

The 2016 National Survey of Children's Health reports four geographic variables on the public use file: FIPSST (State of Residence), CBSAFP_YN (Core-Based Statistical Area Status), METRO_YN (Metropolitan Statistical Area Status), and MPC_YN (Metropolitan Principal City Status). The intersection of CBSAFP_YN and METRO_YN allows users to also identify children in Micropolitan Statistical Areas.

Core-Based Statistical Areas (CBSAs) are defined as a county or counties with at least one urbanized area or urban cluster (a core) of at least 10,000 population, plus adjacent counties that have a high degree of social and economic integration with the core (as measured through commuting ties). There are two types of CBSAs: Metropolitan Statistical Areas (MSAs) and Micropolitan Statistical Areas (μ SAs). The differentiating factor between these types is that MSAs have a larger core, with a population of at least 50,000. A principal city – the largest incorporated place with a population of at least 50,000 – is identified in every MSA.

The intersection of FIPSST, CBSAFP_YN, METRO_YN, and MPC_YN allows a user to identify four geographic areas:

- Not in a Core-Based Statistical Area (CBSAFP_YN = 2)
- Micropolitan Statistical Area (CBSAFP_YN = 1 and METRO_YN = 2)
- Metropolitan Statistical Area, not Principal City (METRO_YN = 1 and MPC_YN = 2)
- Metropolitan Principal City (MPC_YN = 1)

To protect respondent confidentiality, CBSAFP_YN, METRO_YN, and MPC_YN could not be reported for children in some states. If a variable or intersection of variables could be used to identify a geographic area within a state with a child population under 100,000, reported values for that variable were replaced with ".D", indicating "Suppressed for Confidentiality", for all children in that state. It is important to note that values identifying both the suppressed area and the counterpart area must be suppressed; for example, if the child population in non-MSAs for a particular state is less than 100,000, then any indicator of MSA status (i.e., both non-MSA and MSA) in that state is suppressed.