ECLS-K Database Training Seminar Announcement

Using the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study,
Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K)
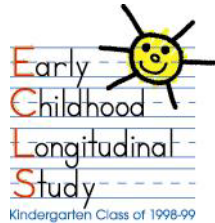**Database for Research and Policy Discussion**

Tuesday, June 7, through Thursday, June 9, 2011
Washington, DC

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES), Institute of Education Sciences, U.S. Department of Education, is sponsoring a 3-day advanced studies seminar on the use of the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998–99 (ECLS-K) database. The ECLS-K allows researchers to examine the relationships among a wide range of child, family, teacher, classroom, and school variables and children's development and performance in elementary and middle school.

The training this year will focus on the ECLS-K restricted data (e.g., special education teacher data, census and geocode information, principal and teacher salary and benefits data, item-level social rating scale data, and head start verification data). Applicants must demonstrate that their specific research interests are related to information that can be found only in the restricted data files.

This seminar is open to advanced graduate students and faculty members from colleges and universities nationwide and to researchers, education practitioners, and policy analysts from federal, state, and local education and human services agencies and professional associations.

OVERVIEW

ECLS-K is sponsored primarily by NCES in collaboration with other federal agencies and organizations. It is a source for detailed information on children's in- and out-of-school experiences, development, and learning. This is one of the first nationally representative studies of children's early development and education. The study began in the fall of 1998 with a nationally representative sample of approximately 23,000 kindergartners from about 1,300 kindergarten programs. The sampled kindergartners come from public and private kindergarten programs and from diverse racial/ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds. Seven waves of data collection were completed, the last in spring 2007.

Examples of the research issues that can be addressed with ECLS-K data include the following topics and activities:

- skills and behaviors children demonstrate when they enter kindergarten and in first, third, fifth, and eighth grade;
- children's growth in mathematics, reading, and general knowledge (i.e., science and social studies) and their progress through elementary and middle school;
- problems, both academic and behavioral, children experience at the start of school and at different points over their schooling;
- how well children fare in their first encounter with formal schooling and differences in their rates of learning during the elementary and middle school years;
- how well kindergarten programs help children prepare for later elementary grades;
- children's transitions to kindergarten, first grade, and beyond;
- the roles that parents, teachers, and schools play in children's growth and development;

- children's health and health care across the years;
- in-school and out-of-school experiences of children with special needs;
- public and private schooling and the achievement of children who attend public and private schools; and
- the school experiences and achievement of language minority children.

More information about ECLS-K, including the questionnaires used in the study and a list of available publications that can be downloaded or ordered, is available at the study website (http://nces.ed.gov/ecls).

PURPOSE AND EXPECTED OUTCOME

The goal of the seminar is to provide researchers with an opportunity to learn about one of the most comprehensive data resources in the nation and to facilitate the use of ECLS-K data in substantive research. The seminar will include both lecture and hands-on instruction. Specifically, the seminar will include the following topics and activities:

- an overview of the ECLS-K design, instruments, and database, with a focus on those data that are available only in the restricted-use files;
- discussion of methodological and technical issues relevant to ECLS-K data use; including the structure of the restricted-use files and how to use them in conjunction with the public-use file;
- instruction on and practice using the ECLS-K kindergarten through eighth-grade data, including restricted-use data; and
- hands-on experience in conducting analyses of ECLS-K data.

Please note that this seminar does not provide formal instruction on advanced statistical methods and analyses.

The seminar enables participants to refine their research plans for using ECLS-K data. At the conclusion of the seminar, participants present a preliminary analysis plan that uses ECLS-K data, including a clear statement of the research questions, a rationale for the analysis, analytic approach (specifications of population, variables, statistical techniques, etc.), and preliminary results. Complimentary copies of any papers and publications using ECLS-K data should be sent to NCES.

QUALIFICATIONS

Participants attending this seminar should have a solid understanding of statistical methods and be proficient in the use of SPSS, SAS, or Stata statistical software packages. Participants are expected to know how to perform SPSS, SAS, or Stata procedures, including recoding data and running descriptive analyses (e.g., frequency distributions, cross-tabulations, means). Applications will be evaluated on the following criteria:

- significance of the proposed research;
- alignment of the proposed research plan with ECLS-K data;
- potential benefits from participation in the seminar;
- prior research experience and training; and
- knowledge and skills in statistical analyses and the use of statistical computer packages. (Please see attached application form for specific questions pertaining to your level of experience.)

Researchers with grants to use ECLS-K data and graduate students using the data in their dissertation research will be given special consideration.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT

There is no fee to attend this seminar. NCES will provide training materials, as well as computers for the hands-on practice. For out-of-town participants, NCES will also pay for transportation, hotel accommodations, and a fixed per diem for meals and incidental expenses during the training seminar.

LOCATION

The seminar will be held in Washington, DC from **Tuesday, June 7, through Thursday, June, 9, 2011**. Accepted applicants will be sent information about both the seminar and lodging arrangements.

REGISTRATION INFORMATION AND APPLICATION INSTRUCTIONS

If you are interested in attending the seminar, please complete and return the following documents:

1. The application form.
2. A copy of your resume.
3. A 2- to 3-page statement clearly describing your research interests, how you plan to use ECLS-K data in your research, and how you would benefit from the seminar. The statement must demonstrate a specific need for restricted data in order to address your research interests.
4. A letter of recommendation from your faculty advisor if you are a graduate student.

Your statement should identify the substantive issues and research questions that you intend to study using ECLS-K data. It should clearly indicate why these issues and questions are important and why you believe ECLS-K is an appropriate data source. You should also indicate what you hope to learn during the seminar that will assist you in your research. The number of applicants for this seminar often far exceeds the number of spaces available. Only complete applications will be considered, and only a maximum of two applicants from the same organization or institution can be accepted.

All applications should be received no later than **May 6, 2011**. Applications will be reviewed and selected candidates will be informed **the week of May 16**. Selected candidates will receive the seminar agenda and information about travel arrangements.

Applications should be returned to: Gordana Vukovic
Synergy Enterprises, Inc.
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 1440
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Email: gvukovic@seiservices.com

Contact Gordana Vukovic through e-mail at gvukovic@seiservices.com if you have any questions regarding this seminar.

NOTE: Applicants are allowed to attend no more than two NCES sponsored training seminars within a 6-year period.

APPLICATION
ECLS-K Database Training Seminar
National Center for Education Statistics (NCES)
U.S. Department of Education
June 7-9, 2011
Washington, DC

☐ Dr.   ☐ Mr.   ☐ Ms.

NAME:

(please type or print clearly)

AFFILIATION:

TITLE/POSITION:

MAILING ADDRESS:

CITY: STATE: ZIP CODE:

TELEPHONE: FAX:

E-MAIL:

Computer Statistical Software Experience:

All participants must have at least one year of SPSS or SAS experience.

Software	Level of experience			
	Extensive (proficient in aggregating, merging, recoding, weighting, and analysis)	Some (familiar with recoding and many analysis procedures)	Very little (simple descriptive procedures and recoding)	None
SPSS (Windows)				
SAS (Windows)				
Stata				
WesVar or SUDAAN				
Other (specify)				

Please answer the following:

1. Do you have experience merging files in SPSS, SAS, or Stata?   ☐ yes   ☐ no

2. Do you have experience recoding variable values in SPSS, SAS, or Stata?   ☐ yes   ☐ no

3. Have you used weights in your analysis using SPSS, SAS, or Stata?   ☐ yes   ☐ no

4. Have you run statistical analyses using WesVar, SUDAAN, or AM?   ☐ yes   ☐ no

Area of Research Interest:

Please attach a clearly written description of your research interest and how that can be furthered through the use of ECLS-K data (2–3 typewritten pages). Be as specific as possible. If you are a graduate student, a letter of recommendation from your faculty advisor must be included with your application.

Complete applications should be submitted no later than **May 6, 2011.** Space is limited for this seminar. Applications will be reviewed and selected candidates will be notified **the week of May 16.**

Applications should be returned to: Gordana Vukovic
Synergy Enterprises, Inc.
8757 Georgia Avenue, Suite 1440
Silver Spring, MD 20910
Tel: (240) 485-1700
E-mail: gvukovic@seiservices.com