

Ancestry and Race Data Items in the Electronic Birth Registration System (EBRS)

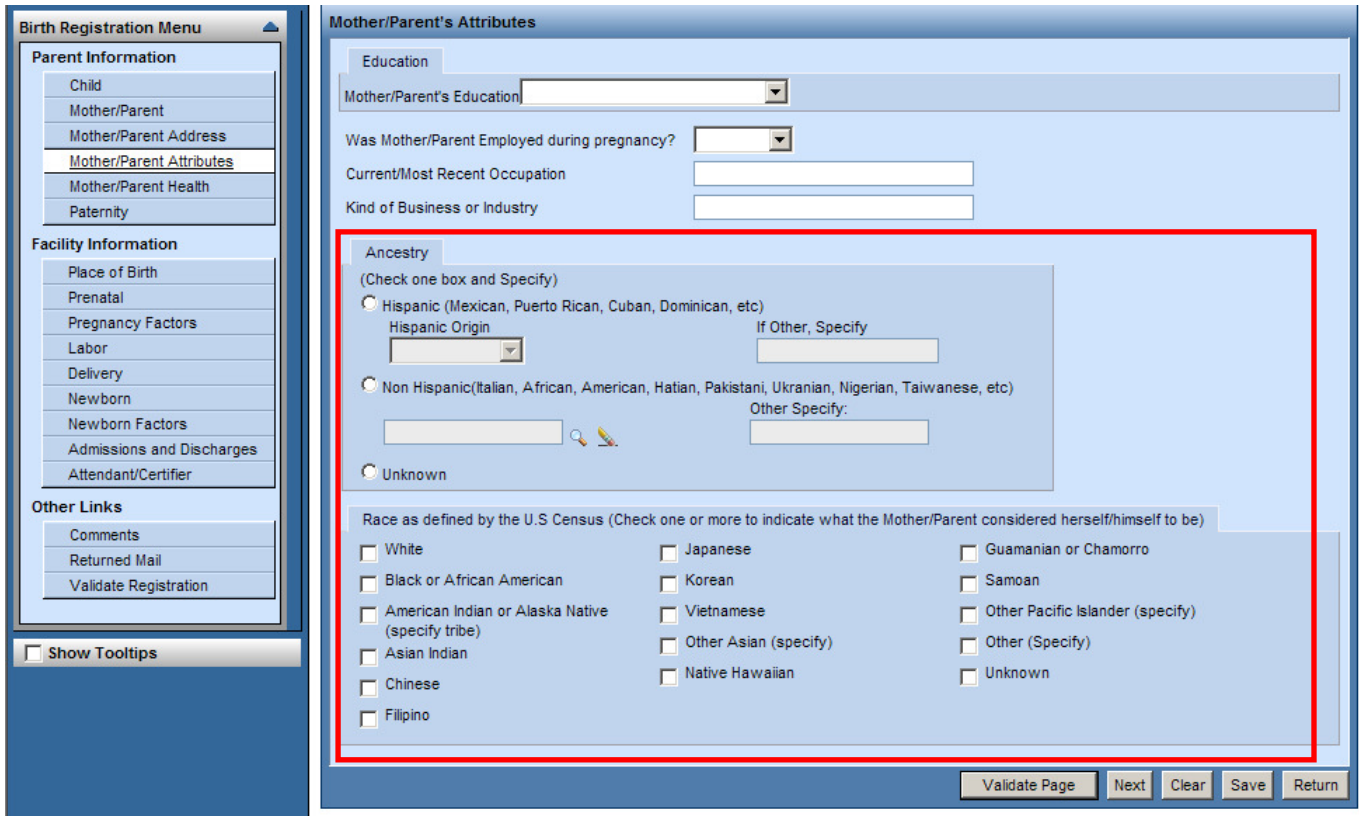
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In this issue, you will find information on data quality regarding Ancestry and Race items and ways to improve the reporting of these data in EBRS.

This newsletter will cover the following data items:

- Ancestry
- Race



Birth Registration Menu

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Show Tooltips

Mother/Parent's Attributes

Education

Mother/Parent's Education:

Was Mother/Parent Employed during pregnancy?:

Current/Most Recent Occupation:

Kind of Business or Industry:

Ancestry (Check one box and Specify)

Hispanic (Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, Dominican, etc)

Hispanic Origin: If Other, Specify:

Non Hispanic (Italian, African, American, Hatian, Pakistani, Ukranian, Nigerian, Taiwanese, etc)

Other Specify:

Unknown

Race as defined by the U.S. Census (Check one or more to indicate what the Mother/Parent considered herself/himself to be)

<input type="checkbox"/> White	<input type="checkbox"/> Japanese	<input type="checkbox"/> Guamanian or Chamorro
<input type="checkbox"/> Black or African American	<input type="checkbox"/> Korean	<input type="checkbox"/> Samoan
<input type="checkbox"/> American Indian or Alaska Native (specify tribe)	<input type="checkbox"/> Vietnamese	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Pacific Islander (specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Asian Indian	<input type="checkbox"/> Other Asian (specify)	<input type="checkbox"/> Other (Specify)
<input type="checkbox"/> Chinese	<input type="checkbox"/> Native Hawaiian	<input type="checkbox"/> Unknown
<input type="checkbox"/> Filipino		

The Quality Improvement Unit of the Office of Vital Statistics is dedicated to improving the quality of vital event data by providing education and training to data providers. This newsletter is the third in a series of quality improvement newsletters that will be distributed to all birthing institutions and Regional Perinatal Coordinators to help improve the entry and quality of birth data.



DATA QUALITY IMPROVEMENT NEWSLETTER

OFFICE OF VITAL STATISTICS
QUALITY IMPROVEMENT UNIT

ISSUE #3 MARCH 2010

www.nyc.gov/evers

I. DEFINITIONS AND IMPORTANCE OF ANCESTRY AND RACE

Ancestry and race are frequently used to examine whether there are demographic variations in women's and infants' health. It is therefore critical to accurately and reliably report these variables. This information informs policymakers' decision-making regarding allocation of funds to improve maternal and infant health, development and targeting of public health programs, and a wide range of research studies.

The definitions of these variables are developed on the national level by the federal Office of Management and Budget, the National Center for Health Statistics, and the U.S. Census. They should be used as guidelines when describing an individual's ancestry and race.

ANCESTRY

- Ancestry refers to the nationality, lineage, or country in which the person or his or her ancestors were born before their arrival in the United States. There is no set rule as to how many generations are to be taken into account in determining ancestry. A person may report ancestry based on the country of origin of a parent, grandparent, or some far-removed ancestor.
- Individuals of Hispanic or Latino descent such as those of Cuban, Mexican, Puerto Rican, Dominican, South or Central American descent or any other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race, are grouped into Hispanic ancestry. Individuals from other lineages are deemed as non-Hispanic.
- In addition to Hispanic versus non-Hispanic origin, we ask for more specific details about an individual's ancestry (often identified through nationality of origin) because New York City is one of the most diverse cities in the nation. This information is of great importance since health outcomes may differ depending on specific lineages.

RACE

- Race is collected according to national guidelines defined by the U.S. Census and allows an individual to self-identify to one or more races regardless of heritage, origin or descent.
- Race is broken up into categories that can contain people of many different ancestries and origins.
- The categories reflect a social definition of race recognized in this country, not an attempt to define race biologically, anthropologically, or genetically. In addition, it is recognized that the categories of the race item include racial and national origin or socio-cultural groups.
- Race is an important variable in planning for and evaluating the effectiveness of health programs. It also is used to study variables in childbearing, access to health care, and pregnancy outcomes such as perinatal mortality and birth weight.



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Vital events within categories of ancestry and race are presented each year in the Annual Summary produced by the Bureau of Vital Statistics (available online at www.nyc.gov/vitalstats). These data are used by multiple bureaus at the NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene (DOHMH) as well as by other governmental agencies, hospitals, and community-based organizations for public health programs, policy planning and research. ***Due to an increase in missing or incomplete Ancestry entries, tables in the 2008 Annual Summary using the Ancestry variable have a greater proportion of Unknown data when compared to previous years. The Bureau of Vital Statistics anticipates similar problems with the 2009 data.***

The Bureau of Vital Statistics will periodically audit hospital-specific data quality and continue to make requests for data completion, clarification, or verification when necessary. Please note that effective January 1, 2010 the revised New York City Health Code Law §201 requires that you provide missing, additional, or corrected certificate data within five business days upon request.

To ensure data accuracy, please review the following pages and incorporate the recommendations into your daily reporting practices. Without improvement, poor reporting and data entry practices will continue to affect the ability of DOHMH, your hospital, and other organizations to analyze and report birth data.

Questions? Contact Us!

If you need assistance or have questions regarding birth data quality, please contact Lauren Abercrombie in the Quality Improvement Unit at 212-788-5289 or VitalQI@health.nyc.gov. If you have questions regarding EBRS, please contact the EVERS Help Desk at 212-788-4575 or EBRS@health.nyc.gov.

All Data Quality Improvement Newsletters as well as resources for data item completion and data entry can be found at <http://www.nyc.gov/html/doh/html/vr/vr-ebres.shtml>.



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II. WORKSHEET COMPLETION AND DATA ENTRY IN EBRs

Collecting ancestry and race data presents different challenges from collecting confidential medical data. Accurate reporting depends on two different sources: (1) the parents completing the worksheet, and (2) the person entering the data into EBRs. Both sources are prone to error and incomplete reporting. We are working to revise the Mother/Parent Worksheet to help the parents accurately complete the ancestry and race questions.

Until then, we need your help to capture the best data possible by assisting the parents and improving data entry. We urge you to help the parents with this portion of the worksheet while they are still in the facility and provide further explanation on the definitions of ancestry and race if needed. You may use any definitions provided in this newsletter for this purpose. Facilities not providing assistance should review the worksheet before the parents leave to assure these questions were answered properly and follow up with the parents if their answers need clarification.

ANCESTRY

On the Mother/Parent Worksheet and in EBRs, the ancestry responses are divided into Hispanic or non-Hispanic. The Hispanic or non-Hispanic origin must then be specified. The response should reflect what the parent MOST considers himself/herself to be and is not based on percentages of ancestry. *Only one ancestry specification is reported in health statistics. After parents indicate Hispanic versus non-Hispanic, please urge them to list the one origin with which they most identify on the "Specify" line, not a combination of ancestries.*

- **HISPANIC** refers to individuals descended from Cuba, Mexico, Puerto Rico, Dominican Republic, South or Central America or any other Spanish culture or origin, regardless of race.
 - In EBRs, if the parent indicated Hispanic ancestry on the worksheet, select the button for Hispanic, then locate the origin specified by the parent using the drop-down menu.
 - If more than one origin was written on the "Specify" line of the worksheet, and you cannot obtain the primary origin from the parent, use the drop-down menu to select the first term written on the "Specify" line.
 - If the Hispanic origin given by the parent cannot be found in the drop-down, choose Other Hispanic from the drop-down and type the ancestry given into the "If Other, Specify" box.
- **NON HISPANIC** refers to any origin or descent that is not classified as Hispanic (see above), regardless of race.
 - In EBRs, if the parent indicated non-Hispanic ancestry on the worksheet, select the button for Non Hispanic, then locate the origin specified by the parent using the look-up menu.
 - If more than one origin was written on the "Specify" line of the worksheet, and you cannot obtain the primary origin from the parent, use the look-up menu to select the first term written on the "Specify" line.
 - If the non-Hispanic origin given by the parent cannot be found in the look-up menu, you have the ability to select Other, Other African, Other Asian, Other Central American/Caribbean, Other European, Other North American, Other Pacific Islander, or Other South American. Once you pick one of the Other categories, type the ancestry given into the "Other Specify" box.
- **UNKNOWN** can be selected if the ancestry is not given (†see note on next page).



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RACE

On the Mother/Parent Worksheet and in EBRs, the race responses provide an opportunity to choose more than one racial category if the parent wishes to identify with multiple racial heritage. If a parent is having trouble identifying the appropriate categories, the following descriptions may be helpful. Data entry staff also can use this guide to classify write-in responses into one of the checkbox responses.

- WHITE - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa. It includes people who report entries such as Irish, German, Italian, Lebanese, Near Easterner, Arab, or Polish.
- BLACK OR AFRICAN AMERICAN - A person having origins in any of the Black racial groups of Africa. It includes people who provide written entries such as Afro-American, Kenyan, Nigerian, or Haitian.
- AMERICAN INDIAN OR ALASKA NATIVE - A person having origins in any of the original peoples of North, Central, and South America and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment. Specify the tribe.
- ASIAN INDIAN - Includes people who identify themselves as Bengalese, Bharat, Dravidian, East Indian, or Goanese.
- CHINESE - Includes people who identify themselves as Cantonese or Chinese American.
- FILIPINO - Includes people who identify themselves as Filipino, Philippine, or Filipino American.
- JAPANESE - Includes people who identify themselves as Nipponese or Japanese American.
- KOREAN - Includes people who identify themselves as Korean American.
- VIETNAMESE - Includes people who identify themselves as Vietnamese American.
- OTHER ASIAN - Includes people who provide a write-in response of an Asian group, such as Bangladeshi, Bhutanese, Burmese, Cambodian, Hmong, Indochinese, Indonesian, Iwo Jiman, Laohmong, Laotian, Madagascar, Malaysian, Maldivian, Mong, Nepalese, Okinawan, Pakistani, Siamese, Singaporean, Sri Lankan, or Thai.
- NATIVE HAWAIIAN - Includes people who identify themselves as full or part Hawaiian.
- GUAMANIAN OR CHAMORRO - Includes people who provide written entries of Guam or Chamorro.
- SAMOAN - Includes people who identify themselves as American Samoan or Western Samoan.
- OTHER PACIFIC ISLANDER - Includes people who provide a write-in response of a Pacific Islander group such as Carolinian, Chuukese (Trukese), Fijian, Kosraean, Melanesian, Micronesian, Northern Mariana Islander, Palauan, Papua New Guinean, Pohnpeian, Polynesian, Solomon Islander, Tahitian, Tokelauan, Tongan, or Yapese.
- OTHER - Includes all other responses not included in the categories described above. Specify the write-in entry.*
- UNKNOWN - Race is not given.†

* The Ancestry section is the portion that captures whether a person is Hispanic or Non Hispanic. **HISPANIC IS NOT A RACE** according to federal definitions. People of Hispanic origin may be of any race. Hispanics can choose one or more race categories, including White, Black or African American, American Indian and Alaska Native, Asian, and Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander. Please encourage the parents to select one of the categories given rather than writing 'Hispanic' as an "Other" specification and explain to them that their Hispanic origin is being captured in the ancestry item.

† If parents leave the ancestry and/or race question(s) blank on the worksheet and have already left the facility, you can enter "Unknown" into these fields. DO NOT make assumptions about what you think the parents would answer or select a race entry based on the parents' appearance. However, if you have too many records where "Unknown" is indicated, you will be contacted by the Quality Improvement team to determine why you are not obtaining this important data.



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III. 2008 ANCESTRY AND RACE DATA QUALITY ISSUES

The Office of Vital Statistics has conducted data cleaning for the 2008 filing year. During this process the Office identified many instances of poor ancestry and race data entry and quality, which are outlined below. *While only the Mother’s Ancestry and Race data items are detailed below, please note that the Father’s Ancestry and Race (where applicable) had similar quality issues.*

DATA ITEM	ISSUE(S) (Among all reported births, NYC, 2008)	HOW TO IMPROVE REPORTING	
		Assisting the Parents with Responses	Data Entry in EBRS
Ancestry	<p>1. Mother’s ancestry was reported as Unknown for 3,906 records.</p> <p>We are unable to report ethnicity statistics without at least the Hispanic versus Non-Hispanic ancestry information.</p>	<p>We urge you to assist the parents with this portion of the worksheet while they are still in the facility and provide further explanation into the importance and meaning of ancestry if needed.</p> <p>Refer to page 2 of this newsletter for the importance and definition of ancestry.</p>	<p>The reporting improvement must come from the parents’ responses.</p>
	<p>2. Among mothers of Non-Hispanic ancestry, 4,392 were reported as “Other” with the ancestry typewritten in the “Other, specify” text field. Most typewritten entries indicated one of two problems:</p> <p>a. A combination of multiple ancestries, e.g., “Irish & Scottish” or “Italian American.”</p> <p>Only one ancestry is reported in the ancestry statistics, regardless of whether more than one (or a combination) was listed.</p>	<p>a. Encourage the parents to specify the <u>one</u> ancestry or nationality they MOST consider themselves to be.</p>	<p>The “Other” option for Non-Hispanic ancestries should only be used in rare circumstances. Nearly all Non-Hispanic ancestries can be found in the look-up menu. Avoid using the “Other” option and typing the entry into the “Other, specify” text field.</p> <p>a. If you cannot obtain the primary ancestry from the parents, enter the first term listed on the worksheet. For example, “Irish & Scottish” should be entered by selecting “Irish” from the look-up menu. “Italian American” should be entered by selecting “Italian” from the look-up menu.</p>



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		Assisting the Parents with Responses	Data Entry in EBRs
Ancestry, cont.	<p>b. An ancestry specification that is too general, e.g., "African" or "European." <i>Entries such as "African," "European," and "Asian" are too general and cannot be coded.</i></p>	<p>b. Encourage the parents to further specify their ancestry, giving a nationality or country of origin.</p>	<p>b. If no more information besides "European" is available, you should select "Other European" from the look-up menu and type "Unknown" in the Specify field. → This method also applies to "African," "Asian," or any other general classifications.</p>
	<p>3. Among mothers of Non-Hispanic ancestry, 1,908 were reported as "Unknown" or "Not Stated" in the Specify field.</p>	<p>Encourage the parents to further specify their ancestry, giving a nationality or country of origin.</p>	<p><i>The reporting improvement must come from the parents' responses.</i></p>



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HOW TO IMPROVE REPORTING	
	Data Entry in EBRs
<p>DATA ITEM</p> <p>Race</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">ISSUE(S) (Among all reported births, NYC, 2008)</p> <p>Mother's race was reported only as "Other" for 21,328 records. Of these, more than half were specified as Hispanic or Latin(o/a) with no other information.</p> <p>We are unable to code race entries left as "Other" with only a Hispanic or Latin(o/a) specification, since people who are Hispanic can be of any race.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Assisting the Parents with Responses</p> <p>We ask that you check the answers to this question before the parents leave the facility and assist them in responding properly.</p> <p>Regarding the entry of "Hispanic" or "Latin(o/a)" as the race:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Explain to the parents that Hispanic is not a race classification, it is an ancestry. The Ancestry section is the portion that captures whether a person is Hispanic or Non Hispanic: whenever ancestry is indicated as Hispanic, the person is considered to be Hispanic, regardless of their race. • For race, encourage the parents to select one of the categories listed, rather than checking "Other" and writing in "Hispanic" or "Latin(o/a)." They may check more than one of the listed categories. <i>Refer to page 5 of this newsletter to help the parents.</i> • If the parents feel that they do not fall into one of the listed categories, offer the alternative of indicating a nationality, such as "Dominican" or "Cuban" rather than "Hispanic" or "Latin(o/a)." 	<p>If the parents insist upon writing "Hispanic" or "Latin(o/a)" for race or they have already left the facility when you enter the data, you may then indicate "Other" and "Hispanic."</p> <p>You should NOT automatically select "White" for anyone who is of Hispanic origin - again, people of Hispanic origin may select any one of the race classifications.</p>