

Data suppression standard

Example 3: Disaggregation by demographic characteristics (rule of 10 and secondary suppression)

Rule of 10 provides adequate suppression for most demographic characteristics (see also Examples 5-7).

Care needs to be taken to ensure that suppressed data cannot be reverse engineered using the remaining variables. For example, data is not effectively suppressed if subtracting the available unsuppressed cells from the total allows for the suppressed cell(s) to be inferred. In these instances, the cell requiring suppression should be combined with the next smallest cell.

Base data

Table: Count of children aged 0-17 years in out-of-home care for a specific year

Age group of children	Count	Percentage
<1 year old	8	6.1%
1-4 yrs old	26	19.8%
5-9 yrs old	40	30.5%
10-14 yrs old	43	32.8%
15-17 yrs old	14	10.7%
Total	131	100.0%

Option 1: With treatment using rule of 10

Age group of children	Count	Percentage
<1 year old	np	np
1-4 yrs old	26	19.8%
5-9 yrs old	40	30.5%
10-14 yrs old	43	32.8%
15-17 yrs old	np	np
Total	131	100.0%

Here the cell data for <1 year is blanked out as it is a count of less than 10. Secondary suppression is needed of the next lowest count (15-17 year olds) so that the existing <1 year count cannot be determined by subtracting the total of the available cells (123) from the reported total (131).

The percentage is suppressed as this could be used to identify the count of children.

Option 2: With treatment using aggregation

Age group of children	Count	Percentage
0-4 yrs old	34	25.9%
5-9 yrs old	40	30.5%
10-14 yrs old	43	32.8%
15-17 yrs old	14	10.7%
Total	131	100.0%

Here the categories are aggregated (“<1 yr old” and “1-4 yrs old” into “0-4 yrs old”), which means that no cell is smaller than 10.