

Using Large Datasets in Research

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National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

- ▶ Funded by the U.S. Department of Education to document the experiences of a nationally representative sample of students with disabilities as they moved from secondary school to adult roles
 - Conducted by SRI International
 - Follow up to the original National Longitudinal Transition Study (NLTS) conducted from 1987–1993

National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

▶ Sample

- ▶ Students aged 13–16 in 2000 across all 12 disability categories in IDEA
- ▶ Stratified random sampling plan to ensure national representativeness across age and disability categories
- ▶ NLTS2 is a child-focused study; the unit of analysis is the student
 - The sample is not representative of teachers, schools, states or geographic regions

National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

- ▶ Data Collection

Instruments	Wave 1	Wave 2	Wave 3	Wave 4	Wave 5
Parent/Youth Phone Interview and/or Mail Survey	2001*	2003	2005	2007	2009
Student Assessment*	2002	2004			
School Characteristic Survey	2002				
School Program Survey	2002	2004			
Teacher Survey	2002	2004			
Transcript	2002	2003/04	2005	2006/07	2008/09

*Only parent interviews collected in Wave 1

*Although student assessments were conducted over two waves, there was only one assessment per sample member

From:

<http://www.nlts2.org/studymeth/index.html>

Accessing NLTS2 Data

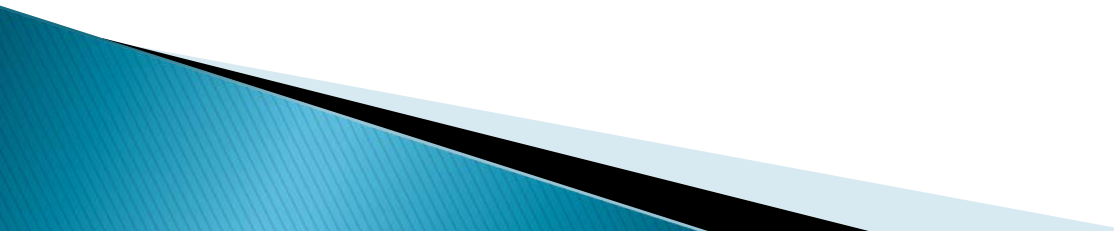
▶ Public Data Files

- http://www.nlts2.org/data_tables/index.html

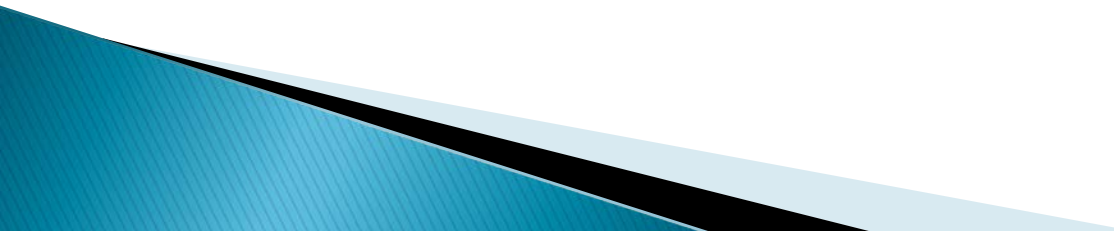
▶ Restricted-use Data Licenses

- <http://nces.ed.gov/pubsearch/licenses.asp>
- Available through the National Center for Education Statistics, Institute of Education Sciences
- Specific requirements:
 - License
 - Data Security Plan
 - Affidavits of Nondisclosure

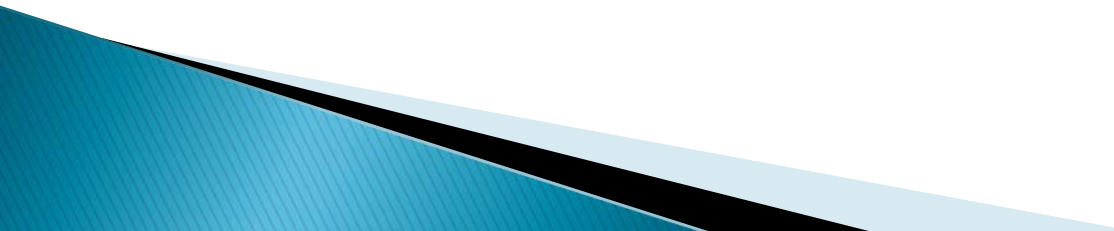
Working with NLTS2 Data

- ▶ Weighting
 - ▶ Missing Data
 - ▶ Temporal Ordering
 - ▶ Selection of Variables
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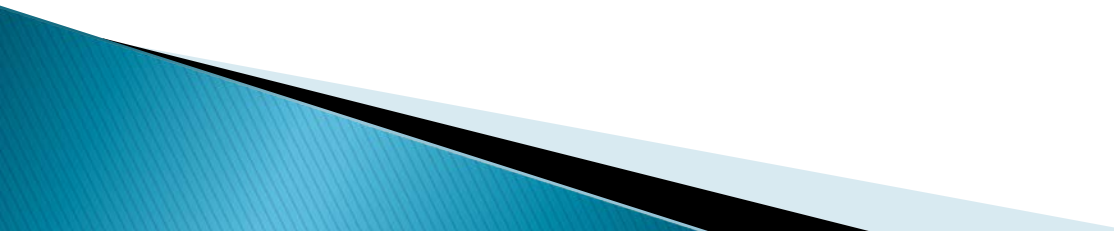
My Research Questions

- ▶ To what degree does a nationally representative sample of students with disabilities express the aspects of self-determination measured by NLTS2?
 - ▶ What student, family, school program, and community factors assessed in NLTS2 predict student self-determination?
 - ▶ To what degree does self-determination predict valued adult outcomes assessed in NLTS2 related to equality of opportunity, full participation, independent living, and economic self-sufficiency?
 - ▶ To what degree do individual and ecological predictors of self-determination mediate or moderate the relationship between self-determination and outcomes?
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Methodology

- ▶ Primary analytic strategy
 - Structural Equation Modeling
 - Multi-Group Confirmatory Factor Analysis
 - Multi-Level Structural Equation Modeling
 - ▶ Models run in Mplus 6.0 (Muthén & Muthén, 2010)
 - ▶ Partnering with Todd Little, Ph.D and staff at the Center for Research Methods and Data Analysis at the University of Kansas
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Beginning to Use the Data

- ▶ Determine the data needed
 - ▶ Start simple
 - ▶ Learn about the resources that are available
 - Instruments
 - Data Dictionaries
 - ▶ Pay attention to n
 - ▶ Recognize that the data is broad, not deep
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Questions or Interested in Learning More

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