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


- **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):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>Females</th>
<th></th>
<th>Males</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>P-value</td>
<td>OR</td>
<td>P-value</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Non-White</td>
<td>1.37</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>1.50</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.66</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>1.45</td>
<td>&lt;.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Enrollment</td>
<td>.48</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>.40</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Homelessness</td>
<td>N.S</td>
<td>N.S.</td>
<td>2.36</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Substance Abuse Referral</td>
<td>N.S</td>
<td>N.S</td>
<td>2.24</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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


  **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):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>OR</th>
<th>p-value</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.38</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>1.34</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relative Foster Home</td>
<td>1.40</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Runaway</td>
<td>2.80</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trial Home Visit</td>
<td>2.35</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exited Care by Age 19</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Employment Skills</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School Enrollment</td>
<td>.62</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incarceration</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>&lt;.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Childbirth &lt;=17</td>
<td>10.10</td>
<td>&lt;.001</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
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


- **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):

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>HS Diploma/ GED or Higher</th>
<th>Current Employment</th>
<th>Public Assistance</th>
<th>Homelessness</th>
<th>Substance Abuse Ref.</th>
<th>Incarceration</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Birth &lt;=17</td>
<td>.76</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>.97</td>
<td>1.05</td>
<td>1.26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Ages 17-19</td>
<td>.67**</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.03</td>
<td>1.13</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>1.10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Birth Ages 19-21</td>
<td>.65***</td>
<td>0.52***</td>
<td>2.65***</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>.98</td>
<td>.93</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*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)