

How to use both Graduate and Sibling Data

The WLS includes two related panels of people followed across time. Original panel members (the “grads”) are a one-third random sample of Wisconsin high school seniors in 1957 (R01). We launched a second panel (the “sibs”) in 1977 (R03) when we attempted interviews with 2,000 of the graduates’ siblings. We expanded the sibling panel in 1993 (R04) when we attempted to interview a sibling for every graduate. Legacy copies of the WLS data were shared in wide format where measures from graduate participants and their selected sibling were released on one record. Currently we release measures from graduates and siblings on separate rows. **Researchers using both the graduate and sibling panels in their work should remember that the observations in the data are not independent.**

WLS Participants within the same Families		
Number of Participants	Individuals	Families
1	1,526	1,526
2	17,434	8,717
3	66	22
4	20	5
Total	19,046	10,270

Each record includes a family level id (familypub) making it easy to identify WLS participants within the same families. Most families in the WLS are represented by two people, but there are families represented by three or four participants. This happened when a family had two 1957 high-school graduates, usually twins. Most often, these two graduates served as each other’s selected sibling. However, in some cases the two graduates were paired with a third, or sometimes a third and fourth, sibling. In multiple waves of the study graduate participants are asked about their selected sibling and if that

sibling completes an interview, they are asked about the graduate participant. Use the measure ssibidpub to connect these reciprocal pairs of participants.

In earlier waves of the study (R03, R04, & R05) we used different instruments for the graduate and sibling participants. The variable sample_type shows which instrument was used for participants during these waves.

Round	Year	Sample Type
R01	1957	Graduates Only
R02	1964	Parent informant reporting about Graduate
R03	1975	Graduate Panel Interviewed
	1977	Sibling Panel Interviewed
R04	1992-1994	Graduate Panel Interviewed
	1993-1994	Sibling Panel Interviewed
R05	2003-2005	Graduate Panel Interviewed
	2004-2006	Sibling Panel Interviewed
	2004-2005	Graduates' Spoused interviewed
	2005-2007	Siblings' Spouses interviewed
R06	2010-2013	Graduates and Siblings interviewed
R07	2019-2022	Graduates and Siblings interviewed
R08	2021-2024	Graduates and Siblings interviewed
R09	2024-2026	Graduates and Siblings interviewed
R10		Graduates and Siblings interviewed

Users with any questions about the WLS data are always welcome to ask for help at wls@ssc.wisc.edu.