

National Longitudinal Survey Of Children And Youth Vol 3, number 1



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Welcome To Our Fourth Newsletter

As we gear up for a third data collection we are excited about the research which is being done using the Cycle 1 data. We are interested in ensuring NLSCY findings are used to encourage dialogue, public debate and research on children's issues. We welcome your comments and questions, and would like any suggestions you have about content that could be included in future newsletters.



National Children's Agenda(NCA)



As announced in the 1997 Speech From the Throne, "The federal, provincial and territorial governments agreed in January 1997 to work together to develop the National Children's Agenda, a comprehensive strategy to improve the well-being of Canada's children." Several initiatives planned as part of the NCA, such as the monitoring of readiness to learn, may make use of NLSCY data. The federal government has made a significant investment in the NLSCY and it is encouraging that the findings are beginning to be used in various ways.



National Organizations Use The NLSCY(NCA)

Findings from the NLSCY have been mentioned in several Canadian publications over the past year. Take some time to read these sample editions.

- Canadian Council of Social Development (1997). *The Progress of Canada's Children 1997*. Ottawa.
- Vanier Institute of the Family (1997). "Canada's Kids: Thriving? Or Just Surviving?", *Transition*, March.
- Cheal, D., Dooley, D., Kelly, M., Landy, S., Lipman, E., McIntyre, L., Offord, D., Ross, D., Scott, K., Tam, K., "Canadian Children in the 1990's", *Canadian Social Trends*, no.44 (1997): 2-9.

- Lipps, G., Frank, J., "The Social Context of School for Young Children", *Canadian Social Trends*, no. 47 (1997): 22-26.
- Canadian Institute of Child Health (1997). *Our Promise to Children*, edited by Kathleen Guy. Ottawa. To obtain any of the above publications, please contact the relevant organizations.



Research Developments



Best Seller



Sales of our book entitled *Growing Up in Canada* indicate that there is much interest in the NLSCY. *Growing Up in Canada* is a book of research articles using the Cycle 1 data, it encompasses a wide spectrum of topics from aggression to single-motherhood, mathematics achievement to temperament. This topic matter has attracted considerable attention - even university courses make it required reading!

For order information, please see the last page of the newsletter.



Applied Research Bulletin

The Applied Research Branch of HRDC periodically publishes a collection of research articles with content covering a wide spectrum of topics. Recent articles describing child-related research using NLSCY data include:

- Human Resources Development Canada (1997). "Statistical Profile of Canada's Children", *Applied Research Bulletin*, Vol. 3, no. 1. 1-3.
- Human Resources Development Canada (1997). "Linking Home Environment and Child Development", *Applied Research Bulletin*, Vol 3, no. 1. 4-5.
- Human Resources Development Canada (1997). "Children at Risk are Found in All Family Types", *Applied Research Bulletin*, no. 1. 19-20.
- Human Resources Development Canada (1997). "Beyond Cinderella and Snow White: Challenging the Myth of the Wicked Stepmother", *Applied Research Bulletin*, Vol 3, no. 2. 12.

Reprints of these articles are available. See last page for order information.



Research Progress

A substantial number of HRDC-funded research projects are now underway, and several are nearing completion. These are analysing the cycle 1 data and will give "snapshots" of many different aspects of the lives of Canadian children in 1994-95, enriching the picture begun in *Growing Up in Canada*. We here at HRDC are excited about the broad range of topics and themes being explored with NLSCY data. Here are just a few of the areas being covered:

- Under the theme of family, research examines the effect of parental work, family structure, and parenting skills.
- School-related research looks at the predictors of school outcomes, such as the family environment, attitudes and readiness at pre-school age. Other research considers the impact of school as an environment.
- To complete the circle, other researchers are considering the influence of the community in which the child lives. Do some children fare better simply because of the neighbourhood they live in?
- In addition to this we have research looking at aggression, behaviour disorders, immigrant children, delinquent children, and children who are vulnerable because they live in poverty.

Longitudinal Research Plans

The first set of cycle 2 data (from the second NLSCY collection, carried out in the winter of 1996-97) are expected to be released in the Fall of 1998. This second look at the same children will give us the first "video" portrayal of child development in Canada. We plan to have a more focused direction of the longitudinal research than of the baseline research, and to that end we will develop a research plan.

A Whole Volume of Policy-Related Research



Vulnerable Children is the title of an edited volume of policy-related research that is being prepared for HRDC under the direction of Dr. J. Douglas Willms. Using data collected in the first cycle of the NLSCY, the volume will explore the relationships between parents' socio-economic status and a range of physical, emotional, behavioural, social and cognitive outcomes in Canadian children aged 0-11 years. The book is expected to be released later this year. Watch for it!

Conference This Fall

An exciting national conference on NLSCY findings is being planned for October 1998 in Ottawa.

The conference will be a major vehicle of dissemination of the aforementioned research findings on Cycle 1 data including vulnerable children, family, community and school.

The conference will provide a rare opportunity to look at the wide body of research as a whole. It will also offer the chance to participate in discussions with prominent researchers on key child-related issues and learn about the soon-to-be-released next cycle of data. In addition, priorities will be announced for a longitudinal research program which will incorporate the first two cycles of NLSCY data.

Final dates and registration information will be available at a later date. We will keep you informed of progress.



Readiness to Learn

National Children's Agenda initiatives will include the monitoring of the learning readiness of Canada's children; work is currently being done to explore the role of NLSCY data in this exercise. Discussions were held with our Expert Advisory Group on Children and Families last October, as well as with federal and provincial/territorial officials, representatives of non-governmental organizations and others at a workshop in January.

Three key papers about readiness to learn have been written and are available from our office on request:

- Doherty, Gillian, "Zero to Six: the Basis for School Readiness" R-97-8E, 1997.
- Morrongiello, Barbara, "Tapping School Readiness in the NLSCY: Measurement Issues & Solutions", 1997.
- Ross, D., Scott, K., Roberts, P., Tsoukalas, S., "Options for Creating Indicators of Learning Readiness at School Entry", 1998.



Survey Developments



Data Collection Complete

The data collection for Cycle 2 was completed in June 1997. It is currently in the midst of being processed and the first longitudinal data for the NLSCY is scheduled to be released this fall. Printed questionnaires for Cycle 2 and an overview of the content are available on request. For more information, please see the last page of this newsletter. Also, the questionnaires are now available at www.statcan.ca:80/english/freepub/89F0077XIE/free.htm on the Internet!



Cycle 3

Our oldest kids will now be 14-15 years old! They've grown a lot in the past four years and we will be following them into their high schools and collecting data from their teachers and principals. The NLSCY has consulted widely in the development of the new 14-15 questionnaire, and minor modifications have been made to the parent questionnaire. The Cycle 3 field test is going to take place this spring and data collection will begin in the Fall of 1998.

Additions to the 14-15 questionnaire include a section on work experience which will reflect the part-time jobs that many students obtain when they become teenagers. We are also looking at school engagement in more detail. Further modifications include more questions on discrimination and victimization, more detail on peer and family relationships, and sexuality.

For youth in high school, we are considering sending questionnaires to their math and language arts teachers as well as to the teacher who knows the student the best. The teacher questionnaires will include a new section on computer usage. This will identify the role computers take as teaching and learning tools in a school setting.



Cycle 4

Early on we made a decision to keep the NLSCY content fairly consistent across the first three cycles, in order to build longitudinal data. For cycle 4, however, now that some of the first data have been analysed we will take a step back and look at what has been collected, what needs to be continued, where there have been problems or suggestions for improvement, as well as what new areas would be valuable. Cycle 4 collection is slated for the winter of 2000-2001, and we plan to start the content development process in the spring of 1998. We know that our oldest cohort will then be aged 16-17 and we will have to allow for changes in their lives. We also plan to reconsider how we should measure areas such as child care, readiness to learn, fathering and community, among others.



Here's our Schedule of Upcoming Data Collection and Release

CYCLE 1

- Spring 1998 - release of remaining data including family & custody history, and marital status

CYCLE 2

- Fall 1998 - first longitudinal data available

CYCLE 3

- Fall 1998 - nation-wide data collection begins
- Spring 1999 - completion of data collection

CYCLE 4

- Spring 1998 - content development begins

New Brunswick Buy-In

The province of New Brunswick funded the collection of NLSCY data on a supplemental sample of N.B. children in Cycle 2, in order to provide baseline data for an evaluation of their new Early Childhood Initiatives. This is a province-wide series of integrated services designed to enhance the school readiness of "priority" children. The broad, developmental approach of the NLSCY made it an attractive instrument for this purpose.

Evaluation

The NLSCY is part of the federal government's Child Development Initiatives, and as such was evaluated in 1996 by a private firm as part of the required CDI evaluation. Reports from this evaluation have been published and are now available upon request. They include:

- *Overview Evaluation Report of the NLSCY Literature Review*
- *Key Informant Interviews*
- *Delphi Panel Study of Methodologists*
- *Potential Users Survey*

For copies of any of these reports, please see last page for information.

Data Access

Note: The Statistics Act guarantees that information identifying individuals will not be released to anyone outside of Statistics Canada without their consent. This applies to public data files as well as custom tabulations and the remote access service.

Public File - The NLSCY Cycle 1 public use microdata file may be purchased from Statistics Canada for \$2,000; contact Michael Sivyer (see below). This file may be accessed by university staff, faculty and students through the Data Liberation Initiative. For more information contact:

John Berigan

Data Liberation Initiative, Statistics Canada
 Tel:613-951-1236
 Fax: 613-951-1134
 berigan@statcan.ca

Master File - A certain amount of data has been suppressed on the public file due to confidentiality restrictions. This information is not suppressed on the master file and is available from Statistics Canada through purchased custom tabulations. In addition, a remote access service is available for researchers wishing to do more complex data analysis. For more information please contact:

Michael Sivyer
 Special Surveys Division, Statistics Canada
 Tel: 1-800-461-9050
 special@statcan.ca

<i>CYCLE 1 MASTER FILE AVAILABILITY</i>		
<i>Fall 1996 Release</i>	<i>Spring & Summer 1997 Releases</i>	<i>Spring 1998 Release (anticipated)</i>
Child information	Child information	Child information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● perinatal ● temperament ● education ● behaviour ● motor and social development ● relationships ● parenting ● child care ● socio-demographics ● vocabulary test results ● for 4-5 year olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● health ● literacy ● activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● family & custody history
Information collected from 10-11 year old children	Information collected from 10-11 year old children	Information collected from 10-11 year old children
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● friends & family ● feelings & behaviour ● parents 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● school ● self-esteem ● puberty ● smoking, drinking & drugs ● activities 	
Parent information	Parent information	Parent information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● depression ● family functioning ● social support ● socio-demographics ● education ● labour force activity ● income 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● health 	
School	School	School
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● math test results 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● results from teacher & principal questionnaires 	

Household demographics	Household demographics	Household demographics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● relationship ● age & sex 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● marital status
Dwelling & neighbourhood data		
CYCLE 1 PUBLIC USE MICRO DATA FILE RELEASES		
<i>Fall 1996 Release</i>	<i>Early 1998 Release</i>	<i>Spring 1998 Release (anticipated)</i>
Child information	Child information	Child information
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● perinatal ● temperament ● education ● behaviour ● motor and social development ● relationships ● parenting ● child care ● socio-demographics ● vocabulary test results ● for 4-5 year olds 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● health ● literacy ● activities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● family & custody history
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School	School	School
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Household demographics	Household demographics	Household demographics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● relationship ● age & sex 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● marital status
Dwelling & neighbourhood data		



Order Information

- For Applied Research Bulletins or copies of Gillian Doherty's paper, please contact:
Nancy Zalman
E-mail: nancy.zalman@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca
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- For **Evaluation Reports** please contact:
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Strategic Policy
E-mail: Diane.Duval@hrdc-drhc.gc.ca
Fax: 819-773-9582
Tel: 613-954-3368 or 1-888-440-4080
- Copies of ***Growing Up in Canada*** (as well as the French version, ***Grandir au Canada***) may be purchased for \$25 from local authorized agents and other community bookstores, the Statistics Canada Regional Reference Centres or from:
Statistics Canada
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Introducing...



The NLSCY Team at HRDC

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Liz Nieman - readiness to learn
Susan McKellar - survey coordination & content development
Jodie de Gonzague - co-op student project team member
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"Developments" is produced by Income Security and Social Development Studies in Applied Research Branch, Human Resources Development Canada. For additional copies, or an alternate format, please contact Susan McKellar.

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