



NORC's AmeriSpeak Teen

PROBABILITY-BASED SURVEY INFRASTRUCTURE FOR POLLING U.S. TEENS

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Background

AmeriSpeak Teen consists of teens aged 13 to 17 years old residing in AmeriSpeak household who have been identified as survey respondents for AmeriSpeak surveys. AmeriSpeak is a nationally representative panel of U.S. households having the highest AAPOR response rate among commercially available survey panels in the U.S.

We created AmeriSpeak Teen to facilitate the timely collection of nationally representative survey data from teens, and to create efficient processes for obtaining parental/legal guardian and the administration of the surveys to the sampled teens.

Consenting Process

Prior to the creation of the AmeriSpeak Teen capability, study-specific parental/legal guardian consent would be obtained for each sampled teen. The requirement to obtain parental/legal guardian consent for each sampled teen increased respondent burden and added substantial time to the data collection schedule.

The key innovation behind AmeriSpeak Teen is the collection of blanket consent from the parents and legal guardians of teens residing in AmeriSpeak households. This innovation makes possible the direct invitation of teens to participate in "not sensitive" survey projects, making unnecessary the obtaining of study-specific consent from the parent or legal guardian. The benefit to our AmeriSpeak clients is that we can reduce the length of the data collection field period and reduce costs.

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The study IRB determines whether a teen survey questionnaire is “sensitive” or “not sensitive.” “Sensitive” survey content typically involves surveys regarding illegal or risky behaviors, crime victimization, or topics that could result in potential harms such as embarrassment, psychological distress, or discomfort. “Not sensitive” surveys do not have such content. Since many AmeriSpeak Teen surveys do have sensitive content and since some parents/legal guardians did not provide blanket consent, it is common for AmeriSpeak Teen surveys to require the collection of study-specific parental/legal guardian consent for all the teen respondents. However, many AmeriSpeak Teen surveys do not require parental/legal guardian consent, such as those that involve consumer research and media usage topics.

For teen surveys whose questionnaire content is determined to be “sensitive” by the governing IRB, it is necessary to obtain study-specific parental/legal guardian consent for all the sampled teens. The necessity to obtain such parental/legal guardian extends to “not sensitive” surveys for those teens for whom a blanket consent was not previously obtained.

Interview Sample Sizes

AmeriSpeak Teen offers two services: (i) AmeriSpeak Teen and (ii) AmeriSpeak Teen with TrueNorth.

- **AmeriSpeak Teen:** Interview sample sizes up to 800-1,000 interview completions for age 13-17 from the probability-based, nationally representative AmeriSpeak Panel. For surveys with “sensitive” topics, we can deliver approximately 600 interviews.
- **AmeriSpeak Teen with TrueNorth:** Interview sample sizes up to 1,600 to 2,000 interview completions for age 13-17 from the probability-based, nationally representative AmeriSpeak Panel. For surveys with “sensitive” topics, we can deliver approximately 1,200 to 1,500 interviews.

The TrueNorth® solution provides larger interview sample sizes by leveraging the scale of non-probability samples that are combined with the AmeriSpeak Teen probability sample. TrueNorth then calibrates data from the lower-quality nonprobability survey, truing it up with the higher-quality AmeriSpeak data.

The additional responses and calibration ensure that respondents truly represent the groups our clients are seeking to survey and, thus, generate more reliable results. Documentation is available here on the TrueNorth calibration service.

We recommend the TrueNorth solution to clients that seek the sample and data quality benefits of the AmeriSpeak probability sample while also seeking the larger sample sizes made possible by using non-probability, opt-in samples.

Sample Representativeness for AmeriSpeak Teen

AmeriSpeak Teen provides a highly representative sample of U.S. teens age 13-17 for our AmeriSpeak clients.

Based on recent study experience using AmeriSpeak Teen, the demographic distribution of the interviewed teens is reasonably close to Census population benchmarks. On an unweighted basis, our interviewed teens have approximately the following distributions in our AmeriSpeak Teen surveys.

Gender	Column %
Male	46%
Female	54%
Age	Column %
13	21-22%
14	22-23%
15	23-25%
16	17-18%
17	14-15%
Race/Ethnicity	
White-NH/ELSE	66%+
Black-NH	15%+
Hispanic	16%+
Household Income	
<\$5k to <\$40k	33-35%
\$40k to <\$75k	25-28%
\$75k to <\$125k	23-26%