PhenX Pediatric Development Working Group
Household Composition

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November 19, 2018
Household Composition

• Definition: Individuals living in child’s home(s)

• Concepts: Child’s home environment plays a critical role in child’s health and development.
  • Assessment of the home environment includes understanding the individuals residing in the home and their relationships to the child and each other.
  • May also include where in the home individuals live and whether they live in home part or full time.
Household Composition

- Considerations: Several separate protocols measuring different related constructs may be used to develop an assessment of household composition, depending on needs of study, research questions, etc.
Existing measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

- **Household Roster-Relationships**
  - Household Roster and Relationship questions in the General Social Survey
    - Respondent asked to list all people who live in household
      - begin with person who owns or rents the dwelling (householder)
      - then spouse or partner of householder
      - then other household members
    - For each person listed, the respondent reports relationship to the householder and spouse of householder, sex, age, and marital status
      - questions are about people who live in household rather than respondent; thus, questions need to be addressed to the head or knowledgeable adult
  - Can be used to describe household size, structure, and composition.
  - Can capture complex living arrangements (e.g., non-family, multi-generational)
  - Questions should precede annual household income questions (if to be administered) because they are linked.
Existing measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

- **Number of Rooms in Primary Residence**
  - 2009 American Housing Survey (AHS) protocol
  - interviewer-administered 17-item questionnaire on number and types of rooms in respondent’s home
  - used to calculate residential crowding by dividing number of household members (from Household Roster–Relationships) by number of rooms in home
  - Example items:
    - 1. How many bedrooms are there in your/that [HOUSING TYPE]?
    - 2. How many full bathrooms?
Existing measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

• Current Marital Status
  – National Survey of Family Growth (NSFG), 2011-2013, Section A: Marital/Cohabiting Status
    • interviewer asks respondent about current marital status by presenting a numbered card that lists answer choices
Existing measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

• Current Marital Status

1. Now I’d like to ask about marital status and living together. What is your current marital or cohabiting status?

ENTER [2] if R is living together with a partner of the opposite sex to whom she/he is not married, even if she/he is also widowed, divorced, separated, or never married.

IF R volunteers living in a same-sex marriage or with a same-sex partner, then enter this information in a comment.

Responses:
1. Married to a person of the opposite sex
2. Not married but living together with a partner of the opposite sex
3. Widowed
4. Divorced or annulled
5. Separated, because you and your spouse are not getting along
6. Never been married
Existing measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

• Current Marital Status

{ASKED IF COHABITING}

2. What is your formal marital status? That is, are you widowed, divorced, separated, or have you never been married?

3. Widowed
4. Divorced or annulled
5. Separated, because you and your spouse are not getting along
6. Never been married
Description of measurement protocols in PhenX Toolkit

• **Family Interpersonal Relationships**
  – Family Interpersonal Relationships from the Family Environment Scale (FES)
    • 27 self-administered, true/false questions
    • 3 subscales, 9 items each
      – Cohesion: degree of commitment and support family members provide one another
      – Expressiveness: extent to which family members are encouraged to express their feelings directly
      – Conflict: amount of openly expressed anger and conflict among family members
    • can be used to describe a respondent's current or past family environment (e.g., childhood environment)
    • for adults and children 11y+
    • can derive standardized scores based on norms
      – manual includes data on subpopulations (e.g., adults vs. adolescents, distressed vs. non-distressed families, single-parent families, Latino and African-American families)
    • proprietary
Missing elements

• No single measure captures all relevant constructs
• Not clear why Current Marital Status questions are geared toward opposite-sex relationships and codes same-sex relationships “in a comment”
• Some measures not written from perspective of child/caregiver
  – Difficult to complete/interpret
Filling in the gaps

- Caregiver Relationship & Family Household Composition (ECHO)
  - Asks about each person who lives in child’s home
    - Relationship to child
    - Age and gender identity
  - Allows for describing household composition in two households where child resides (e.g., divorced parents)
- Concerns
  - not clear of source, validated?
  - although has benefit of being child-directed in wording, may not add more information than existing measure in PhenX Toolkit (Household Roster-Relationships) except 2nd household option
Filling in the gaps

- “Mother and Home” Questionnaire from ALSPAC
  - Specifically written for mothers, most common caregiver respondent in child studies
  - Includes sections relevant for this construct and Household Stability in one measure
  - Sections relevant for Household Composition
    - Household
      - Who lives in home
      - Marital status of mother
      - Child’s relationship with father
      - Complex assessment of children, where they live, relationship to fathers, other relationships
      - Sibling relationship quality
      - Parents’ feelings toward child
Filling in the gaps

• “Mother and Home” Questionnaire from ALSPAC
  – Concerns
    • Level of detail in subsections may be excessive for goals of PhenX Toolkit and needs of most studies
    • Needs editing
      – remove unnecessary/irrelevant sections
      – not tie to certain child age
      – change “British” wording
Recommendations to the WG

• **Recommendation #1: Household Roster-Relationships_Pediatric, Protocol source: Household Roster-Relationships form in PhenX Toolkit, modified**
  - Form in the PhenX Toolkit is geared toward “householder,” which may be confusing to complete in child studies
  - Modify to make child-centric
  - Modify to allow for questions about other households if child lives in multiple homes (e.g., divorce)
  - Count as different version of form already in PhenX Toolkit?
Recommendations to the WG

• **Recommendation #2: Marital Status, Protocol source: Current Marital Status form in PhenX Toolkit, modified**
  
  - Modify to be neutral regarding responder’s sexual orientation?
Recommendations to the WG

• Recommendation #3: Home Environment, Protocol source: “Mother and Home” Questionnaire from ALSPAC
  – Using sections from “Mother and Home” Questionnaire, create a measure that includes questions that address both household composition and household stability in a way relevant for pediatric populations
  – Certain sections/items would require editing to remove unnecessary/irrelevant items, change “British” wording, etc.
  – Because items across sections do not sum to make total scores, sections could be clearly delineated so that investigators could choose only sections of relevance to their study