Listening to Mothers II: Report of the Second National U.S. Survey of Women's Childbearing Experiences

Conducted January–February 2006 for Childbirth Connection by Harris Interactive® in partnership with Lamaze International

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ABSTRACT

With permission from Childbirth Connection, the concise version of the *Listening to Mothers II* “Survey Methodology” is reprinted here. Harris Interactive® conducted *Listening to Mothers II: Report of the Second National U.S. Survey of Women's Childbearing Experiences* on behalf of Childbirth Connection. The survey consisted of 1,373 online interviews and 200 telephone interviews with women who had given birth in U.S. hospitals in 2005, with weighting of data to reflect the target population. Interviews were conducted from January 20 through February 21, 2006. The methods used to conduct the survey and analyze the data collected are described.

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METHODOLOGY

Harris Interactive® conducted *Listening to Mothers II: Report of the Second National U.S. Survey of Women's Childbearing Experiences* on behalf of Childbirth Connection. The survey consisted of 1,373 online and 200 telephone interviews with women who had given birth in 2005, with weighting of data to reflect the target population (see “Weighting”). Interviews were conducted from

* © Childbirth Connection 2006. Reproduced with permission. The full survey report is available at the Childbirth Connection Web site (www.childbirthconnection.org/listeningtomothers/). Appendix A in the report provides additional details about the survey methodology.

Lamaze members can view the entire report of the Listening to Mothers II survey by logging in to the Lamaze Web site (www.lamaze.org). Others can purchase the full report from the Childbirth Connection Web site (www.childbirthconnection.org), where the Executive Summary of the report is also available to the public.

January 20 through February 21, 2006, and the survey took about 30 minutes to complete.

THE SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

Listening to Mothers II was developed through the collaborative efforts of core teams from Childbirth Connection and Harris Interactive®, with the support of the Listening to Mothers II National Advisory Council and in partnership with Lamaze International. All interviews were conducted in English. The questionnaires used for the online and telephone interviews differed slightly in wording to reflect the specific requirements of these two different modes of interviewing. In addition, the telephone questionnaire contained fewer questions than the online version in order to limit fatigue among telephone respondents. On average, however, online and telephone interviews took about the same amount of time to complete, since respondents can typically complete a questionnaire faster online than by phone.

ELIGIBILITY REQUIREMENTS

All respondents were asked a series of preliminary questions to determine their eligibility for the survey. To be eligible, respondents had to be 18–45 years old and to have given birth in a U.S. hospital in 2005 to a single child who was living at the time the survey was conducted.

THE ONLINE SAMPLE

Potential respondents for the online survey were drawn from the Harris Poll Online (HPOL) panel of over 6 million active U.S. members. Respondents in this panel have been recruited from a variety of sources, including the HPOL registration website and offerings made in conjunction with a number of organizations.

ONLINE INTERVIEWING

An email was sent to a sample of women 18–45 years of age drawn from the HPOL panel inviting them to participate in the survey. Embedded in this invitation was a direct link to the survey website, enabling recipients to proceed to the survey immediately or at a time more convenient to them.

After proceeding to the survey website, respondents were screened to determine their eligibility. Respondents who satisfied the eligibility requirements were able to proceed to the actual survey. Once in the survey, respondents could complete

the entire questionnaire in one session, or could choose to complete it in multiple sessions.

TELEPHONE SAMPLE

To improve the study's projectability to the broader population of black non-Hispanic and Hispanic women, the online sample was supplemented with a telephone over-sample. A telephone-based approach helps reduce biases associated with Internet-only data collection by providing an outlet for participation to women who may not have Internet access. Telephone participants were recruited from a list of households with a baby; the list was provided by Survey Sampling International.

TELEPHONE INTERVIEWING

All telephone interviewing was conducted from Harris Interactive's telephone center in Orem, Utah. Up to six attempts were made over a 4-week period to complete an interview with each potential respondent. Interviewing staff were monitored on an ongoing basis to maintain interviewing quality. Due to the sensitive nature of many of the questions, female interviewers conducted all interviews.

WEIGHTING

In order to more accurately reflect the target population, the data were weighted by key demographic variables, as well as by a composite variable known as a propensity score, intended to reflect a respondent's propensity to be online. Demographic variables used for weighting included educational attainment, age, race/ethnicity, geographic region, household income, and time elapsed since last giving birth, using data from the March 2005 Supplement of the U.S. Census Bureau's Current Population Survey and national natality data. The propensity score took into account selection biases that occur when conducting research using an online panel.

DATA PROCESSING

All data were tabulated, checked for internal consistency, and processed by computer. A series of computer-generated tables was then produced that showed the results of each survey question, both by the total number of respondents and by key subgroups.

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policy and practice related to cesarean section in the United States. CAROL SAKALA has been Director of Programs of Childbirth Connection (formerly Maternity Center Association) since 2000. She has 25 years' experience as a researcher, educator, advocate, and policy analyst, with a focus on the welfare of mothers, babies, families, and the quality of maternity care. MAUREEN CORRY has been Executive Director of Childbirth Connection (formerly Maternity Center Association) since 1995. She has 30 years' experience as a researcher, educator, advocate,

and policy analyst, focusing on maternal- and infant-health promotion and on maternity-care quality improvement. SANDRA APPLEBAUM is currently a research manager in the Healthcare Division at Harris Interactive. While at Harris, she has worked on dozens of studies for pharmaceutical clients, public-relations firms, universities, and nonprofit organizations. Declercq, Sakala, Corry, and Applebaum were also members of the team that planned, carried out, and reported the first national Listening to Mothers survey in 2002.

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