Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System: Methodological Changes, 2011

Beginning in 2011, BRFSS methods changed in two ways:¹

- Cell phone-only households were added to the sample.
- Responses were weighted using iterative proportional fitting (IPF) or raking, which allows adjustment for a larger selection of demographic factors and is the weighting schema used by the U.S. Census.

Why is this important?

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Cell phone</th>
<th>Weighting</th>
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<td>- The proportion of U.S. households relying only on cellular telephone service is steadily rising; estimates from 2011 show approximately 32% no longer have a land-line.² In Hawaii, the estimate rises to 42%.³</td>
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<td>- Research shows that there is a different demographic profile among people who use only cellular phones. They tend to be younger, unmarried, home renters who live in metropolitan areas.</td>
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<td>- Omitting people who use only cellular phones skews the estimates of health behaviors and outcomes, making the results less representative.</td>
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<td>- The previous weighting adjusted the survey population based only on three demographic factors: age, race/ethnicity, and gender.</td>
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<td>- Advances in computer technology now allow for more sophisticated weighting methods that can adjust for a larger number of demographic factors, including some representing the intersection of two subgroups.</td>
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<td>- Adjusting for many demographic variables makes the sample more representative of the population, reducing the potential for bias.</td>
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Hawaii BRFSS estimates are adjusted for:

- Age group by gender
- Race/ethnicity
- Education
- Marital status
- Tenure (rent or own)
- Gender
- Age group by race/ethnicity
- Phone usage group
- Region (county)
- Region by age group
- Region by gender
- Region by race/ethnicity

References: