
Subject: Re: Missing data for C-section variable (m17) for births prior to the most recent

Posted by [Bridgette-DHS](#) on Tue, 22 Dec 2020 14:44:50 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

Following is a response from DHS Research & Data Analysis Director, Tom Pullum:

This is one of the variables that is given for all children born in the past 5 years. The subscript _1 refers to the most recent birth in the past 5 years; _2 refers to the second most recent birth in the past 5 years, etc. Most women who had a birth in the past 5 years had 1 or 2 and very few had more than 3. In the IR file, m17_3, for example, will be blank or have a dot if the woman only had 0, 1, or 2 births in the past 5 years. These are not MISSING cases. If you want the births to be the units of analysis, you could shift to the KR or BR file. Some other variables are only available for the most recent birth and are blank or a dot for all subscripts other than _1. This issue--the distinction between "missing" and "not applicable"--has come up repeatedly.
