

WELCOME
TO THE 2024
NDACAN
SUMMER
TRAINING
SERIES!

- The session will begin at 12pm EST.
- Please submit questions to the Q&A box.
- This session is being recorded.

NDACAN SUMMER TRAINING SERIES: BEST PRACTICES IN THE USE OF NDACAN DATA

National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect

Cornell University & Duke University

NYTD:
STRENGTHS &
LIMITATIONS

AUGUST 14, 2024



Children's Bureau

An Office of the Administration for Children & Families

NDACAN SUMMER TRAINING SERIES SCHEDULE

- July 10 — NCANDS: Strengths & Limitations
- July 17 — Assessing Reporting Issues in NCANDS & AFCARS
- July 24 — AFCARS: Strengths & Limitations
- July 31 — Survey Design & Using Weights
- August 7 — NSCAW III for Experienced & New Users
- August 14 — NYTD: Strengths & Limitations

SESSION AGENDA

- NYTD background
- Strengths
- Limitations

NYTD BACKGROUND

BACKGROUND

- John H. Chafee Foster Care Program for Successful Transition to Adulthood (the Chafee Program) was established out of the Foster Care Independence Act of 1999
- Chafee Program provides state with flexible funding to provide independent living services to current and former foster care youth transitioning to adulthood.
- Goal to improve outcomes for youth in foster care who have or are likely to reach their 18th birthday without having found a permanent home
- The law requires states to develop:
 - A system for tracking services provided through the Chafee Program, and
 - A method for collecting outcome measures so that the effectiveness of the program can be assessed.

NATIONAL YOUTH IN TRANSITION DATABASE (NYTD)

- The program is intended to serve:
 - Youth who are likely to remain in foster care until age 18, youth who have left foster care for kinship guardianship or adoption after the age of 16, and
 - Young adults ages 18 to 21 who have "aged out" of the foster care system
- States required to report **services** in 11 broad categories:
 - independent living needs; academic support; post-secondary educational support; career preparation; employment/vocational programs or training; budget/financial management; housing education and home management training; health education and risk prevention; family support and healthy marriage education; mentoring; and supervised independent living
- States required to survey youth regarding 6 major **outcomes**:
 - financial self-sufficiency; experience with homelessness, educational attainment; positive connections with adults; high-risk behavior; and access to health insurance

NYTD OUTCOMES AND SERVICES FILES

- Outcomes files (Cohorts 2011, 2014, 2017, 2020)
 - 3 waves of survey data from cohorts who turned 17 at wave 1, with follow-up surveys at ages 19 and 21
 - 3 cohorts complete (2011, 2014, 2017), 2 cohorts in process (2020, 2023)
 - Each cohort comes in their own data package
- Services files (2011-2023)
 - Records for all youth who receive at least one independent living services paid for or provided by the agency that administers the Chafee Program
 - Cumulative data file
- The number of youth who receive services is much larger than the number eligible to take the Outcomes Survey
 - Only about 5% of those who received services are in the Outcomes files.

SERVICES FILE

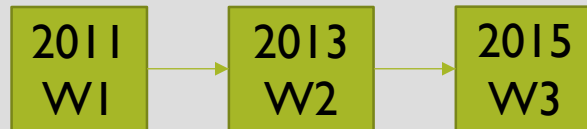
- Longitudinal records for all youth who receive at least one independent living skills service paid or provided by a Chafee funded county or agency, regardless of their foster care status and regardless of their age
- Data are submitted by the states every 6 months on a continuing basis.
- A child will have a record in the file for each 6-month period during which they received services.
- Data on independent living skills services such as: academic support, career preparation, employment/vocational training, budget/financial mentoring, financial assistance

OUTCOMES FILE

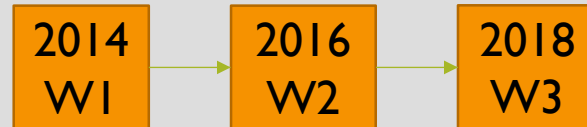
- One record per child per wave (though variables will be missing if they didn't respond to the wave)
 - Demographic data for all baseline youth is recorded in Wave 1 regardless of whether they respond to the survey to allow comparison of non-responders
- Data come in long format with variable “wave” to distinguish waves 1, 2, or 3
- First cohort was in 2011, new cohorts surveyed every 3 years
- Contains demographic information about the youth and many binary measures about what types of services, assistance or training a youth received, and certain outcomes such as homeless, incarceration, marriage, parenthood, insurance coverage

OUTCOMES SURVEY COHORTS

2011 Cohort / Cohort 1



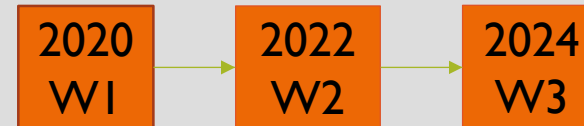
2014 Cohort / Cohort 2



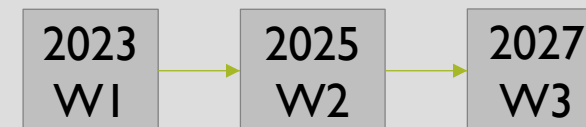
2017 Cohort / Cohort 3



2020 Cohort / Cohort 4



2023 Cohort / Cohort 5



OUTCOMES SURVEY BASELINE POPULATION

- The baseline population for the outcomes survey is all youth who reach their 17th birthday in the year and are in foster care within the 45-day period following their birthday
- All youth in the baseline population are eligible and required to be contacted and asked to complete the Outcomes Survey
 - No random sampling is done

OUTCOMES SURVEY COHORT

- The cohort is a self-selected, non-probabilistic sample of youth from the baseline population
- To be in the cohort, a youth must meet all the following conditions:
 - Youth is in the baseline population;
 - Youth is in foster care on the day of the survey;
 - Youth participated in the survey (at least one non-missing/non-refusal response)
 - Youth completed the survey within 45 days of her/his 17th birthday
- Youth who complete the Wave 1 survey are followed up 2 and 4 years later – at ages 19 and 21 – with the same survey

FOLLOW UP WAVES

- Most youth in the cohort are eligible to take the Wave 2 survey during the 6-month reporting period that contains their 19th birthday. (Exception of those who are not in the sample for states that sample)
- Youth who were eligible for the Wave 2 Survey at age 19 are eligible for the Wave 3 Survey, even if they did not respond to the Wave 2 Survey.
- For states that opt to sample, only youth randomly chosen to be in the sample are included in the follow-up population

SAMPLING STATES

- States have the option of randomly sampling from the Wave I Cohort baseline population for the 2-year and 4-year follow-up surveys
- Regulations dictate sampling frame, sampling method, and sample size calculation:
 - “Appendix C to Part 1356—Calculating Sample Size for NYTD Follow-Up Populations”
https://www.law.cornell.edu/cfr/text/45/appendix-C_to_part_1356
- Sampling is done once, and the same sample is used for both follow-up surveys.
- Only youth in the sample – and all those from no sample states – are eligible for the ages 19 and 21 follow-up surveys.
- 16 states used sampling for the 2020 Cohort: AZ, CO, GA, IL, IN, IA, KY, LA, MA, MD, MO, OH, PA, TN, TX, WA

SURVEY ADMINISTRATION

- States have the discretion to choose the methods used to administer the survey (e.g., in person, online, or over the phone) provided that the survey is administered to the person directly
- No one can answer for the youth, nor can data from other sources be used to answer questions.
- Participation in the survey is completely voluntary on the part of the youth

RESPONSE RATES: WAVE I

- Numerator is the number of youth who responded to wave I
- Denominator is the number of youth in the baseline population

RESPONSE RATES: WAVES 2 AND 3

- Numerator is the number of youth who responded at that wave
- Two ways of computing the response rate depending on the denominator
- Method 1 uses the baseline population as the denominator
 - This is the population for which that the survey is hoping to measure the outcomes, e.g. the population that the survey respondents are intended to represent
- Method 2 uses the youth who responded to the survey at Wave 1 and were eligible for subsequent surveys (e.g. eligible cohort) as the denominator
 - More a measure of attrition to that wave
 - Any youth in the cohort from a state that didn't sample is eligible. For sampling states, only youth in the sample are eligible
 - This response rate tells you the proportion of youth who responded among those who were eligible

STRENGTHS

STRENGTHS OF NYTD

- Best available data on the subject
- Many years of services data for long term tracking or longitudinal analyses
- Multiple complete cohort data to compare trends between or across time
- Lots of data support and resources through NDACAN and others
 - NYTD reports and summaries on the Children's Bureau website:
<https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/nytd>
- Linkable with AFCARS and NCANDS (with some limitations)
- States use data to inform policy changes and other funding needs, provide better services, target places/people that need more attention

NYTD DATA REPORTING STANDARDS

- States must comply with NYTD standards else they face penalties:
 - File format requirements and contain error-free information for certain standard demographic information;
 - 90% error-free for other data elements (i.e., be free of missing information, internally inconsistent responses and invalid information);
 - Provide full or partial outcome survey information on all 19/21 year-olds in the follow-up population or sample, or indicate why the survey information was not obtainable (i.e., because the youth is incapacitated or deceased); and
 - Garner the participation in the outcomes survey of at least 60 percent of 19- or 21-year-old youth in the follow-up population who are no longer in foster care. For youth who are still in foster care at ages 19 or 21, the State must achieve an outcome survey participation rate of at least 80 percent

LIMITATIONS

LIMITATIONS OF NYTD

- Not much granularity; a lot of variables are simplistic binary variables
- Low sample sizes and response rates from some states
- Small proportion of youth in the Services file are in the Outcomes file
- State differences in statutes/definitions etc.
 - State footnotes associated with each state should always be taken into account when utilizing a state's data
- State-to-state variation in child maltreatment laws and information systems may affect the interpretation of the data.

NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS AT WAVE I BY COHORT

Distribution of number of respondents over all states in Wave 1, by cohort



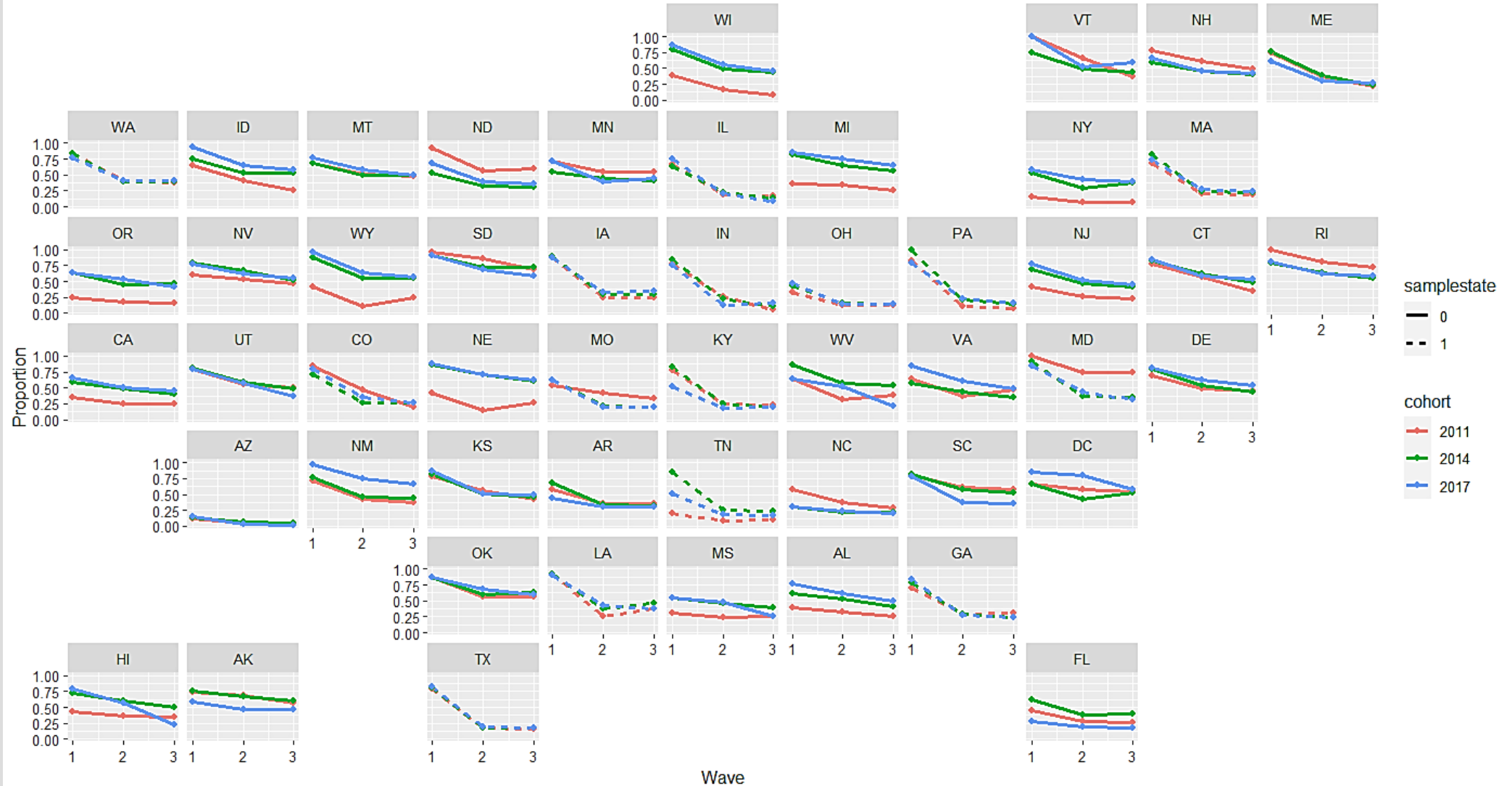
MASKING AND SUPPRESSION

- Same confidentiality protections used in AFCARS are applied to the NYTD Files:
 - County masking – unable to compare or analyze small counties, rural populations
 - Date masking – DOB is masked to the 15th of the month and any other dates are shifted similarly to maintain timespans

SURVEY LIMITATIONS

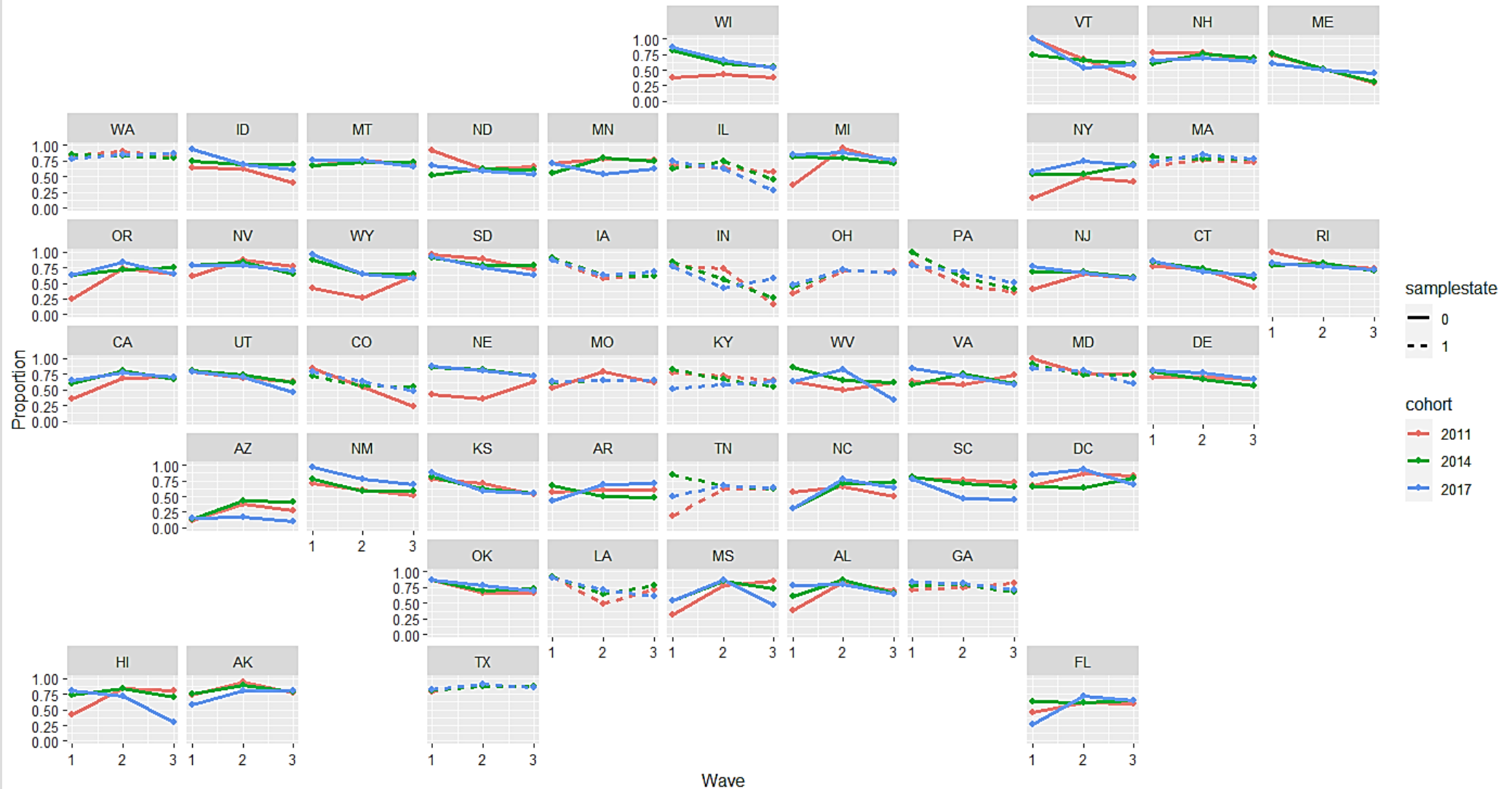
- Youth self-respond, i.e. not selected randomly, therefore no guarantee that the cohort is representative of the baseline population
- States administer survey differently which may lead to varying survey design bias
- Wave non-response to various reasons, rates vary by certain characteristics
 - E.g. some states require parent permission to respond for youth not of age

Proportion of baseline population responding at each wave, by cohort



SURVEY RESPONSE RATE FROM SUBSEQUENT WAVES (NON-ATTRITION)

Proportion of response from subsequent wave, by cohort



OTHER

- AFCARS ID's use UTF-8 characters (which is more extensive than standard ASCII) therefore some “weird” characters may cause problems in certain programming languages, which can interfere with linking

ADDITIONAL CONSIDERATIONS

SUGGESTIONS

- Always do state X year exploration of any variables used for research – understand missingness, reporting, etc. – frequencies, crosstabs, visualizations
- Consider multi-level modeling if using all states and years to account for differences at state level
- Refer to published reports or state footnotes for additional information on each state's reporting
- Seek assistance! – NDACAN, CB reports, other published literature

QUESTIONS?

SARAH SERNAKER
STATISTICIAN

Sarah.Sernaker@duke.edu

REFERENCES

- **About NYTD Fact Sheet (Children's Bureau)**
 - <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/fact-sheet/about-nytd>
- **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD) User Support at NDACAN**
 - <https://www.ndacan.acf.hhs.gov/user-support/user-support-nytd.cfm>
- **NYTD Technical Bulletin #5: Cohort Management and Sampling (PDF)**
 - https://www.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/documents/cb/nytd_tb5.pdf
- **National Youth in Transition Database (NYTD): Children's Bureau Page**
 - <https://www.acf.hhs.gov/cb/research-data-technology/reporting-systems/nytd>