



The Data Resources Program: Making Data Available to Researchers

NIJ funds numerous research and evaluation projects every year, and since 1984 much of the resulting data have been available to criminal justice researchers and evaluators. In an effort to help researchers and evaluators replicate original findings or test new hypotheses, NIJ created the Data Resources Program (DRP), which offers most of the data free of charge.

DRP helps researchers to obtain and use the data for secondary analysis, provides training in methodological and statistical issues relevant to major NIJ studies, and offers technical assistance.

The data from many concluded NIJ research grants are included in the DRP database along with documentation files, codebooks (which outline the data files' structure, content, and layout), and the data definition syntax files for SAS and SPSS (two statistical software packages commonly used in the social sciences field).

In addition to the database, DRP also prepares and distributes CD-ROM's containing topical studies. For example, the Program has released *Crime Victimization Data, 1973-1991* (ICPSR 6261), *Data on Crime and Community* (ICPSR 2434), and *Violence Research Data, 2nd Edition* (ICPSR 6728). DRP also helps NIJ staff prepare data sets, including those related to crime mapping and spatial analysis programs.

Since 1993, DRP has conducted an annual workshop in conjunction with the Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) Summer Program for quantitative analysis of criminal justice data. Twenty individuals are selected to participate in the workshop, which focuses on a different crime and justice topic each year.

In 1992, NIJ transferred the activities of the program to ICPSR's National Archive of Criminal Justice Data Team at the Institute for Social Research at the University of Michigan.

TAKING ADVANTAGE OF DRP

With more than 440 research and evaluation projects from NIJ and more than 600 criminal justice data collections from the U.S. Bureau of Justice Statistics and other criminal justice agencies listed in the DRP database, you can probably find the criminal justice statistics you need. But what steps do you take to locate the data? Below are some tips that may help.



The first step is to conduct a general search of the database using the Web site's "Access Data" page at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/archive.html>. The search feature allows you to search by keyword, title of data collection, study number, or principal investigator's name. The data are also divided into 12 divisions—attitude surveys; community studies; computer programs and instructional packages; corrections; court case processing; courts; crime and delinquency; criminal justice system; drugs, alcohol, and crime; official statistics; police; and victimization—so you can browse the files by general topic.

Once the data are located, you simply have to download the ASCII files. Most of the files are available free of charge, but some are available on CD-ROM for a small fee, and other data sets are available only to Inter-University Consortium for Political and Social Research (ICPSR) members. Some studies, however, contain information that could be used to indirectly identify study participants; these are available only through a restricted access archive if you contact ICPSR and submit additional certifications.

Finally, if you cannot locate the needed statistics or are having trouble using the database, DRP staff can help you. They offer assistance with finding data appropriate to a specific topic, downloading files from a study, and minor syntax editing necessary to recreate the data files on your computer. Email nacjd@icpsr.umich.edu or call toll-free 1-800-999-0960 for further help.

For More Information

- Visit DRP's National Archive of Criminal Justice Data (NACJD) Web site at <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD> for more information or access to the resource database. For more general information about the Program, contact Chris Dunn, DRP Principal Investigator, at nacjd@icpsr.umich.edu.
- To download a copy of 2002's *Data Collections Available From the National Archive of Criminal Justice Data*, a catalog of NIJ-funded studies archived at NACJD, visit <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/ORG/Publications/NACJD/nacjd02.pdf>.
- For a list of DRP CD-ROM's, visit http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/NACJD/disk_cd.html.
- For more information about the summer workshop or to apply for admission, contact Chris Dunn at nacjd@icpsr.umich.edu or visit <http://www.icpsr.umich.edu/TRAINING/summer/index.html>.

The Data Resources Program helps researchers to obtain and use the data for secondary analysis, provides training in methodological and statistical issues relevant to major NIJ studies, and offers technical assistance.