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User Guides for Datasets in the FCD PK-3 Database

One goal of the FCD PK-3 Research and Evaluation Forum is to increase the knowledge base on PK-3 by building a group of researchers who focus their inquiry on children ages 3-8. One strategy is to increase the accessibility of existing data sources that include PK-3 relevant variables, particularly longitudinal data sets encompassing a wide range of child, family, school, neighborhood, and other variables. These data sets could be used by junior scholars who may not yet have funding to collect original data to focus their attention on PK-3. More importantly, these data sets also provide researchers with access to data which are beyond the means of any single scholar to collect, and which provide the prospect of yielding rich conclusions that can be generalized to the U.S. population of children and important groups within the population.

To use existing data sources in their studies, researchers must create extract data sets with a flat file structure including all variables relevant to their specific study, but not burdened by the enormous number of variables that are not directly relevant to the specific research. The proposed project will create a series four "user guides" which will provide researchers with step-by-step instructions to create extract data sets tailored to their analytical needs using existing extraction tools or available documentation. This proposal summarizes the contribution of Hernandez' previous project to the current FCD activity, and then describes plans for the proposed project.