

NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE  
(NYTD)

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OUTCOMES FILE  
USER'S GUIDE

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NYTD OUTCOMES SURVEY  
FY2017 COHORT  
WAVE 1

*NDACAN DATASET #229*

*Revised August 5<sup>th</sup>, 2019*



NATIONAL DATA ARCHIVE ON  
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NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE  
(NYTD)

**NYTD OUTCOMES SURVEY**  
**FY2017 COHORT**  
**NDACAN DATASET #229**

***DATA PROVIDED BY***

CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES  
U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES (DHHS)  
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***FUNDED BY***

CHILDREN'S BUREAU  
ADMINISTRATION ON CHILDREN, YOUTH AND FAMILIES  
ADMINISTRATION FOR CHILDREN AND FAMILIES  
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## ABSTRACT

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The John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Program (CFCIP) was initiated in an effort to improve outcomes for youth in foster care who are likely to reach their 18<sup>th</sup> birthday without having found a permanent home. The program provides funding to states to develop and administer programs designed to help ease the transition from foster care to independence.

The law that created CFCIP also required states to develop: 1) a system for tracking the services provided through CFCIP, and 2) a method for collecting outcome measures so that the effectiveness of the program can be assessed.

These two components together form the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD). The files contain data from all 50 states, as well as from the District of Columbia and Puerto Rico.

This User Guide is for the Outcomes component of NYTD. The Outcomes File contains the results of surveys conducted with youth to examine certain well-being, financial, and educational outcomes as they get older.

The Services component of NYTD contains cross-sectional information on the services provided by states under CFCIP and the youth who receive those services. Data are submitted by the states every 6 months on a continuing basis. The Services File is available from NDACAN as a separate dataset. See our website (<https://www.ndacan.cornell.edu>) for more information on the Services File.

## **ACKNOWLEDGEMENT OF SOURCE**

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Authors should acknowledge the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect and the Children's Bureau when they publish manuscripts that use data provided by the Archive. Users of these data are urged to follow some adaptation of the statement below:

*The data used in this publication were made available by the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY, and have been used with permission. Data from the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) were originally collected by the states and provided to the Children's Bureau. Funding for the project was provided by the Children's Bureau, Administration on Children, Youth and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The collector of the original data, the funder, the Archive, Cornell University, and their agents or employees bear no responsibility for the analyses or interpretations presented here.*

## **PUBLICATION SUBMISSION REQUIREMENT**

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In accordance with the *Terms of Use Agreement* for these datasets, users of these data are required to provide citations for any published work or report based wholly or in part on these data with the Archive.

# OVERVIEW OF NYTD

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## PURPOSE

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The optimal outcome for children in foster care is permanency – a permanent home, either by reunification with the parents or adoption to a loving family. Some children, especially those who enter foster care when they are older, never find a permanent home. Each year, about 10% of children who exit foster care are discharged due to having reached the state’s age limit for eligibility. These youth are at particular risk for negative outcomes. Emancipated foster care youth encounter homelessness, incarceration, poor educational outcomes, lack of health insurance, unemployment, unplanned parenthood, and poverty at much higher rates than other youth.

In 1999, the John H. Chafee Foster Care Independence Act (42 USC § 677) was enacted. The goal of the Chafee Act is to support such youth by providing states with flexible funding for the design and administration of programs that will:

- (1) identify children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age and to help these children make the transition to self-sufficiency by providing services such as assistance in obtaining a high school diploma, career exploration, vocational training, job placement and retention, training in daily living skills, training in budgeting and financial management skills, substance abuse prevention, and preventive health activities (including smoking avoidance, nutrition education, and pregnancy prevention);
- (2) help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age receive the education, training, and services necessary to obtain employment;
- (3) help children who are likely to remain in foster care until 18 years of age prepare for and enter postsecondary training and education institutions;
- (4) provide personal and emotional support to children aging out of foster care, through mentors and the promotion of interactions with dedicated adults;
- (5) provide financial, housing, counseling, employment, education, and other appropriate support and services to former foster care recipients between 18 and 21 years of age to complement their own efforts to achieve self-sufficiency and to assure that program participants recognize and accept their personal responsibility for preparing for and then making the transition from adolescence to adulthood;
- (6) make available vouchers for education and training, including postsecondary training and education, to youths who have aged out of foster care; and
- (7) provide the services referred to in this subsection to children who, after attaining 16 years of age, have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption.

The act also requires the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS) to collect two kinds of data:

- (1) Information about services and those who receive them, including “the number and characteristics of children receiving services”, and “the type and quantity of services being provided.”
- (2) Outcome data, including “measures of educational attainment, high school diploma, employment, avoidance of dependency, homelessness, non-marital childbirth, incarceration, and high-risk behaviors.”

These two datasets together constitute the National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD).

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## GEOGRAPHIC AREA

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NYTD data come from all 50 states, the District of Columbia, and Puerto Rico.

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## NYTD FILES

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There are two NYTD datasets: one dataset contains records for all youth who receive independent living services using funds provided through the Chaffee Act, and the other dataset has the results of a periodic survey of youth who turn 17 in certain years, along with follow-up surveys at ages 19 and 21.

Data from both populations are collected by the states and submitted to the Children’s Bureau. Although there is some overlap, the two sets of data differ in the number and identity of the cases they cover, and the variables they contain. The number of youth who receive services (Services Population) is much larger than the number eligible to take the NYTD Outcomes Survey (Outcomes Population). Only 5% of those who received services are in the Outcomes Population.

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## CONFIDENTIALITY PROTECTIONS

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Because the same youth, under the same encrypted identifier, may appear in NYTD and the AFCARS Foster Care File, and the files can be linked, the same confidentiality protections used in AFCARS are applied to the NYTD Files. These are:

- The county FIPS code for the youth from counties with fewer than 1,000 records in the AFCARS Foster Care File are recoded to 8 to indicate *not provided for reasons of confidentiality*. This adjustment applies to NYTD element #15, *LCLFIPSSV*, which appears only in the Services File.
- The youth’s date of birth (DOB) is recoded to the 15<sup>th</sup> of the month. This adjustment applies to NYTD element #4, *DOB*.



# THE OUTCOMES FILE

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## COHORTS

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Starting with the 2011 federal fiscal year, and every three years thereafter, all youth who reach their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday in the fiscal year and are in foster care within the 45-day period following their birthday (73 FR 10342) are eligible for the NYTD Outcomes Survey. Youth who complete the survey are followed-up 2 and 4 years later – at ages 19 and 21 – with the same survey. Below is the schedule for outcomes data collection through the year 2023:

Fiscal Year	Cohort	Wave	Data Collected
2011	2011	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FY2011)
2012	-		
2013	2011	2	Age 19 Follow-Up Survey
2014	2014	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FY2014)
2015	2011	3	Age 21 Follow-Up Survey
2016	2014	2	Age 19 Follow-Up Survey
2017	2017	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FY2017)
2018	2014	3	Age 21 Follow-Up Survey
2019	2017	2	Age 19 Follow-Up Survey
2020	2020	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FY2020)
2021	2017	3	Age 21 Follow-Up Survey
2022	2020	2	Age 19 Follow-Up Survey
2023	2023	1	Baseline Outcomes Survey (Age 17 in FY2023)

## THE THREE WAVES

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### WAVE 1: BASELINE POPULATION AND COHORT

**Baseline Population.** All foster care youth who turn 17 in the baseline year are in the baseline population. All youth in the baseline population are required to be contacted and asked to complete the NYTD Outcomes Survey. Demographic data for all baseline youth is recorded in the Wave 1 File, regardless of whether they respond to the survey. This allows comparison of demographics of responders to non-responders.

**Cohort.** The cohort is a subset of the baseline population. To be in the cohort, a youth must meet all the following conditions:

- a) Youth is in the baseline population;
- b) Youth is in foster care on the day of the survey;
- c) Youth participated in the survey (at least one non-missing, non-refusal response to Elements 37-58);
- d) Youth completed the survey within 45 days of her/his 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

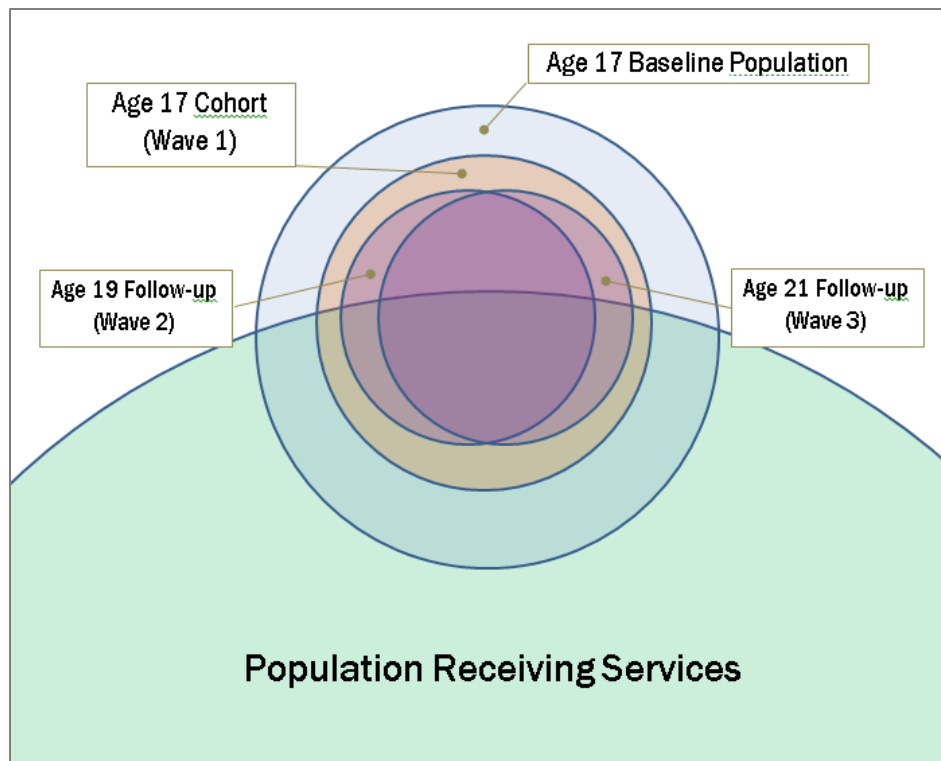
## WAVE 2: TWO-YEAR FOLLOW-UP

Most youth in the cohort, with the exception of those who are not in the sample (for states that sample), receive a follow-up survey during the 6-month reporting period that contains their 19<sup>th</sup> birthday. For the FY2017 Cohort, this survey will be conducted in FY2019.

## WAVE 3: FOUR-YEAR FOLLOW-UP

Youth in the cohort receive a second follow-up survey during the 6-month reporting period that contains their 21<sup>st</sup> birthday. For the FY2017 Cohort, this survey will be conducted in FY2021. The survey questions are the same for both follow-ups. Youth who were eligible for the Wave 2 Survey at age 19 are eligible for the Wave 3 Survey, even if they did not respond to the Wave 2 Survey.

FIGURE 1: RELATIONSHIPS BETWEEN WAVES:



## DATA COLLECTION

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For the baseline survey, results are reported to the Children’s Bureau at 6-month intervals. The “A” period covers the first 6 months of the fiscal year (October through March), and the “B” period covers the second 6 months (April through September). The baseline survey is administered during the 45-day period following the youth’s 17<sup>th</sup> birthday. If a youth’s birthday occurs during the last 45 days of the “B” period, the state still has 45 days to collect the data. If the survey is administered after the end of the fiscal year, the data is reported along with the “A” period data for the following year. This means that the full complement of baseline data will not be complete until after the May 15<sup>th</sup> deadline (45 days after the end of the “A” period – March 31) for submission of the “A” period file for the following fiscal year.

## SAMPLING

For the baseline population, no sampling is done. The baseline population consists of *all* youth in foster care at any point during the 45-day period beginning on their 17<sup>th</sup> birthday.

The cohort is a self-selected, non-probabilistic sample of youth in the baseline population. Because youth are not selected randomly, there is no guarantee that the cohort is representative of the baseline population (i.e., 17-year-old youth in foster care).

Once the cohort is selected, probabilistic sampling *may* be used to determine the two follow-up populations (at 19 and 21 years of age). Sampling is done once, and the same sample is used for both follow-up surveys.

**Sample States.** For the 2-year and 4-year follow-up surveys, states have the option of surveying a random sample of the Wave 1 Cohort. Sampling is done just once for both follow-ups. States that take this option have a value of 1 for the variable *SampleState*. Youth who are in the sample are denoted as such in the variable *InSample*. Only youth in the sample – and all those from non-sample states – are eligible for the ages 19 and 21 follow-up surveys.

A total of 15 states have opted to use sampling for the FY2017 Cohort, Waves 2 and 3: Colorado, Georgia, Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Louisiana, Maryland, Massachusetts, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, and Washington.

The NYTD regulations specify the following regarding the sampling frame, sampling method, and sample size (73 FR 10371 §1356.84):

*(b) The State agency must select the follow-up sample using simple random sampling procedures based on random numbers generated by a computer program, unless ACF approves another sampling procedure. The sampling universe consists of youth in the baseline population consistent with 45 CFR 1356.81(b) who participated in the State agency's data collection at age 17.*

*(c) The sample size is based on the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the State agency's data collection at age 17.*

*(1) If the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the outcome data collection at age 17 is 5,000 or less, the State agency must calculate the sample size using the formula in appendix C of this part, with the Finite Population Correction (FPC). The State agency must increase the resulting number by 30 percent to allow for attrition, but the sample size may not be larger than the number of youth who participated in data collection at age 17.*

*(2) If the number of youth in the baseline population who participated in the outcome data collection at age 17 is greater than 5,000, the State agency must calculate the sample size using the formula in appendix C of this part, without the FPC. The State agency must increase the resulting number by 30 percent to allow for attrition, but the sample size must not be larger than the number of youth who participated in data collection at age 17.*

Appendix C, referenced above, can be found as on-line document [Appendix C to Part 1356 - Calculating Sample Size for NYTD Follow-Up Populations](https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/appendix-C_to_part_1356) on the Cornell Law School website ([https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/appendix-C\\_to\\_part\\_1356](https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/appendix-C_to_part_1356)).

No state had more than 5000 youth in their cohort, so the Finite Population Correction (FPC) – described above and in Appendix C – applies to all states that use a sample.

## SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

Under NYTD rules, states have the discretion to choose the methods used to administer the Outcomes Survey to youth (e.g., in person, online, or over the phone) provided that the survey is administered to the person directly. No one can answer for the youth, nor can data from other sources be used to answer questions. Participation in the survey is completely voluntary on the part of the youth.

## RESPONSE RATES

**Response Rates for Wave 1.** For Wave 1, there is only one way of computing the response rate.

### Wave 1:

- *Denominator* is the number of youth in the baseline population (*Baseline = 1 AND Wave = 1*).
- *Numerator* is the number of youth who responded to the survey, and who met all other Cohort 2017 inclusion criteria (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 1*).

For the 2017 Cohort, there were 24,469 youth in the Baseline Population. Of these, 16,276 responded and met all the inclusion criteria. The overall response rate, then, was  $16,276 / 24,469 = .665$ , or 66.5%.

**Response Rates for Waves 2 and 3.** For Waves 2 and 3, there are two ways of computing the response rate. The difference is in the denominator.

In Method 1, the denominator goes back to the original population of youth who turned 17 in FY2017 – this is the population for which that the survey is hoping to measure the outcomes. That is, this is the population that the survey respondents are intended to represent.

In Method 2, the denominator is the cohort – the youth who responded to the survey at Wave 1, and were eligible for subsequent surveys. Any youth in the cohort from a state that didn't sample is eligible. For sample states, only youth in the sample are eligible. This response rate tells you the proportion of youth who responded among those who were eligible.

**Wave 2, Method 1:**

- *Denominator* is the number of youth in the baseline population (*Baseline = 1 AND Wave = 1*).
- *Numerator* is the number of youth at Wave 2 who are in the cohort who are eligible for the Wave 2 survey and who participated in the survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 2 AND Elig19 = 1 and OutcmRpt = 1*).

**Wave 2, Method 2:**

- *Denominator* is the number of youth who were in the FY2017 Cohort, and were eligible for the Age 19 Outcomes Survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 2 AND Elig19=1*).
- *Numerator* is the number of youth at Wave 2 who are in the cohort who are eligible for the Wave 2 survey and who participated in the survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 2 AND Elig19 = 1 and OutcmRpt=1*).

**Wave 3, Method 1:**

- *Denominator* is the number of youth in the baseline population (*Baseline = 1 AND Wave = 1*).
- *Numerator* is the number of youth at Wave 3 who are in the cohort who are eligible for the Wave 3 survey and who participated in the survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 3 AND Elig21 = 1 and OutcmRpt=1*).

**Wave 3, Method 2:**

- *Denominator* is the number of youth who were in the FY2017 Cohort, and were eligible for the Age 21 Outcomes Survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 3 AND Elig21=1*).  
*Numerator* is the number of youth at Wave 3 who are in the cohort who are eligible for the Wave 3 survey and who participated in the survey (*FY17Cohort = 1 AND Wave = 3 AND Elig21 = 1 and OutcmRpt=1*).

**TABLE 1: 2017 COHORT, WAVE 1, RESPONSE RATES BY STATE**

StFIPS	State	In Baseline	In Cohort and Responded	Response Rate
01	Alabama	344	267	78%
02	Alaska	81	47	58%
04	Arizona	858	127	15%
05	Arkansas	231	101	44%
06	California	3,618	2,383	66%
08	Colorado	290	229	79%
09	Connecticut	244	207	85%
10	Delaware	59	48	81%
11	District of Columbia	48	41	85%
12	Florida	1,060	289	27%
13	Georgia	722	602	83%
15	Hawaii	79	63	80%
16	Idaho	86	81	94%
17	Illinois	717	538	75%
18	Indiana	933	711	76%
19	Iowa	375	329	88%
20	Kansas	425	372	88%
21	Kentucky	634	331	52%
22	Louisiana	287	261	91%
23	Maine	59	36	61%
24	Maryland	344	292	85%
25	Massachusetts	747	554	74%
26	Michigan	539	459	85%
27	Minnesota	484	346	71%
28	Mississippi	253	138	55%
29	Missouri	729	458	63%
30	Montana	101	77	76%
31	Nebraska	179	157	88%
32	Nevada	140	109	78%
33	New Hampshire	101	66	65%
34	New Jersey	256	197	77%
35	New Mexico	82	79	96%
36	New York	1,436	829	58%
37	North Carolina	586	183	31%
38	North Dakota	110	75	68%
39	Ohio	1,131	527	47%
40	Oklahoma	233	204	88%

StFIPS	State	In Baseline	In Cohort and Responded	Response Rate
41	Oregon	322	203	63%
42	Pennsylvania	732	580	79%
44	Rhode Island	129	105	81%
45	South Carolina	293	227	77%
46	South Dakota	60	55	92%
47	Tennessee	779	397	51%
48	Texas	1,355	1,125	83%
49	Utah	229	183	80%
50	Vermont	32	32	100%
51	Virginia	450	378	84%
53	Washington	375	290	77%
54	West Virginia	382	242	63%
55	Wisconsin	373	321	86%
56	Wyoming	78	75	96%
72	Puerto Rico	279	250	90%
<b>Avg Across Cases:</b>		<b>24,469</b>	<b>16,276</b>	<b>67%</b>
<b>Avg Across States:</b>				<b>73%</b>

## DATA FILE INFORMATION

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NDACAN Dataset #229 contains results from Wave 1 of the NYTD Outcomes Survey for the FY2017 Cohort. The variable “Wave” distinguishes between the Waves. Wave 1 (Wave=1) includes all youth in the baseline population, regardless of whether they responded to the survey. Waves 2 and 3 will include only youth who in the FY2017 Cohort and were eligible for the follow-up.

## ANALYTIC CONSIDERATIONS

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*RecNumbr* is the encrypted child identifier. This ID is only guaranteed to be unique within a state, so *RecNumbr* must always be used in combination with the state ID when counting or otherwise analyzing particular youth.

To facilitate working with *St-RecNumbrs*, NDACAN added the derived variable *StFCID* to the dataset. *StFCID* is the concatenation of *St* and *RecNumbr*. For example, when *St* = “CA” and *RecNumbr* = “123456789012”, then *StFCID* would be “CA123456789012”.

A *StFCID* is unique within a Wave. A *StFCID-Wave* combination is unique in the entire longitudinal file. The file has the complete three Waves of data.

Another advantage of using *StFCID* is that it is present in each of the four linkable files listed below, with the same name.

## LINKING TO OTHER FILES

The variable *RecNumbr* is an encrypted version of the youth’s unique identifier used by the state agency. The ID may go by different names in the various linkable files. These are:

- NYTD Outcomes File: *RecNumbr*
- AFCARS Foster Care File: *RecNumbr*
- AFCARS Adoption File: *RecNum* (for some states)
- NCANDS Child File: *AFCARSID*

The AFCARS child identifier is encrypted for all these datasets, but is encrypted consistently across datasets, so it serves as an indicator of the same child across datasets and across years. Be careful, however. These commonalities are generally reliable, but are not applicable to all states in all years. Contact NDACAN Support for further information regarding which states can be linked across specific years.

**SEE THE NYTD CODE BOOK FOR VARIABLE INFORMATION.**

Technical support for this dataset is provided by NDACAN. Send inquiries to [NDACANSupport@cornell.edu](mailto:NDACANSupport@cornell.edu)