you.



What about the exam?

Our interviewer will ask you to make an appointment for the exam at the mobile exam center. Our medical team will collect health data by examining you, doing lab testing, and asking questions about your health. No internal exam is included. No drug testing will be done. We may ask you to prepare for the exam by fasting for a short time. The exam may take from 2-1/2 to 4 hours for those 12 and older and 1-3 hours for younger children. The time depends on the age of the person examined, since some procedures are done only for certain ages. (For a full list of procedures, see page 5.)

Reports of Exam Findings

The survey exam does not replace regular health care. However, you will get some exam results at the exam site. If the exam reveals urgent health problems, we will notify you at once and refer you for treatment. If some urgent problem is found through your lab tests, right away we will send that information in a letter to your home address. If you wish, we



will mail the routine findings report to you about 12-16 weeks after the exam. In general, we give results only to the person examined or to the parents/guardians of children. Some results, such as sexually transmitted disease (STD) tests, are given in special ways explained below. We will not give you results from some tests because they will be used only for research. NHANES does not cover the cost of any health care you may decide to seek after the exam.

Safety of Tests

We chose the tests and measurements because they are safe. As in any other exam like this, some procedures may give slight discomfort. Examples are collecting a blood sample or doing the dental exam. For the blood sample, a person will have a small amount of blood drawn from a vein in his/her arm with a needle. We will not ask you to have any test or procedure that is wrong for you because of a health problem or condition.

We will give bone density tests that involve low-dosage x-rays to persons 8 years old and older. Radiation exposure during this test is equal to a cross-country airline flight or a few days of natural background radiation. But because the bone density scan involves x-rays, no one who is pregnant should get this exam. We will obtain information about periods from girls and women, and those who have started their periods will have a urine pregnancy test. Those with a positive test

will not have the bone density scan. Also, pregnant women and girls will not have fitness testing if they are in their second or third trimester. We report positive test results only to the person tested if she is 14 years old or older. If a girl is under 14 and has a positive pregnancy test, we will inform both her and her parent/guardian.

Private Health Interview

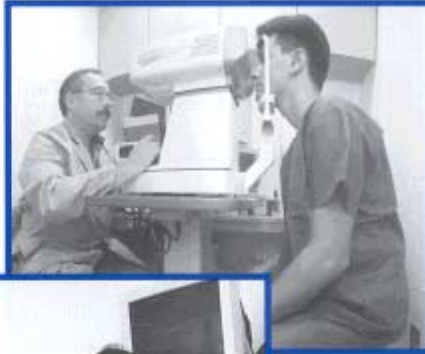
At the exam center, all persons who are 12-59 years old will be asked some personal questions in complete privacy. You will be alone in a room. The questions will be on computer screen. You respond by touching an answer on the screen. Your answers are completely confidential. We ask these questions because some behaviors relate to people's health. Persons are asked about sexual experience and the use of illegal drugs.



Also, our staff will ask persons who are 8-39 years old some questions about their feelings and behavior. If you are 15 or younger, a staff member will call your home after your exam to ask your mother (or other caretaker) these same questions about you.

4

If you are the parent/guardian of a child age 8-15 who is seen in NHANES, you will receive a phone call within a few weeks after the exam. Our staff will ask you questions about your child's feelings and how he or she is behaving at home and school. The interview will take about 1/2 hour. Your permission for your child's exam also gives consent for this phone call.



Tests for Reproductive Health and Sexually Transmitted Disease (STD)

Females aged 14-49 years will be asked to do private, self-administered, vaginal swabs. These swabs will be tested for bacterial vaginosis and *Trichomonax*. In addition, all persons 14-49 years will be tested for STDs. Depending on age, tests will be for some or all of these diseases: chlamydia, gonorrhea, herpes, syphilis, and HIV. We will not put these results in writing, but you can get reproductive health and STD test results a few weeks after the exam. Before leaving the exam center, you will receive a toll-free number, a password, and the dates to call for your results. Only you will get your test results by calling



in and telling us your password. Parents will not be informed of their child's STD test results. If your test results show that you have a current health problem, we will talk with you about the results and tell you how to seek treatment. We will keep all STD/HIV test results completely private, just like all other test results. If you do not want to be tested, you can tell a staff member.

The NHANES Exam

Health Measurements

- * Doctor's exam - all ages
- * Blood pressure - ages 8 years and older
- * Body fat - ages 8 years and older
- * Bone density - ages 8 years and older
- * Oral health exam by a dentist - ages 2 years and older
- * Vision test - ages 12 years and older
- * Hearing test - ages 20-69 years
- * Fitness test - ages 12-49 years
- Muscle strength - ages 50 years and older
- * Height, weight, and other body measures - all ages
- ** Hair sample for mercury test - ages 1-5 years and females ages 16-49 years
- Balance - ages 40 years and older
- * Leg circulation and sensation - ages 40 years and older
- ** Volatile organic compounds (VOCs) exposure - selected persons ages 20-59 years

Lab Tests on Urine: (6 years and older)

- Bone status tests - ages 8 and older
- Kidney function tests - ages 6 and older
- *** Sexually transmitted disease (STD)
 - Chlamydia and gonorrhea - ages 14-39
 - Human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) - ages 18-49 (only if no blood is drawn)
- Exposure to pesticides - selected persons ages 6-59
- ** Pregnancy test - females 12-59 and girls 8-11 who have periods
- ** - ages 13 and under
- *** - ages 14 and over

Lab Tests on Blood: (1 year and older)

- * Anemia - all ages
- * Cholesterol - ages 3 and older
- * Glucose measures - ages 12 and older
- Markers of immunization status - for ages 6-49
- ** Infectious diseases - ages 3 and older (Persons who test positive for hepatitis C will be asked to participate in a brief telephone interview six months after the exam. Parents will respond for children.)
- * Kidney function tests - ages 6 and older

- * Lead - all ages
- ** Cadmium - all ages
- ** Mercury - ages 1-5 and females ages 16-49
- * Liver function tests - ages 12 and older
- Nutrition status - all ages
- * Hormone tests - ages 12 and older
- * Prostate Specific Antigen (PSA) - males ages 40 and older
- *** Sexually transmitted disease (STD)
 - Herpes type 2 - ages 14-49
 - Syphilis and human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) - ages 18-49
- VOCs - selected persons ages 20-59
- Exposure to environmental chemicals - selected persons ages 12-19

Other Lab Tests

- *** Vaginal swabs (self-administered) - females ages 14-49
 - Bacterial Vaginosis and *Trichomonas*
 - Nasal swab - ages 1 year and older
 - Test for an antibiotic-resistant germ

Private Health Interviews

- Health status - all ages (parent answers for ages 11 and younger)
- ** Mental health - ages 8-39 (If the child examined is 8-15, our interviewer will ask a parent or guardian these same questions in a phone interview within a month after the exam.)
- Questions about drug and alcohol use - ages 12 and older (no drug testing will be done)
- Nutrition - all ages (parent answers for ages 5 and younger)
- Physical activity - ages 12-15
- Reproductive health - females ages 12 and older
- Questions about sexual experience - ages 14-59
- Tobacco use - ages 12 and older

* Results reported to you or to your child and you
 ** Results reported only if positive (or abnormal)
 *** Results only reported to person tested

6

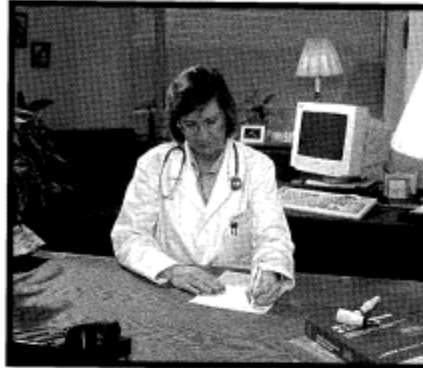
How are NHANES data used?

Many of the National Institutes of Health help us in this survey. The U.S. Department of Agriculture is our partner in planning how to get data on the foods you eat. We share with them the task of looking at people's diets in the United States. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency is another of our many partners. Your survey data helps study harmful effects of being exposed to environmental hazards.

What you tell us, your exam findings, and samples you give are a rich resource for health science. Many Federal agencies, universities, and other public and private groups use NHANES data. They use it to help find new cures and treatments for diseases and disabilities. The aim is to enhance the health of all people. Results of this survey may be reported in journals, at major meetings, or through other news media. None of these reports will ever name or use data that can point to any person who took part in the survey.

Combining NHANES results with other facts about you can be useful. An example of this is using Social Security numbers to link survey data with vital statistics and other health records. Also, we may need to contact you in the future. To do this we would ask public or private agencies, such as the Post Office, to provide changes in your address.

In the past, we have had the chance to call or revisit people who took part in this survey. We may contact you in the future to ask you to be part of other research projects.



More questions?

Our survey representative can discuss other questions or concerns or give you other printed matter that can help. She or he can give you a phone number in your area that you can call for more facts about the survey. Also, you can make a free call to Dr. Kathryn Porter at the U.S. Public Health Service office to discuss any aspect of the survey. She can be reached at 1-800-452-6115, Monday-Friday, 9 AM - 6 PM EST. You may also contact her regarding any survey-related injury. You can also get answers to your questions by mail (Room 900, 6525 Belcrest Rd., Hyattsville, MD 20782). If you have questions about your rights as a participant, call the Institutional Review Board Chair at 1-800-223-8118.

**Exam Findings Are a Rich
Source for Health Science**

Mobile Examination Center (MEC) Diagram

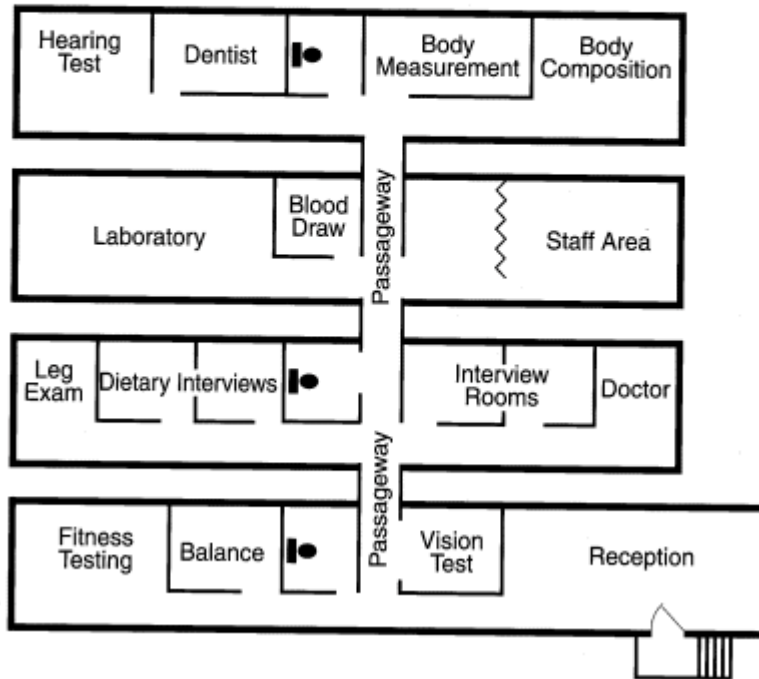


Exhibit 5-1. SP Consent/Assent/Parental Brochure (continued)

#3

FORM APPROVED: OMB # 0920-0237

NATIONAL HEALTH AND NUTRITION EXAMINATION SURVEY
CONSENT/ASSENT AND PARENTAL PERMISSION FOR EXAMINATION AT THE MOBILE EXAMINATION CENTER

Print name of participant _____
First Middle Last

The attached brochure gives the details about National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES). After reading the information provided, please complete the form below.

For the Parent or Guardian of the Survey Participant who is Under 18 Years Old (unless the participant is an emancipated minor):

I have read the information in the attached NHANES brochure, which explains the nature and purpose of the survey. I freely choose to let my child take part in the survey.

Signature of parent/guardian of participant Date

If you **do not want a written report** of your child's exam results, check here .

For the Survey Participant who is 12 Years Old or Older:

I have read the information in the attached NHANES brochure, which explains the nature and purpose of the survey. I freely choose to take part in the survey.

Signature of participant Date

If you **do not want a written report** of your exam results, check here .

Signature of staff member Date Witness (if required) Date

SP ID

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 6.6 hours per response for total participation, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer, 1600 Clifton Road, MS D-24, Atlanta, GA 30333, ATTN: PRA (0920-0237).

Child SP Assent Brochure (SPs 7 through 11) – Exhibit 5-2

The purpose of this brochure is to inform the child SP who is between the ages of 7-11 about the health interview and health examination and to ensure that s/he **agrees** to be examined. You should give the brochure to the child. The text of the brochure must be reviewed by the child OR the interviewer must review the brochure with the child.

This brochure is much shorter than the Consent/Assent/Parental Brochure. The basic concepts of the study are very simply stated and the language in the text has been simplified so that it is more appropriate for young children.

The **Assent Form** that appears on the back of the brochure should be read and signed by **the child**. The rules for signing the form are the same as those for the Adolescent Assent Form. The Child Assent Form appears on page 5-19.

The back page of the Child Assent Form is an area for the signature. Use the following guidelines to complete the signature process:



- Have the child sign the form on the line entitled “Signature of participant 7-11 years old”;
- Print the full name of the child on the lines provided;
- Sign and date the form on the appropriate line; and
- Print the child’s SP ID in the space provided.

Allow the respondent adequate time to read the appropriate brochure including the Consent Form **thoroughly**. After the respondent has completed the form, review it carefully to assure that all appropriate information has been filled out completely.

Remember we are not allowed to conduct any examination component on any person who has not had an opportunity to read the appropriate SP Assent Brochure and signed the appropriate assent forms.

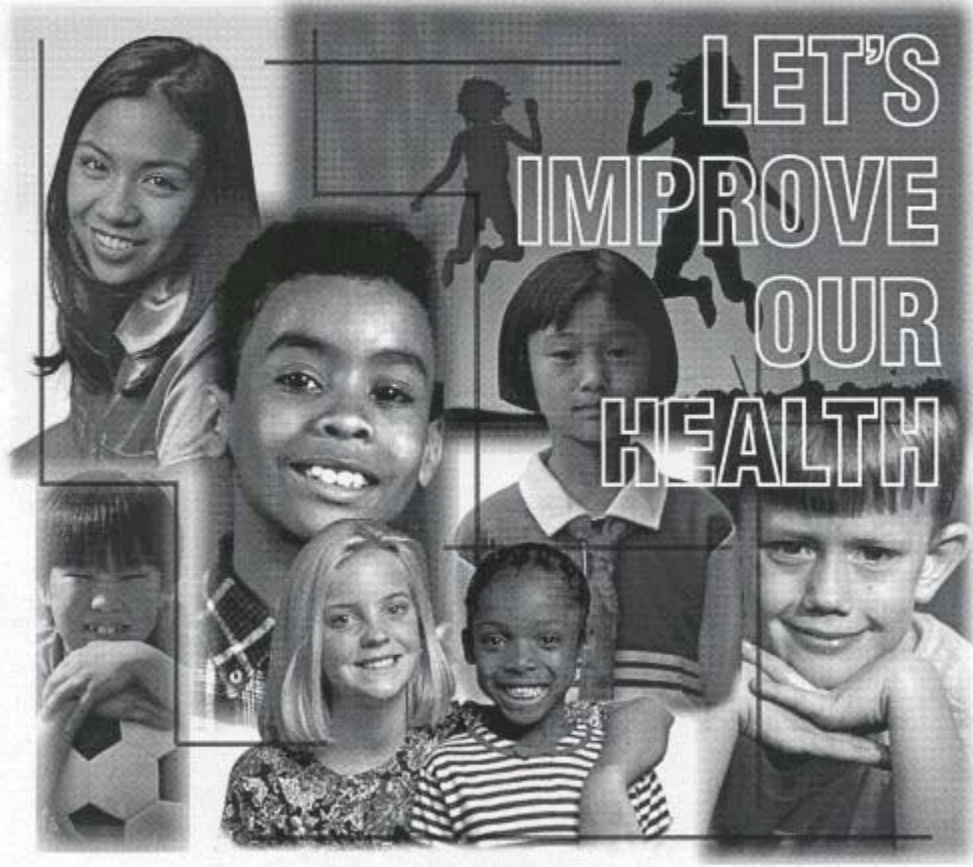
Exhibit 5-2. Child SP Assent Brochure

**National Health
and Nutrition
Examination Survey**




From the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention/National Center for Health Statistics


Examination Assent Brochure **7-11 years of age**



**LET'S
IMPROVE
OUR
HEALTH**



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention
National Center for Health Statistics



CDC
CENTERS FOR DISEASE CONTROL
AND PREVENTION

Exhibit 5-2. Child SP Assent Brochure (continued)

This booklet contains facts for you about the
National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey

The National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES) studies the health and diet of people in this country.



We go all over the United States in these vans.

The survey will look at how young people grow and develop. We will look at special health problems that may affect kids.

2

Our survey wants you to come to this exam center. Your exam will help us find out more about the health of children your age.

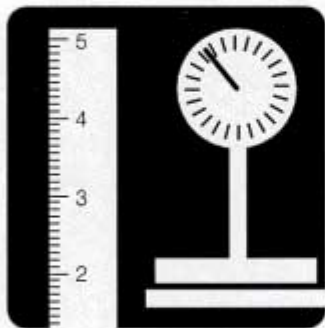
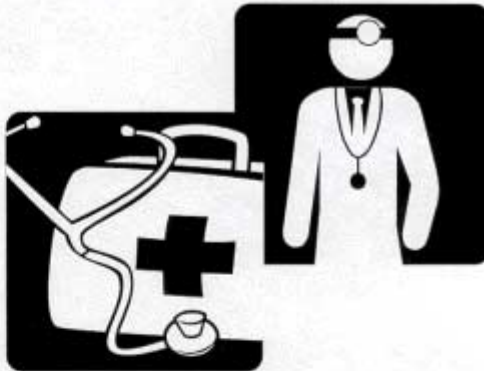


We will ask questions about what you eat and drink.

You will change into special exam clothes at the exam center.

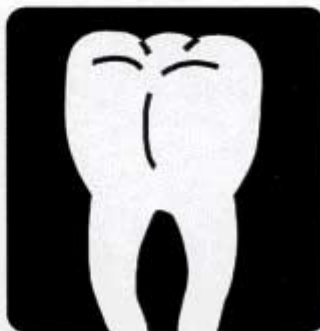


Our doctor will take your blood pressure.



We will see how much you weigh and how tall you are.

Our dentist will look at your teeth.

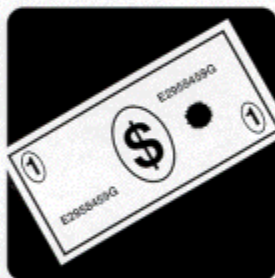


4

We will check your blood and urine in our lab.



We will send you and your parents a report on your exam.



We will give you money to thank you for helping us with our survey.



Our staff will answer any questions you have.

We would like you to go to our mobile exam center vans for an exam. You will help us learn more about all children in the United States.

If you are 8 years or older, we will ask you about your feelings and about how you have been doing at home and school. Your mother (or other grown-up) will be called to answer these same questions about you.

Exhibit 5-2. Child SP Assent Brochure (continued)

#4

OMB # 0920-0237

National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey (NHANES)

Your parents say that you can take part in this special survey. You have just read about the survey in this book. The survey tells us about the health of people. We will ask you to have an exam at our vans that are here in your town. This exam is a little like going to the doctor. Other kids and their families will be at the center. You do not have to do this if you do not want to. If you take part, you will learn some things about yourself. You will help us learn a lot about other kids in the United States.

If you want to take part in the survey, write your name below.

Signature of participant 7-11 years old

Print name of participant

Signature of staff member

Date

SP ID

Public reporting burden of this collection of information is estimated to average 6.6 hours per response for total participation, including the time for reviewing instructions, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. An agency may not conduct or sponsor, and a person is not required to respond to collection of information unless it displays a currently valid OMB control number. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden to CDC/ATSDR Reports Clearance Officer, 1800 Clifton Road, MS D-24, Atlanta, GA 30333, ATTN: PRA (0920-0237).

5.3 Obtaining Minor Assent for Specimen Storage and Future Research

As scientists learn more about health, important new research projects can be done using specimens (blood and urine) that are stored in a controlled environment. For this reason, we will ask to keep some of the SP specimens given during the time of the MEC examination for continuing studies. No specific studies are planned, however, as new ways to measure health and disease are discovered, other studies may be conducted that will add to the knowledge of the treatment and causes of disease.

All SPs who consent to the examination that includes blood and urine collection will be asked permission to keep blood and urine samples collected during the MEC examination for continuing studies. In addition, SPs who are 20 years old or older will be asked permission to use genetic samples to help understand the genetic link to medical conditions. Exhibit 5-3 is a sample of the form that is used to record consent/assent/parental permission for these purposes.

The rules for signing this form are similar to those used for signing the MEC Examination Consent/Assent/Parental Permission Forms. However, **in rare situations**, if the respondent refuses to check the items on the form or sign the form, s/he **should continue to be examined in the MEC**. In this case the SPs specimens will not be kept.

The text that follows provides a specific explanation of the form.

The form is divided into three general areas:

- **Questions and answers directed toward the goals and procedures of specimen storage and future research**—Allow the SP time to read the text of each question and answer.
- **Statements and Required Check Boxes**—This part of the form contains three separate statements:
 - Two regarding permission to keep the SP's specimens for future health studies—one worded for the SP and the other worded for the parent of the SP, and
 - One regarding permission to use the genetic material from the specimens of SPs who are **20 years old or older** to understand the link between genes and medical conditions.

- **Signature lines** – This part of the form contains four separate signature lines:
 - One for subjects 7 years of age or older,
 - One for the parent or guardian of SPs under age 18,
 - One for the NHANES staff member, and
 - One for a witness, as necessary.

Specific rules for completing the form in the MEC **for SPs 7-17 years old** are discussed below.

- The text of the form must be reviewed by the child or the interviewer must review the text with the child.
- Have the SP read the statement printed under the label “For persons ages 7 and over, check this box”. If the SP **agrees** to have his/her specimens kept, s/he should **check** the box provided. **Note that the SP’s and/or parent’s signature alone does not constitute permission to keep specimens or conduct genetic research. Permission for these processes is determined by whether s/he has checked the box next to the appropriate statement.**
- Have the **SP sign** on the appropriate signature line (“Signature of participant age 7 and over”) and record the date.
- Sign your name and date the form under the line entitled “Signature of staff member”.
- “Witness (if required)” refers to any witness used during the consent process. For example, if a respondent cannot read, read the text of the form to him/her in the presence of a witness. If the respondent cannot read or write, have a witness testify that the respondent has been read the form information and the appropriate statements. In both cases, print the full name of the witness on the appropriate line.
- Record the 6 digit SP ID on the lines provided.
- Return the completed form to the MEC coordinator.

Note: The form must be signed by the child in the presence of the interviewer or MEC staff in order to be considered complete. The form cannot be left with the parent for the child to answer and sign. It is acceptable for the child to sign a separate (identical) form in the MEC if s/he was not present to sign it in the presence of the interviewer. Also note that in order to keep the child’s specimens for future research, **both** statements (one for the child and one for the parent/guardian) **must be checked**. The form is considered complete when all appropriate signatures and dates have been obtained.

As mentioned previously, in very rare situations the SP may refuse to sign the form. This should not jeopardize the examination process. Record the word “Refused” on the line designated for the SP’s signature. In this case, the SP’s specimens will not be kept.

5.4 Logging in the SP

Procedures for logging the SP into the automated system are as follows:

1. Select the MEC Interview icon from the introductory window on the automated system at the start of a session.
2. Enter your interviewer password when prompted.
3. Open a new examination session when the SP has been assigned to the room.
4. Wand the SP’s identification bracelet or type in the SP’s ID number. Verify the SP’s name and identification number displayed on the screen.

5.5 Conducting the Interview

As described in Chapter 2, the MEC Interview consists of three main sections: the CAPI-based health interview, the mental health interview, and the Audio-CASI interview on health behaviors of a sensitive nature. Administration of each section involves introducing and providing appropriate transitions between sections, asking the questions specific to the section and entering SP responses, and recording a section status.

5.5.1 Introducing the MEC Interview to the Respondent

Briefly explain the purpose of the interview in a manner which is appropriate for the age of the SP. For SPs aged **8-59 years** and male SPs **60 years and older**, you will use a separate introduction for each of the main sections. For SPs aged **12-19 years** and for those SPs aged **20-39 years** who are part of the **half sample selected to receive the mental health assessment**, the CAPI introduction is as follows:

“There are three parts to this interview. In the first part, I will ask you questions on your current health status and on other health behaviors.”

For SP's **20-39** years of age who are **not** part of the half-sample selected to receive the mental health questions, and for all SPs **40-59** years of age, and for male SPs **60 years and older**, the CAPI introduction is as follows:

“There are two parts to this interview. In the first part, I will ask you questions on your current health and on other health behaviors.”

After conducting the CAPI section of the interview, you will introduce the **mental health section** to SPs eligible for these questions as follows:

For SPs **8-19** years:

“This interview is made up mostly of questions about the kinds of things you have been feeling and doing in the past year – that is, from last <SEASON> until today.”

For SPs **20-39** years:

NOTE: There is no overall introduction to this section. Instead, the first question in each module of the interview contains brief introductory language.

After conducting the appropriate mental health section of the interview, you will introduce the **audio-CASI section** as follows:

“Now I'd like you to use the headphones and listen to some questions. You will enter your responses into the computer by touching the screen. This will allow you to answer questions in complete privacy. I will leave the room during this time, but will be right down the hall to help you if you have a problem. Let's go over some examples and then you'll complete the interview on your own.

For female SPs who are **60 years and older**, your introduction to the MEC interview is much briefer, as this age group receives only the CAPI section of the interview. This introduction is as follows:

“During this interview, I will be asking you questions on your current health status, and other health behaviors. Remember, all of your responses to these questions will be kept strictly confidential. Do you have any questions before we begin?”

For a **proxy** interview or an interview conducted through an **interpreter**, the introduction is also brief, as the interview is quite limited in scope:

“During this interview, I will be asking you questions about <SP’s> current health status, and on other health behaviors.”

These introductions will be automatically displayed on the screen of your PC.

5.5.1.1 Asking Parents/Guardians to Leave the MEC Interview Room for the Mental Health Interview

The mental health section of the interview is intended to be asked directly of the SP. For minor SPs who are accompanied to the MEC by a parent or guardian, it is important that anyone accompanying the SP is not present for this portion of the interview. Use the following, or a similar statement, to politely request that anyone accompanying the SP leave the room.

“The next part of the interview is about things that [SP] has been doing or feeling in the past year. I need to ask these questions directly to [SP] and have [SP] answer [himself/herself]. In order to get the most accurate answers, I have to ask [SP] these questions in private. Let me bring you to the waiting area where you can wait while I complete the interview with [SP].”

Unlike the introductions to the interview sections, this statement is not automatically displayed on your computer screen. Instead, you will need to become familiar with it so you can use it at the appropriate time.

Occasionally, you may encounter a parent or guardian who is reluctant to leave the room. If he or she wants to know more about the types of questions that you will ask, you may provide some general information about the interview, but do not go into great detail. The following is an example of what you may say:

“The exact questions depend upon your child’s age and his/her responses to some general questions. However, he/she may get asked about things he/she may worry about, about feeling sad or unhappy, or about eating and weight.”

If the parent assures you that the SP is comfortable expressing his or her feelings in the parent's presence, acknowledge that this may be true but that not all respondents feel this way. In order that the interview is conducted in exactly the same way with each respondent, it is important to conduct the interview in private even if the parent does not think it is necessary.

5.5.2 Administering the Actual Questionnaire

One of your primary responsibilities as a MEC interviewer is to administer the questionnaire. Successful administration of the questionnaire is a twofold process. It involves:

- Making sure that each respondent hears the questions in exactly the way they are written in the questionnaire; and
- Making sure the respondent's answers are faithfully and accurately recorded.

Specific instructions for administering the three main sections of the questionnaire are contained in Chapter 6, Question-by-Question Specifications.

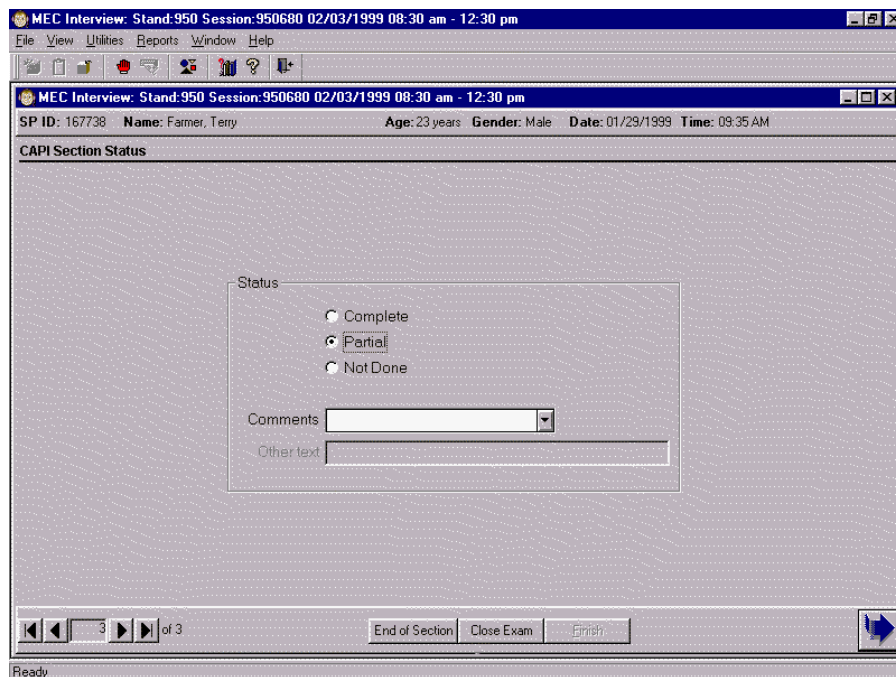
5.5.3 Recording a Status for Each Section

NHANES requires that a separate status code be recorded for each section of the interview. After the answer to the final question has been recorded and any additional instructions on exiting the particular software for that section have been followed, the automated system displays a section status screen. An example of a CAPI section status screen is shown in Exhibit 5-4.

The status for a particular section may be either "Complete," "Partial," or "Not done." The ISIS software automatically displays a section status code according to predetermined criteria. However, you should always verify that the correct status code is displayed and edit it as necessary. Once you have launched and begun to administer a section, ISIS is unable to determine whether all appropriate questions were administered so you will need to be particularly mindful of this if you end an interview prematurely. For example, if you were to conduct the CDISC interview with an SP who completed the modules on panic disorder and generalized anxiety disorder but then refused to complete the interview half way through the third module, ISIS would display a CDISC section status of "Complete". As the interviewer

you would realize that the SP hadn't completed the questions on eating disorders and, in fact, had failed to start the final module on depression. In this instance, you would need to change the status code to "Partial."

Exhibit 5-4. Section Status screen



A status of "Partial" or "Not done" requires you to enter a comment code from the drop down comment screen.

Valid comments for the interview and their appropriate use are as follows:

- | | |
|----------------------|--|
| Safety Exclusion: | Not applicable. |
| SP Refusal: | This is an SP initiated nonresponse due to refusal. The SP refuses the component for any reason other than an illness or emergency. If the SP refuses in the reception area, the coordinator can code the exam. If the SP refuses after starting the interview, the interviewer will code the refusal. |
| No Time: | The SP comes on time and stays for the entire session, there are adequate staff in the MEC but at the end of the session there is no time to do the examination. The coordinator enters this code. |
| Physical Limitation: | SP is unable to have the interview due to a physical problem. |

Communication Problem:	SP is unable to understand and follow instructions for the component due to language, cognitive impairment, or other problem and is unable to complete the interview.
Equipment Failure:	Not applicable.
SP Ill/Emergency:	The SP became ill or an emergency occurred and the interview was not done.
Interrupted:	An exam is interrupted, usually for a MEC-Wide emergency, and cannot be completed by the SP.
Other, specify:	If the above reason for a status code of Partial or Not Done is not explained by one of the Comment codes, choose Other, specify, and record a comment in the text field.

5.6 Distributing the Mental Health Parent Interview Reminder Notice

Youths 8 to 15 years of age who complete the Youth Mental Health Assessment (CDISC) are eligible for a parallel parent interview. A reminder notice (Exhibit 5-5) should be given to eligible SPs to prepare the child's parent for the telephone interview. After entering a status code for the CDISC show the youth a copy of the notice and inform him/her that you will put it with his/her belongings. Fold the notice in half and write both the child's name and the name of the child's mother or caretaker as indicated by the child, on the outside. Place the envelope in the child's basket.

REMINDER...REMINDER...REMINDER...REMINDER

We will be calling parents of youths ages 8 to 15 years to ask questions about how your child has been feeling and behaving over the past 12 months. Our preference is to interview the child's mother. The interview can be arranged at your convenience and will take about 30 minutes. Our telephone interviewers will be calling you from 4 to 28 days following your child's examination. You will be compensated \$30 for your time.

If you have any questions, please call Dr. Kathryn Porter at the U.S. Public Health Service office at 1-800-452-6115, Monday through Friday, 9:00 A.M. - 6:00 P.M. EST.

5.7 Critical Data Items

There are a few pieces of demographic information that are considered critical to the study and should be collected for each SP. These items include: mailing address, home telephone number, and Social Security number. For most SPs this information will have been collected previously by one of the field interviewers. At the time of the MEC interview, it is your responsibility to verify the existing information and to attempt data collection for all missing items.

Procedures for verifying and collecting critical data items (CDI) vary depending upon the age of the SP. For SPs 12 years of age and older, you will collect the items as part of the MEC interview. For SPs younger than 12 years of age, the information is collected either on hardcopy for later entry into a CDI utility, or directly into the utility.

5.7.1 Critical Data Item Collection for SPs 12 Years of Age and Older

Critical data items for this age group are collected within the MEC interview after completing the final interview section appropriate for the SP. After completing the section status screen, click on the forward arrow in the lower right hand corner of the screen to bring up the screen labeled “Verify Mailing Address” (Exhibit 5-6).

Exhibit 5-6. Verify Mailing Address screen

Mec Interview: Stand:107 Session:107401 08/14/1999 01:30 pm - 05:30 pm

File View Utilities Reports Window Help

Mec Interview: Stand:107 Session:107401 08/14/1999 01:30 pm - 05:30 pm

SP ID: 592301 Name: TEST, TEST Age: 39 years Gender: Female Date: 04/25/2001 Time:

Verify Mailing Address

In case we have to contact you again, please give me
{your/SP's} complete mailing address.

Additional Address Line

Street # Dir Pre Street Name St/Rd/Ave Dir Post

Unit/Apt/Bldg Unit # PO Box RRHC # RRHC Box

City State Zip

1 of 4

End of Section Close Exam Finish

Ready | MEC Layer: 04/12/2001 | Application: Ver 9.4.18B | Not connected to Coordinator | 11:31 AM

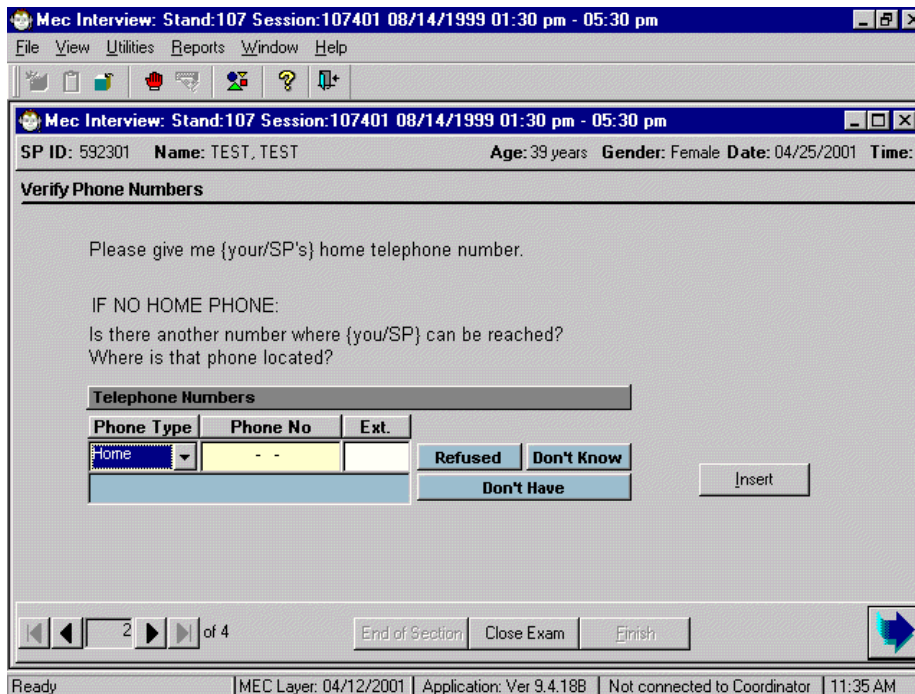
The screen will contain any mailing address information we have for the SP. Verify that the information is correct and make any changes, as necessary.

Enter the address in the appropriate fields as follows:

- **Additional Address Line:** Use this field to enter additional address information that is not a street address. Examples include a university name, a nursing home name, or the name of an apartment complex. You should also use this field if a subject receives mail in care of another person (e.g., c/o John Jones).
- **Street #, Dir Pre, Street Name, St/Rd/Ave, Dir Post:** Enter the street number in the first data field on this line. When applicable, select the appropriate directional prefix or suffix (N, S, NE, SW, etc.) from the drop-down menu in the second and fifth data fields. Enter the complete street name in the third data field. Use the drop-down menu in the fourth field to select the street type (e.g., ST, RD, AVE, etc.).
- **Unit/Apt./Bldg.:** Use this field in conjunction with Unit # to indicate whether the number refers to an apartment, lot, room, suite, building, etc.
- **Unit #:** Enter the actual apartment (room, suite, bldg., etc.) unit number in this field.
- **PO Box, RRHC #, RRHC Box:** When applicable, enter a post office box number in the first field, a rural route number in the second field, and a rural post office box number in the third field. If a PO box number or Rural Route number is added and there is a street address, there will be a prompt to “Remove the street address.” Delete the street address as directed.
- **City, State, Zip:** Enter the full name of the city in the first field. Use the drop-down menu in the second field to select the appropriate state abbreviation. Enter the full six-digit ZIP code plus the four-digit suffix, when known.

After verifying and/or collecting the mailing address, click on the forward arrow to bring up the “Verify Phone Numbers” screen (Exhibit 5-7).

Exhibit 5-7. Verify Phone Numbers screen



The screen will display any phone numbers we have collected for the SP. Verify that the home phone number reported by the SP is among the numbers listed. If not, click on the insert button to enter a new phone number, highlight “Home” from the drop-down menu under “Phone type”, and enter the phone number and extension, as applicable, in the designated fields. If the SP reports that s/he does not have a home phone, check that this information isn’t already in the system. If not, click on insert to enter a new phone number, highlight “Home” under phone type, and click on the box labeled “Don’t Have”.

If the SP does not have a home phone, read the probes to obtain additional phone numbers where the SP can be contacted. After checking that any additional numbers are not in the system, choose the correct phone type (office, mobile, other) and enter the phone number and extension, as appropriate. If you select a phone type of “other” an additional data field appears in which you should type in an explanation of where the phone is located.

NOTE: The program will NOT allow you to edit any existing phone numbers. If the SP provides a phone number that is different from a phone number that is already in the system for that phone type, simply record the new information that the SP provides by inserting a new phone number.

If you insert a new phone number in error, delete the phone number using the backspace or delete key. The system will remove the additional phone number field when you proceed to the next screen.

After completing the “Verify Phone Numbers” screen, click on the forward arrow to bring up the “Verify SSN” screen (Exhibit 5-8).

Exhibit 5-8. Verify Social Security Number screen

Mec Interview: Stand:107 Session:107401 08/14/1999 01:30 pm - 05:30 pm

File View Utilities Reports Window Help

Mec Interview: Stand:107 Session:107401 08/14/1999 01:30 pm - 05:30 pm

SP ID: 592301 Name: TEST, TEST Age: 39 years Gender: Female Date: 04/25/2001 Time:

Verify SSN

We also need {your/SP's} Social Security Number. The Public Health Service will use {your/his/her} Social Security Number to conduct health-related research by linking {your/his/her} survey data with vital statistics and other records. We may also use it if we need to recontact {you/him/her} or {your/his/her} family. Except for these purposes, the Public Health Service will not release {your/his/her} SSN to anyone, including any government agency. Providing this information is voluntary and is collected under the authority of the Public Health Service Act. There will be no effect on {your/his/her} benefits if you do not provide it. [Public Health Service Act is title 42, United States Code, section 242k.]

What is {your/SP's} Social Security Number?

Refused
Don't Know
Don't Have

3 of 4

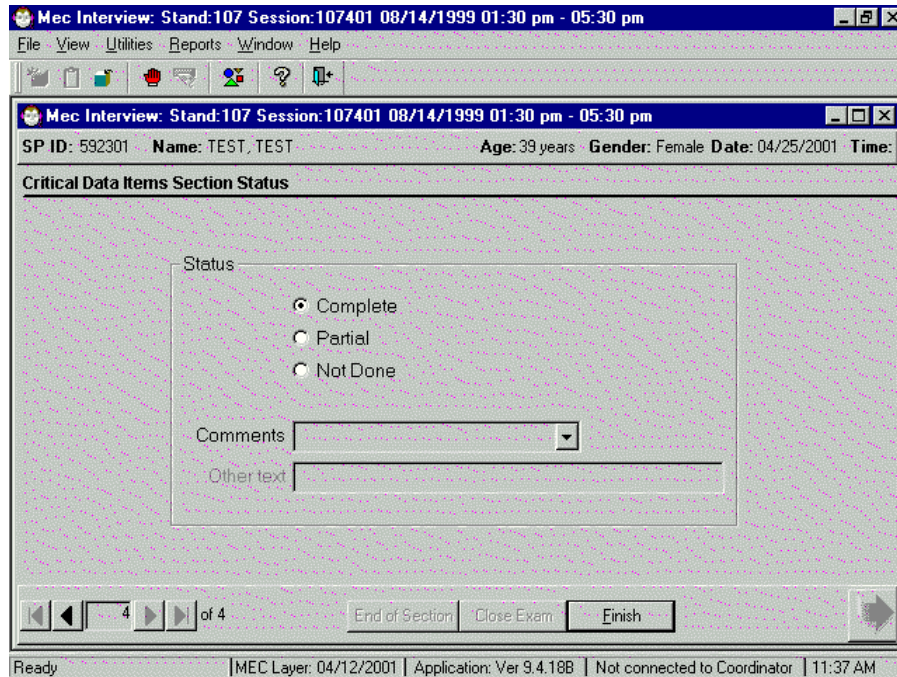
End of Section Close Exam Finish

Close the exam | MEC Layer: 04/12/2001 | Application: Ver 9.4.18B | Not connected to Coordinator | 11:37 AM

If a valid Social Security number (SSN) has been collected previously for this SP, simply verify that the number is correct. You should attempt data collection if the SSN is missing, or a response of “don’t know” (field is 9-filled) or “refused”(field is 7-filled) is recorded. If a response of “don’t have” (field is 2-filled) is recorded, confirm that the SP does not have a Social Security number. Occasionally, the SP may not have had a SSN at the time of the interview in the home but has since obtained one. When attempting data collection for this item, you must read the entire question, including the lengthy disclaimer text.

Click on the arrow in the right hand corner to bring up the “Critical Data Items Section Status” screen (Exhibit 5-9).

Exhibit 5-9. Critical Data Items Section Status screen



The program automatically fills in the status as “Complete” and does not allow you to edit it. Click on “Finish” to exit the MEC interview application.

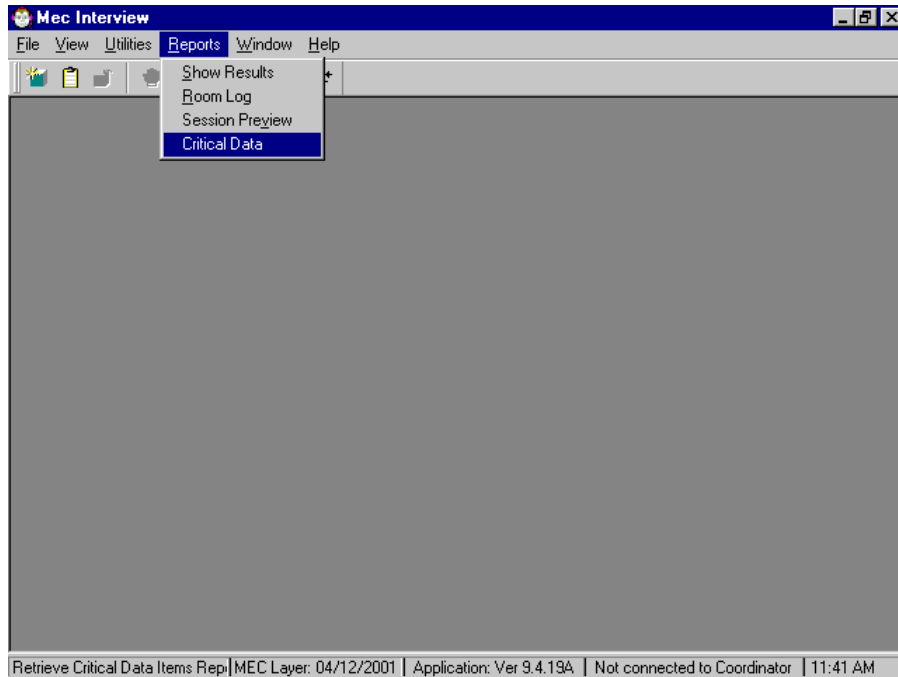
5.7.2 Critical Data Item Collection for SPs Younger than 12 Years of Age

Critical data item collection for this age group may be accomplished either on a hardcopy report for later entry into a critical data item (CDI) utility, or directly into the CDI utility.

Prior to the start of the exam session, check the session preview report to determine whether any SPs 11 years of age or younger are scheduled for the session. If there are SPs in this age group you will need to print out a critical data report. Reports are generated only for SPs 11 years of age or younger.

To generate the critical data report, click on “Reports” then “Critical Data” on the main menu of the MEC interview application (Exhibit 5-10).

Exhibit 5-10. Generating the Critical Data Item Report



A separate one-page report will be printed for each SP 11 years of age or younger (Exhibit 5-11). The report lists all existing critical data information that has been collected. If any item is missing, the corresponding data field(s) are blank.

Exhibit 5-11. Critical Data Items Report

Critical Data Items Report

675973 JANE DOE

Current Social Security Number 777-77-7777

Current Mailing Address

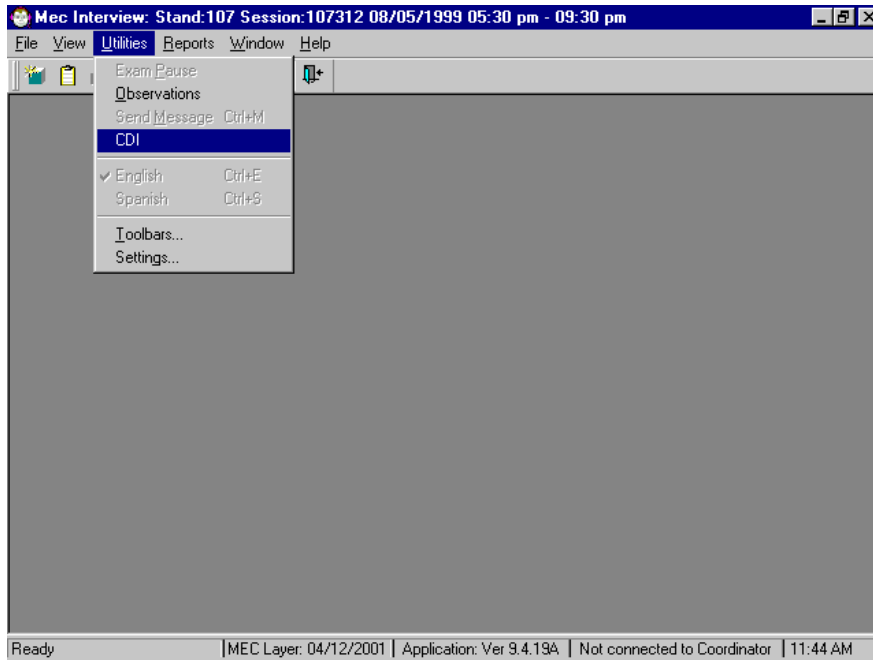
Additional Address Line				
Street #	Dir Pre	Street Name	St/Rd/Ave	Dir Post
2160		123RD	ST	
Unit/Apt/Bldg	Unit #	PO Box	RRHC #	RRHC Box
	1N			
City		State	Zip	
ANYTOWN		MD	11111-	

Current Phone Numbers

Obtain the information from the child’s parent or guardian and record it on the hardcopy report for later entry into the critical data item (CDI) utility. This allows you to take the form with you to track down the parent anywhere in the MEC and serves to facilitate the data collection effort. An exception to this approach is if the parent/guardian is also an SP. Either at the beginning or the end of the parent/guardian’s MEC interview, you may collect the child’s information from the parent and enter it directly into the CDI utility.

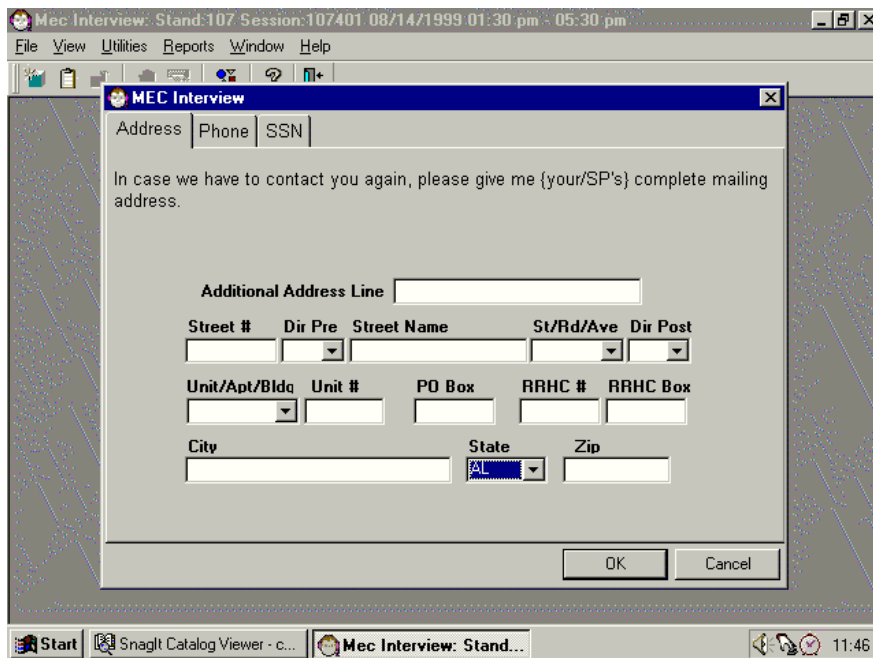
To access the CDI utility, click on “Utilities” and then “CDI” on the main menu of the MEC interview application (Exhibit 5-12).

Exhibit 5-12. Accessing the Critical Data Items Utility



Highlight the current exam session and click on OK. Then select the appropriate SP from the list of SPs to bring up the corresponding data screens (Exhibit 5-13).

Exhibit 5-13. Critical Data Items Utility



Use the tabs at the top of the screen to move between the address, phone, and SSN screens. Data entry follows the same conventions as for SPs 12 years of age or older as described in Section 5.7.1.

5.8 Ending the Interview

At the conclusion of the interview, end the interview and notify the MEC coordinator that you are done by clicking on the “Finish” button in the bottom center portion of the screen. Do not leave the examination open any longer than necessary as this can lead to inaccurate estimates of the amount of time it takes to complete the interview component. It can also slow down the flow of SPs between components.

Thank the SP for his or her time and contribution to the study. Check whether the MEC coordinator has sent you a message advising you of the next component for the SP. If not, escort the SP back to the coordinator’s area to await assignment to the next component.