

Summer of NYTD, 2018

**National Data Archive On Child Abuse and Neglect
Bronfenbrenner Center for Translational Research
Cornell University**

Introduction

- ▶ Summer Schedule:
 - ▶ August 8th – Introduction
 - ▶ August 15th – Data Structure
 - ▶ August 22nd – Expert Presentation I
 - ▶ August 29th – Expert Presentation II
 - ▶ September 5th – Linking to NCANDS & AFCARS
 - ▶ September 12th – Research Presentation I
 - ▶ **September 19th – Research Presentation II**

Publishing with the National Youth in Transition Database

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About Me

- ▶ Associate Professor and MSW Program Director, Department of Social Work and Child Advocacy, Montclair State University
- ▶ Research interests include adolescents transitioning out of foster care, child maltreatment, child welfare policy
- ▶ Successfully published research using NYTD in several journals:
 - ▶ Journal of Adolescent Health
 - ▶ Children and Youth Services Review
 - ▶ Journal of Public Child Welfare

Advantages of Using NYTD

- ▶ A large, national dataset
- ▶ Has not been “used to death”
- ▶ Can be combined with other child welfare datasets (AFCARS, NCANDS)
- ▶ Includes adequate samples of generally small subgroups (e.g., teen parents)
- ▶ Ability to connect service data to outcome data
- ▶ Ability to conduct longitudinal analysis
- ▶ Useful for policy research (e.g., how state policies may relate to variations in outcomes)

Challenges of Using NYTD

- ▶ A national, but NOT *nationally-representative* dataset
- ▶ Response rates vary greatly by state, attrition is often significant
- ▶ Service data may be inconsistent/unreliable due to differences in definitions and data entry procedures
- ▶ Outcome data lacks detail (e.g., frequency, severity, timing)
- ▶ Challenges associated with missing data
- ▶ Reviewers not familiar with the dataset/do not trust administrative data

My View - Advantages are Greater than Limitations!

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ Shpiegel, S. & Cascardi, M. (2015). Adolescent parents in the first wave of the National Youth in Transition Database. *Journal of Public Child Welfare*, 9(3), 227-298.
- ▶ **Goals of the study:**
 - ▶ (a) Document the number of males and females who had children by age 17
 - ▶ (b) Examine bivariate differences between male and female parents on functioning indicators and use of Chafee services
 - ▶ (c) Explore the factors associated with teen parenthood for males and females
- ▶ **Methodology:**
 - ▶ NYTD 2011 cohort, baseline data only
 - ▶ Logistic regression analyses

Examples of Published Research

▶ Results:

- ▶ About 10% of females and 4% of males had children by age 17; few bivariate differences between mothers and fathers on functioning indicators and service use
- ▶ Factors associated with parenthood by age 17 (significant results only):

<u>Variable</u>	Females <u>OR</u>	Females <u>P-value</u>	Males <u>OR</u>	Males <u>P-value</u>
Non-White	1.37	<.001	1.50	<.05
Hispanic	1.66	<.001	1.45	<.01
School Enrollment	.48	<.001	.40	<.05
Homelessness	N.S	N.S.	2.36	<.001
Substance Abuse Referral	N.S	N.S	2.24	<.001
Incarceration	1.41	<.001	2.32	<.001

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ **Publication challenges:**
 - ▶ Reviewers not familiar with the dataset
 - ▶ Concerns about response rates and generalizability
 - ▶ Lack of detail in key variables
- ▶ **Strategies for responding to reviewers:**
 - ▶ Emphasizing the strengths of the dataset
 - ▶ Stressing that findings are similar to prior research
 - ▶ Contextualizing response rates (i.e., not dissimilar from other high-risk samples)
 - ▶ Comparing responders and non-responders

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ Shpiegel, S., Cascardi, M, & Dineen, M. (2017). A social ecology analysis of childbirth among females emancipating from foster care. *Journal of Adolescent Health, 60*, 563-569.
- ▶ **Goals of the study:**
 - ▶ (a) Document the rates of initial and repeat births among females ages 17 and 19
 - ▶ (b) Identify risk and protective factors at age 17 that relate to childbirth between ages 17-19
- ▶ **Methodology:**
 - ▶ Combined dataset: AFCARS 2011 and NYTD 2011 cohort (baseline, first follow-up)
 - ▶ Logistic regression analysis

Examples of Published Research

▶ **Results:**

- ▶ Cumulative rate of childbirth by age 19 was 21%; repeat childbirth very common
- ▶ Factors associated with childbirth between ages 17-19 (significant results only):

Variable	OR	p-value
Hispanic	1.38	<.05
Black	1.34	<.05
Relative Foster Home	1.40	<.05
Runaway	2.80	<.001
Trial Home Visit	2.35	<.001
Exited Care by Age 19	1.27	<.05
Employment Skills	.76	<.05
School Enrollment	.62	<.05
Incarceration	1.35	<.05
Childbirth <=17	10.10	<.001

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ **Publication challenges:**
 - ▶ Concerns about response rates and generalizability
 - ▶ Lack of detail regarding childbirth and associated variables
- ▶ **Strategies for responding to reviewers:**
 - ▶ Comparing demographics of responders and non-responders
 - ▶ Emphasizing the novelty and strength of the findings (particularly with respect to repeat childbirth)
 - ▶ Combining AFCARS and NYTD to obtain more detail on child welfare variables
 - ▶ Clearly stating the limitations of the dataset

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ Shpiegel, S., & Cascardi, M. (2018). The impact of early childbirth on socioeconomic outcomes and risk indicators of females transitioning out of foster care. *Children and Youth Services Review*, 84, 1-8.
- ▶ Study goals:
 - ▶ Examine the association between childbirth at three time points (i.e., by age 17, between ages 17-19, between ages 19-21) and females' socioeconomic outcomes and risk indicators at age 21
- ▶ Methodology:
 - ▶ NYTD 2011 cohort; baseline, first follow up, second follow up
 - ▶ Logistic regression analyses

Examples of Published Research

▶ Results:

- ▶ Over 40% of females reported childbirth by age 21; a large increase between ages 19-21
- ▶ The link between childbirth at three time points and outcomes at age 21 (controlling for race/ethnicity, foster care status, prior risk indicators):

Variable	HS Diploma/ GED or Higher OR	Current Employment OR	Public Assistance OR	Homelessness OR	Substance Abuse Ref. OR	Incarceration OR
Birth <=17	.76	1.27	1.05	.97	1.05	1.26
Birth Ages 17-19	.67**	1.19	1.03	1.13	1.19	1.10
Birth Ages 19-21	.65***	0.52***	2.65***	1.11	.98	.93

*p<.05; **p<.01, ***p<.001

Examples of Published Research

- ▶ **Publication challenges:**
 - ▶ Concerns about response rates and generalizability
 - ▶ Lack of detail in outcome variables and the exact timing of childbirth
- ▶ **Strategies for responding to reviewers:**
 - ▶ Emphasizing limited data on this topic and the importance of the research question
 - ▶ Extensively discussing limitations and their possible implications
 - ▶ Stressing the trade-off between depth and breadth (i.e., limited detail on key variables, BUT a large, national dataset containing an adequate number of mothers to conduct the necessary analyses)

Summary

- ▶ **Ability to publish research using NYTD by focusing on the dataset's strengths:**
 - ▶ Large, national sample
 - ▶ Longitudinal
 - ▶ Service AND outcome data
 - ▶ Sufficient sample size to study small subgroups
 - ▶ Linkages with other administrative datasets
 - ▶ Ability to answer previously unexamined research questions

These Strategies Have Generally Been Effective!

Summary

- ▶ **Strategies for a successful publication:**
 - ▶ Use the strengths of the dataset to examine novel research questions
 - ▶ Use weights to improve generalizability, if appropriate
 - ▶ Compare the demographics of responders and non-responders
 - ▶ Combine NYTD with AFCARS and/or NCANDS to obtain additional data about youths' child welfare histories
 - ▶ Limit analysis to states with adequate response rates
 - ▶ Be upfront about the dataset's limitations; do not overstate findings
 - ▶ Emphasize similarities to published research using other data sources
 - ▶ Educate colleagues about NYTD's strengths and the importance of its use

Possible Research Directions with NYTD

- ▶ **A focus on understudied subgroups** - e.g., the outcomes of Native American youth transitioning out of foster care
- ▶ **A link between services and outcomes** - e.g., the effectiveness of Chafee services for improving youths' post-secondary educational attainment
- ▶ **A detailed examination of child welfare histories** - e.g., linking AFCARS and NYTD to examine the link between placement moves and outcomes
- ▶ **Longitudinal and/or trend analysis** - e.g., examining the impact of incarceration histories on future employment; exploring longitudinal trends in childbirth rates across various NYTD cohorts
- ▶ **Policy analysis** - e.g., examining how availability of housing assistance influences the rates of homelessness by state

Questions? Comments?

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Questions Received in the Chat Window:

- ▶ When emphasizing findings in the literature to buttress your findings, could that be construed as biased
- ▶ When combining datasets, how do you decide which set of demographic data elements to use? (i.e. AFCARS vs. Outcomes)