ARCHIVE OF LONGITUDINAL STUDIES ON CHILDHOOD PROBLEM BEHAVIORS

A significant portion of children display marked problem behaviors that interfere with their healthy development, such as psychiatric dysfunction, violence, delinquency, substance use, and premature sexual activity. There is general agreement that problem behavior constellations are best understood as multi-factorial, the complex interaction over time of biological, psychological, and sociological factors. While progress has been made in explicating some of these determinants and the processes by which they affect disordered behavior, we have a long way to go to a full understanding of any one constellation. There are now many longitudinal studies that have produced rich data on one or more problem behaviors in childhood, but the full potential contributions of most of these are far from being realized. Identifying the best of these studies, and making the data from them much more readily available to the scientific community to conduct secondary analysis will advance knowledge about the development of problem behaviors in childhood.

Sociometrics' goal was to develop a set of research-based products that identify and increase accessibility and sharing of high quality yet underutilized data resources in the field of Childhood Problem Behaviors. Although there are many rich sources of data in this field, no collection of longitudinal data in this topical area is currently available for public use. A set of products were conceptualized: **Product 1, the Data Archive of Longitudinal Studies on Childhood Problem Behaviors (DALSCPB)**, was to consist of an online and CD-ROM collection of important longitudinal studies on Childhood Problem Behaviors studies. The archive would include content-rich longitudinal studies that are not currently available for public use as well as those studies in the public domain that may not have received widespread use among the research community. **Product 2, the Longitudinal Data Analysis Guide**, would be intended for researchers, analysts, or instructors who wish to use the data archive for longitudinal or meta analysis. The purpose of the Guide was to introduce data users to current concepts and techniques in longitudinal data analysis, impart knowledge that will increase data users' ability to use longitudinal data effectively, and provide real-life examples of how longitudinal analysis techniques are applied to actual data using studies from the archive. Our aim was to provide detailed examples of various longitudinal analysis techniques in addition to information about typical methods and practices. **Product 3, the Online Search Assistant for Childhood Problem Behaviors Studies**, was to be a search tool for researchers who are using the archive. This product would assist researchers in finding studies that meet their research or analysis requirements and will serve as a valuable resource for instrumentation, questionnaires, and other documentation that facilitates data use. The Search Assistant was conceptualized as a keyword- and field-based search tool utilizing CGI programming. Examples of predefined searches would include study title, constituency of the sample, population of inference, number of variables, scales and instrumentation, and variable content.

Work was completed during the course of this project to examine the feasibility of these products.

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