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Pre-conference Workshop at
*The International Family Violence and Child Victimization Research Conference*
Portsmouth, NH
July 11, 2010
Goals for today

- Show you the contribution of NSCAW to the study of child maltreatment, child welfare and child development
- Help prepare you to become an NSCAW user
- Reflect on the role of NSCAW in research and practice
Three parts

- Part I: Overview of NSCAW
- Part II: Using NSCAW Data
- Part III: Technical Knowledge You Will Need & NSCAW Resources Online
Part I
Overview of NSCAW
Political and Historical Background on NSCAW

- Child welfare is a state function but the Federal government has a substantial investment through Title IV-E and other programs
- Child welfare has evolved toward greater emphasis on child well-being
- Little state and national data available on well-being of children, partly because of measurement difficulties
- Led DHHS to seek funding from Congress for national study
NSCAW Origins

- Personal Responsibility and Work Opportunity Reconciliation Act of 1996, Title V, Section 429A (PL 104-193) calls for a “national random sample study of child welfare”

- Translated into a: “national probability study of children investigated following an abuse and neglect allegation”

- Federal steering committee designed NSCAW with consultation from numerous child development and child welfare experts

- Data collection for NSCAW I began November 1999
NSCAW Firsts

- First national study of child welfare services to collect data from children and caregivers
- First national study to collect detail about the home environment
- First study with the sampling methodology to produce national estimates of well-being, safety and permanency of children involved with CPS
  - Two-stage random sampling of primary sampling units and children within agencies
Primary NSCAW Population

- Children and youth involved in investigations of child maltreatment by child protective services
Two Cohorts of NSCAW

- **NSCAW 1**
  - Five waves of longitudinal data collected from 1999-2007
  - Available to research community through the National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect, Cornell University (www.ndacan.cornell.edu)

- **NSCAW 2**
  - New cohort with a new sample but essentially same methods
  - 85% to 90% of the same variables as NSCAW 1
  - Data collection began 2008
  - Baseline data will be available from NDACAN this year
  - 18 month follow-up data will be ready in 2012
  - Additional waves will require new Congressional appropriations
NSCAW Sampling

• Two stage random sampling

• First stage: 92 Primary Sampling Units (PSUs)
  • **PSU**: “a geographic area encompassing the population served by a CPS agency. In most cases, PSUs are counties, but in a few cases two or three contiguous counties were grouped to form a single PSU”
  • PSU’s encompass 97 counties in 36 states

• Second stage: 5,501 children within PSUs

Note: These numbers apply to NSCAW 1 CPS Sample. NSCAW 2 numbers are similar
Composition of NSCAW Cohorts

NSCAW 1 Cohort

- Total 6,228
  - CPS Sample 5,501
    - No CPS Services 1,421
      - In home 2,803
      - Out-of-home 1,277
    - OYFC Sample 727
      - Ongoing CPS Services 4,080

NSCAW 2 Cohort

- CPS Sample 5,873
  - No CPS Services 1,761
    - In home 3,636
    - Out-of-home 2,237
  - Ongoing CPS Services 4,112
NSCAW Child Sampling

Oversampled on the basis of:

- Children/Families Receiving Services
- Infants
- Sexually Abused Children (NSCAW 1 only)

Not Sampled on the basis of:

- Substantiated Reports (cases are included whether substantiated or not)
Note on Relationship of NSCAW to Child Welfare

- Children are included at baseline even if report was not substantiated and/or child welfare case was closed.
- Children continue to be tracked regardless of their status with the child welfare agency.
- Many children have limited involvement with the child welfare agency; on average, the sample’s involvement with child welfare diminishes over time.
- Some children re-enter child welfare system.
More on NSCAW Data

- National staff of field interviewers
- Used laptop computers to conduct computer-assisted personal interviews (CAPI)

Interviewed
- Children (Reported Victims)
- Caregivers
- Caseworkers
- Teachers

Data on re-reports and child placement will be added from state CPS administrative data sets at 18 month follow-up (new in NSCAW 2)
Data Collection Timeline: NSCAW 1

Target population: Children involved in investigations closed between October 1, 1999 and December 31, 2000

Wave 1: Baseline
Nov, 1999 – Apr, 2001

Wave 2: 12 Month Follow-up
Oct, 2000 – Apr, 2002

Wave 3: 18 Month Follow-up
Apr, 2001 – Sept, 2002

Wave 4: 36 Month Follow-up
Oct, 2002 – Apr 30, 2004

Wave 5: ~6 Year Follow-up

1999 2000 2001 2002 2003 2004 2005 2006
Data Collection Timeline: NSCAW 2

Target population: Children involved in investigations closed between February 2008 and April 2009

Wave 1: Baseline

Wave 2: 18 Month Follow-up
Data Collection Timeline: NSCAW 1 and 2

NSCAW 1 Cohort

- Wave 1
- Wave 2
- Wave 3
- Wave 4

NSCAW 2 Cohort

- Wave 1
- Wave 2

Years:
- 1999
- 2000
- 2001
- 2002
- 2003
- 2004
- 2005
- 2006
- 2007
- 2008
- 2009
- 2010
Broad generalizations about what the NSCAW data set contains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Primary content</th>
<th>Case data</th>
<th>Child data</th>
<th>Caregiver &amp; home data</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>CPS events and actions and caseworker judgments</td>
<td>Child well-being, behavior, and services and youth perceptions</td>
<td>Child’s care and living environment and caregiver risk factors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source of information

- Caseworker interview
- Administrative data (NSCAW 2 only)
- Child interview
- Caregiver interview
- Caseworker interview
- Teacher interview
- Caregiver interview
- Caseworker interview
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Overview of NSCAW data (selected variables)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Investigation</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive development and social skills</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Home environment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Risk assessment</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Health, behavior problems &amp; mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>CPS services</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>School achievement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver mental health &amp; well-being measures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Caseworker relationship with caregiver</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth report of delinquency, substance abuse, sexual behavior</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver substance abuse &amp; criminal history</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Placement</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth report of child maltreatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver report of child discipline and child maltreatment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Permanency</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mental health, education &amp; health services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social support</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Re-reports</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Youth perceptions of foster and adoptive care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver satisfaction with caseworker</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
More detail on case variables

- Abuse and neglect info
- Investigative assessment of risk, harm and evidence of maltreatment
- Substantiation of reports
- Risk assessment
- Caseworker assessment of family service needs
- Caseworker referral for services
- Caseworker contact with caregivers
- Family history with child welfare

- Caseworker report of relationship with caregiver
- Type of placement
- Court hearing outcomes
- Reunification efforts
- Changes in placement
- Termination of parent rights
- Adoption possibilities
- Permanency planning possibilities
- Parental visitation in placements
- Family compliance and progress

- Re-reports
- Substantiation of re-reports
- Caseworker background
- Caseworker responsibility
- Organizational culture of child welfare agency
## More detail on child variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Infant neurodevelopment</th>
<th>Exposure to violence</th>
<th>Youth delinquent behaviors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Physical health</td>
<td>Youth report of</td>
<td>Youth sexual activity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adaptive behavior</td>
<td>maltreatment by</td>
<td>Youth substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Temperament</td>
<td>caregivers</td>
<td>Youth report of future</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cognitive skills</td>
<td>School engagement</td>
<td>expectations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>IQ</td>
<td>Grade progression</td>
<td>Youth satisfaction with</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>School achievement</td>
<td>caseworker</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Language development</td>
<td>Extracurricular</td>
<td>Youth perceptions of</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>activities</td>
<td>out-of-home care</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Peer relationships</td>
<td>Special education</td>
<td>Youth perceptions of their</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Special educational</td>
<td>Health services</td>
<td>adoptive homes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disability status</td>
<td>Outpatient mh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Behavior problems</td>
<td>services</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Trauma symptoms</td>
<td>Inpatient mh</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>services</td>
<td></td>
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<td></td>
<td>Use of psychiatric</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>medications</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Youth report of</td>
<td>Emancipated youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>parental monitoring</td>
<td>independent living skills</td>
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<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>
### More detail on caregiver and home variables

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family income</th>
<th>Caregiver physical health</th>
<th>Foster parents’ thoughts about adopting child</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Family socioeconomic status</td>
<td>Caregiver depression</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Household composition</td>
<td>Caregiver alcohol dependence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Disruptions in child's living environment</td>
<td>Caregiver drug dependence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver emotional nurturance of child</td>
<td>Caregiver criminal history</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver’s cognitive/verbal responsiveness to child</td>
<td>Caregiver report of child discipline and maltreatment of child</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver’s stimulation of child</td>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of child’s community environment</td>
<td>Caregiver satisfaction with caseworker</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Caregiver social support</td>
<td>Services received by caregiver</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Selected Standardized Measures Used

- Battelle Developmental Inventory
- Bayley Infant Neurodevelopmental Screener
- Brief Toddler Social Emotional Assessment
- Vineland Adaptive Behavior Scale
- Kaufman Brief Intelligence Test
- Woodcock-McGrew-Werder Mini-Battery of Achievement (Waves 1-4); Woodcock-Johnson (Wave 5)
- Child Behavior Checklist (behavior problems)
- Youth Self-Report (behavior problems)
- Teacher Report Form (behavior problems)
- Children's Depression Inventory
Selected Standardized Measures Used (continued)

- Trauma Symptom Checklist for Children (adapted)
- Conflict Tactics Scale—Parent Child
- Home Observation Measure of the Environment
- Social Skills Rating System
- Self-Report Delinquency
- Youth Risk Behavior Survey
- Short Form Health Survey
- Satisfaction with Caseworker and Services
- Child and Adolescent Services Assessment
Data Release Status

- “Tiered” data release plan to ensure security and confidentiality of data
  - General (allows users to get a feel for data but not adequate for actual research)
  - Restricted (release for vast majority of NSCAW research)
  - RTI Restricted (special category for special circumstances)
Achieved Samples: NSCAW 1

Wave 1
- Current caregiver: (CPS) 70% (OYFC) 73%
- Child welfare worker: (CPS) 86% (OYFC) 80%
- Children: (CPS) 66% (OYFC) 70%

Wave 2
- Current caregiver: (CPS) 83% (OYFC) 89%
- Child welfare worker: (CPS) 84% (OYFC) 85%

Wave 3
- Current caregiver: (CPS) 85% (OYFC) 87%
- Child welfare worker: (CPS) 94% (OYFC) 95%
- Children: (CPS) 82% (OYFC) 84%

Wave 4
- Current caregiver: (CPS) 84% (OYFC) 87%
- Child welfare worker: (CPS) 97% (OYFC) 97%
- Children: (CPS) 82% (OYFC) 84%

Wave 5
- Current caregiver: (CPS) 73% (OYFC) NA
- Child welfare worker: (CPS) 79% (OYFC) NA
- Children: (CPS) 90% (OYFC) NA
Additional NSCAW data:
One Year in Foster Care (OYFC) sample

- NSCAW data were collected on an additional sample of 727 children who had been in foster care for about 12 months
- Four waves of data available (no Wave 5)
- Data have been under-utilized
- Report on this study:

Additional NSCAW data: 1999 Local Agency Survey

- Survey of an administrator at each of 92 participating agencies
- One time event near beginning of NSCAW I
- Data at the agency level only
- Examines, e.g., Agency organization, Staffing and training, Services and service dynamics, Budget and expenditures
- Can be use in a multi-level modeling analysis
- Separate report on this survey, including text of instrument, is available at:

Additional NSCAW data: 1999 State Agency Survey

- Survey of an administrator at each of 36 participating states
- One time event near beginning of study
- Data at the state level only
- Examine, e.g., Organization of services, Collaborations with other agencies, Subcontracting of services, Investigation process
- Can be used in a multi-level modeling analysis
- Separate report on this survey, including text of instrument, is available at:

Current NSCAW Use

- Over 200 researchers hold data use licenses. Over 200 journal articles, book chapters, dissertations and other publications.
- Federal Administration for Children and Families
  - Baseline reports on CPS sample, One Year in Foster Care sample, Local agency survey
  - 5 year longitudinal reports on CPS sample for children and adolescents
  - 13 research briefs

Examples of NSCAW research
What explains the relationship between child behavior problems and placement changes?

- Numerous studies show that children in foster care who have behavior problems are also more likely to have multiple placements, but what explains this?
- Do behavior problems lead caregivers and professionals to seek placement changes?
- Or do the stress and loss of a placement change lead to behavior problems?
Aarons et al.’s method for addressing these questions

- Subsample of 500 youth age 2-15 who had been in out-of-home care for entire 36 month period studied (Baseline through Wave 4 of NSCAW)

- NSCAW data
  - Child behavior problems at baseline, 18 month follow-up and 36 month follow-up
  - Caseworker report of number of placement changes between measurement time points

- Prospective cross-lag design and path analysis
Path analysis results for externalizing behavior

- Earlier behavior problems significantly predicted later placement changes at both 18 and 36 months.
- Placement changes from 18 to 36 months predicted behavior problems at 36 months.

Reciprocal relationship
Additional results

- Boys’ baseline internalizing problems predicted placement changes by 18 months
  - No other significant effects for internalizing problems
- Placement changes from baseline to 18 months predicted increased internalizing problems at 18 months only for boys
- Placement changes from 18 to 36 months predicted externalizing and internalizing behavior problems at 36 months but only for girls
Example 2

Children’s Mental Health Services Research in NSCAW

From various publications
## Children’s MHS Use in First 12 Months

From Burns, et al., 2000

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mental Health Service Use</th>
<th>CBCL Score in Clinical Range</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Yes (15.8%)</td>
<td>Yes (47.9%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>11.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No (84.2%)</td>
<td>No (52.1%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>4.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

|                             | Yes (47.9%)                  |
|                            | 36.2%                        |
|                             | No (52.1%)                   |
|                            | 48.0%                        |
Receipt of Specialty Mental Health Services in NSCAW

Large increase in % after baseline

Very small % of the youngest children
In child welfare, a larger proportion of those in need receive services.

![Bar graph showing the percentage of children in need who received specialty mental health services, comparing the NSCAW population baseline to children identified by schools (GSMS study; Burns et al., 1995).]
Summary of NSCAW findings on children’s mental health services

- There is a larger need for children’s mental health services in child welfare population
- Persistent gap between need and receipt of services
- Child welfare contact increases chances of getting services -- Sizable, immediate effect
- Greater involvement with child welfare services increases likelihood of receiving mental health services
- Large gap in service delivery among very young children
  - Not yet in school
  - Low rate of prior child welfare contact`
  - Consistent with studies of other populations of children in need
Selected References for NSCAW Research on Children’s Mental Health Services


The Effect of Sensitive Caregiving on the Resilience of At Risk Children

These results are taken from the following journal article:

Jaffee’s research question:

- Does an improvement in the sensitivity of the caregiving environment lead to greater resilience among neurodevelopmentally at-risk children?
Jaffee’s methods:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sample</th>
<th>1,720 children age 3-24 months at NSCAW baseline</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Selected measures/variables used           | • Home Observation for Measurement of the Environment (HOME)  
• Preschool Language Scale  
• Child removed from biological parents (yes/no)  
• Family SES |
| Measurement points                         | Baseline, 18 month follow-up                     |
| Analysis                                   | Regression analysis examining whether change in caregiving environment predicts child language ability over and above effects of SES and child removal from home of biological parents |
### Jaffee’s regression results predicting language ability at 18 month follow-up

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Predictor</th>
<th>b</th>
<th>SE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Change in cognitive stimulation</td>
<td>2.83*</td>
<td>1.23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal from care of biological parents</td>
<td>-3.27</td>
<td>2.97</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Family income (Wave 3)</td>
<td>2.98***</td>
<td>0.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Removal from care x change in cognitive stimulation</td>
<td>7.82*</td>
<td>3.92</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

\[ R^2 = 8.5\%, \ *p , .05. **p , .01. ***p , .001. \]
Jaffee’s conclusions

- Positive change to a more cognitive stimulating environment promotes language ability, over and above the effects of child removal and family socioeconomic status.

- Changes in the cognitive stimulation of the environment on children’s language had a bigger impact when children were removed from the home of biological parents.
Part II
Using NSCAW Data
Many Research Opportunities Remain in NSCAW

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Areas “tapped out”</th>
<th>Some papers published (examples)</th>
<th>Few or no papers published (examples)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>NONE</td>
<td>Child maltreatment &amp; domestic violence</td>
<td>Permanency</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Children’s services</td>
<td>Youth and caregiver substance abuse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Developmental and behavioral needs</td>
<td>Educational outcomes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Criminal justice and child welfare</td>
<td>Relation of state and agency practice to services and outcomes</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Getting Started with NSCAW — General Advice

- Check out the materials, websites and publicly available reports
- If you are still interested, get the general release data set (see ndacan.cornell.edu) and explore in detail whether the data are a good fit for your needs
- Talk with NDACAN at any time about your ideas.
Tips on Planning an NSCAW Analysis
General Theme

- First, think schematically
- Then, and only then, study the detail
Ask D.W.I.T.E.!
D.W.I.T.E. !

- **D** What NSCAW data do I want to use?
- **W** What wave(s) do I want data from?
- **I** What informants (interviews) do I want to use?
- **T** What topics do I want to study?
- **E** Are there particular events in the case or the child’s life I am interested in?
Choose your Data

- NSCAW has different data sets and useful subgroups within the primary data sets
- All Waves of NSCAW 1 data are available
- Baseline NSCAW 2 data will be available this year and 18 month follow-up in 2012
- There are many opportunities but you need to make a choice
NSCAW samples

1. NSCAW 1
   a. Child Protective Services sample – covers population of all children age 0-14 involved in CPS investigations
   b. One Year in Foster Care sample -- 727 children who had been in foster care for about 12 months

2. NSCAW 2
   a. Child Protective Services sample only
## NSCAW 1, NSCAW 2 or both?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Advantages</th>
<th>Disadvantages/Challenges</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSCAW 1</strong></td>
<td>Longitudinal data over 5-6 years are available</td>
<td>▶ Data are not contemporary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Some studies have already been done</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>NSCAW 2</strong></td>
<td>Data are contemporary</td>
<td>▶ Limited waves of data for now</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Using both</strong></td>
<td>▶ Replicating results in both data sets is powerful</td>
<td>▶ More work</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>▶ Comparison provides historical test</td>
<td>▶ Special comparison weights needed</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Oversampled groups

- Some subgroups were oversampled to allow large enough subsamples for analysis
  - Children age 0-2 (at baseline) (n=1,996)
  - Sexual abuse cases (NSCAW 1 only) (n=644)
  - Children receiving ongoing CWS services at baseline (n=4,080)
- Entire analyses could be done on these subgroups
In-Home and Out-of-Home Settings are Very Different

- **In-home**
  - Children staying with original caregivers at baseline
  - Note that caregivers may shift informally and children may still be in-home

- **Out-of-home**
  - Foster care – foster caregivers complete measures
  - Kinship care – kin caregivers complete measures
  - Other out-of-home (group home etc.) – a comparatively small group

- Your analysis may focus on one or the other
Composition of NSCAW Cohorts

**NSCAW 1 Cohort**
- Total: 6,228
  - CPS Sample: 5,501
    - No CPS Services: 1,421
      - In home: 2,803
      - Out-of-home: 1,277
    - Ongoing CPS Services: 4,080
      - In home: 3,636
      - Out-of-home: 2,237

**NSCAW II Cohort**
- CPS Sample: 5,873
  - No CPS Services: 1,761
  - Ongoing CPS Services: 4,112
    - In home: 3,636
    - Out-of-home: 2,237
Researchers may want other subsets

- **Examples:**
  - Children in substantiated cases (?! – Substantiation is NOT a proxy for maltreatment – may want to use risk and harm variables instead)
  - Children with a demonstrable need for services

- Subsamples are often – but not always! – large enough to accommodate separate analysis
Information about CWS case flow that is relevant

- About 2/3 of cases are not substantiated
- Children may be in and out of CWS services, placements and caregiver settings
- The later the wave, the smaller the percentage of children who are receiving CWS services
  - The majority of children are NOT receiving CWS services in later waves
  - In later waves, the population might be better described as children at risk than children involved with CWS
D.W.I.T.E.!

Wave
Choose Your Wave(s)

- NSCAW is longitudinal, but not all waves of data are useful for all analyses
- You need to choose which wave(s) of data to use
NSCAW 1: Data Collection Timeline

Target population: Children involved in investigations closed between October 1, 1999 and December 31, 2000

Wave 1: Baseline
Nov, 1999 – Apr, 2001

Wave 2: 12 Month Follow-up
Oct, 2000 – Apr, 2002

Wave 3: 18 Month Follow-up
Apr, 2001 – Sept, 2002

Wave 4: 36 Month Follow-up
Oct, 2002 – Apr 30, 2004

Wave 5: ~6 Year Follow-up

NSCAW 2: Data Collection Timeline

Wave 1: Baseline
[month? 200?_ – month? Year]

Wave 2: 12 Month Follow-up
Oct, 2000 – Apr, 2002

Target population: Children involved in investigations closed between [date?] and [date?]
## General Guidelines on Choosing Waves

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Research</th>
<th>Waves to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Investigation</td>
<td>Baseline</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Caseworker judgments and actions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding children of a certain age (Type 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• How baseline characteristics and events relate to final status</td>
<td>Baseline and Wave 5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### General Guidelines on Choosing Waves (cont).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Focus of Research</th>
<th>Waves to Use</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• How maltreatment and CWS response relate to children’s status after about 1 year</td>
<td>Baseline and Wave 3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• True longitudinal analysis</td>
<td>All Waves</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• History of certain events (e.g., service delivery)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Understanding children of a certain age (Type 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Waves and Weights

- There are special weights to use for each individual wave
- There are special weights to use for longitudinal analysis that take into account all waves
D.W.I.T.E.!

Informant (Interview)
Multiple Informants (Interview)

- Child
- Caregiver
- Caseworker
- Teacher (In NSCAW 1, Wave 5 only?!)  
- Local agency administrator (agency level only)
- State agency administrator (state agency level only)
Each informant...

- Has a separate interview (child interview includes several standardized measures)
- May be interviewed on different times
Many Topics Are Covered
By Multiple Informants (Examples Below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Child</th>
<th>Care-giver</th>
<th>Case-worker</th>
<th>Teacher</th>
<th>Local Agency</th>
<th>State Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Depression</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>DV</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social skills</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interagency coordination</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Informant perspective, reliability and validity

- Researchers need to keep in mind that different informants vary on their perspective and the reliability and validity of their responses; consider e.g.,
  - Parents' reports of their own violence toward children
  - Teacher reports on child depression
  - Caseworker reports on families’ needs
Child interview

- Content and variables vary considerably by child age
- Makes it difficult to do straightforward longitudinal analysis of child data
- Includes many standardized instruments--cognitive development especially
- Children have limitations as informants
Selected contents of child interview

- Cognitive status and development
- School achievement
- Depression and behavior problems
- Loneliness
- Children’s reactions to foster care and caregivers
- Substance abuse, delinquency, risk sexual behavior (adolescents)
Caregiver interview

- Largest single source of information
- Separate caregiver interviews for permanent and foster caregivers
  - Content differs greatly between them
  - May need to write code to combine variables
- Questions asked to identify caregiver relationship and household membership
- Caregivers shift across waves – tricky!
Selected Contents of Caregiver Interview

- Child behavior problems
- Child and family services received
- Disciplinary methods
- Caregiver mental health and well-being measures
Caseworker Interview

- Investigating caseworker at baseline and ongoing caseworker at subsequent waves
- Sometimes ongoing caseworker answered baseline questions if investigating caseworker was not available
- MUCH LESS caseworker data at Waves 2-5 than at baseline because many children were no longer a CWS case
Selected Contents of Caseworker Interview

- Investigation characteristics
- Risk factors and risk assessment
- Out-of-home placement and adoption variables
- CWS services
Teacher interview

- Unfortunately, the large percentage of missing cases in Waves 1-4 of NSCAW 1 makes these data difficult to use before Wave 5
- Response rate was improved at Wave 5 and teacher data at Wave 5 are very useful – especially since a large percentage of these kids are in school then
- Baseline teacher data in NSCAW 2 are useful
Selected Contents of Teacher Interview

- Child behavior problems in school
- Social skills in school
- Academic progress
- Special education interventions
Derived Variables

- Variables created based on combinations of original variables

- Derived variables can be based on:
  - Multiple informants
  - Multiple waves
  - Multiple variables within an informant and wave

- A number of derived variables have already been created and are available in the data set
Example of an Existing Derived Variable

**CHDOOHPL**

Ch OOH Placement (chOOHPl)

Placement type and situation information from the child, caregiver, and caseworker were reviewed for discrepancies. If none were found, chdOOHPl and chdOOHSi were set to non-missing values from one of the interviews. If discrepancies were found, the first non-missing data found from the caregiver, then the child, and then the caseworker was used. Discrepancies were resolved using relationship of caregiver, number, age, gender, and relationship of children in the household.
D.W.I.T.E. !

Topic
NSCAW covers four broad domains

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Permanency</th>
<th>Well-Being</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Permanency</th>
<th>Well-Being</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Initial abuse</td>
<td>Placement, foster care, kinship care</td>
<td>Risk factors</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Re-reports (?)</td>
<td>Reunification</td>
<td>Health</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental aggression</td>
<td>Termination of parental rights</td>
<td>Mental health</td>
<td>Early interv.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic violence</td>
<td>Adoption</td>
<td>Development</td>
<td>Special ed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Court data</td>
<td>Cognition</td>
<td>CWS</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

- Risk factors
- Health
- Mental health
- Development
- Cognition
- Academics
- Social skills
- Social skills
- Delinquency
- Caregiver well-being
- Living environment
- Social support
- Agency & state CWS characteristics
How to handle topics

- Need to think broadly at first about the topics and subtopics covered by NSCAW
- Once you have chosen a topic, it is useful to spend 2-4 hours studying how NSCAW assesses that topic
  - Check which informants provide data
  - Check which waves provide data
  - Check frequency distributions of relevant variables
  - Check psychometrics of relevant instruments
D.W.I.T.E.!

Event
NSCAW records a number of relevant events related to the case (examples below)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safety</th>
<th>Permanency</th>
<th>Well-Being</th>
<th>Services</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• Substantiation</td>
<td>• Additional placements</td>
<td>• Injury</td>
<td>• Receipt of various services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Child placement</td>
<td>• TPR</td>
<td>• ER visit</td>
<td>• IEP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Parental arrest</td>
<td>• Adoption</td>
<td>• Child Arrest</td>
<td>• Hospital admission</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Stay in DV shelter</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Pregnancy</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Events

- Some good, concrete information is available on a number of events
- Several of these of are great importance: placement, TPR, adoption, IEP, hospitalization
- Depth of information varies
- Availability of dates or time sequence information varies
- NSCAW is not necessarily good at tracking events across waves
Data Set Chosen (e.g., all CPS data)

Waves

1 (baseline)

NSCAW 1

2

3

4

5

NSCAW 2

1 (baseline)

Topic 1

Topic 2

Event 1

Event 2

Your Exciting Research

Child

Caregvr

Casew

Tchr

Inform.
Part III

Some Technical Knowledge You Need
Documentation

- Data File User’s Manual
  - Main Volume
  - Appendix I: Forms
  - Appendix II: Questionnaire Specifications
  - Appendix III: Assessments and Derived Variables
- Statistical User’s Manual
General Release vs. Restricted Release

- **General Release**
  - The least restrictive version
  - Identifying information and geographic detail have been removed
  - Variables posing risk of respondent disclosure have been recoded to make identification of individuals unlikely
  - Requires approval by an Institutional Review Board at the researcher's institution
  - Generally not preferred for scholarly use
General Release vs. Restricted Release

- **Restricted Release**
  - Greater research utility
  - Geographic detail is present
  - Fewer variables have been recoded, but presents a higher risk to respondent confidentiality
  - Only made available to researchers who can justify need for high-level access
  - Requires approval by an Institutional Review Board at the researcher's institution
  - Requires application with data protection plan and willingness to cooperate with unannounced on-site inspections of your research facility
Obtaining Data Sets

- For more about obtaining NSCAW data: [http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/](http://www.ndacan.cornell.edu/)

- Costs:
  - General Release: no charge
  - Restricted Release: $500
Data Analysis Issues

- NSCAW has a complex stratified sample design
- Because of complex sample design, need appropriate software to conduct analyses
- Calculation of correct standard errors only possible using appropriate software
- All analyses should use the appropriate weights
Appropriate Software

- SUDAAN
- SAS (use the survey procedures: SurveyMeans, SurveyFreq, SurveyReg, and SurveyLogistic)
- SPSS (use the Complex Samples module)
- Stata (use the svy commands)
- LISREL (version 8.8)
- MPLUS (version 4.2)
- HLM (version 6.04)
NSCAW Resources Online
Administration for Children and Families

- Funds NSCAW; ultimate authority
- Useful website of NSCAW information and Federal NSCAW reports:
  - Information on NSCAW methods, instruments and measures
  - Baseline and longitudinal follow-up reports provide an excellent overview of what is in NSCAW and what can be done with it
  - Research briefs provide quick information on a variety of topics
National Data Archive on Child Abuse and Neglect (NDACAN)

- Cornell University program (ndacan.cornell.edu) to disseminate and support use of NSCAW and many other child maltreatment data sets

NDACAN...

- Distributes NSCAW data sets
- Provides phone and email assistance to NSCAW users
- Provides and supports four-day training at Cornell (Summer Research Institute)
- Runs an NSCAW listserv
- Provides website resources (ndacan.cornell.edu and follow Datasets link to National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being details)
  - NSCAW User Support Documents
  - Searchable database of all NSCAW publications