

KIDSCOUNT DATA PROJECT

Introduction to Project

This final project will allow you to use your sociological imagination to develop a report to inform the Governor's office about many of the problems facing children in the United States and the State of Ohio. You may want to include issues such as hunger, poverty, crime, health, and education.

Directions:

Using information from the following websites develop a report to inform the Governor's office about the state of young people in this country. Be sure to include data and tables in your report (You can print them out and put them in an appendix). Your report must have the following:

1. Cover page
2. Introduction
3. Executive Summary (1 page listing the highlights of your report)
4. Content (You may want to organize your report by different areas such as Health, Education, Violence, etc)
5. A one page set of recommendations
6. An appendix with tables, data, and charts.
7. Your paper must be typed and double space with no larger than 1 inch margins. Please use 12 pt. Font.
8. Be creative and have fun with this report.

Websites you will want to use:

1. www.ssdan.net/kidscount (There is a data analysis tool that you can use)
2. www.childrensdefense.org/data
3. www.teenpregnancy.org/
4. www.nationalhomeless.org/
5. <http://cpmcnet.columbia.edu>
6. www.kidscount.org

Be sure to contact me should you have any questions. You are more than welcome to use the sociology lab at any time. The completion of this project fulfills your research project requirement for this course.

Key concepts:

Appalachian

% Teen Births
% Poverty
% Child Poverty
Unemployment
Correlation
Bar Graphs

Learning Objectives

Skill

After the completion of this module, the learner should be able to:

- Explain the difference between correlation and causation.
- Define the key concepts.
- Create a bar chart and interpret it.

Substance

- Discuss the correlations between living in an Appalachian county in Ohio and various indicators of poverty.

Learner's name _____

Pre-Assessment

1. What does it mean to live in Appalachia? Are there any areas in Ohio that would be considered Appalachian? Explain.

2. What major social problems do you think are related to living in Appalachia? Why?

Exploration #1 What does it mean to live in Appalachia? Are there are Appalachian Counties in Ohio?

In order to answer this question, you will need to go the World Wide Web. Go to the following web address for the Appalachian Regional Commission (www.arc.gov/).

According to this website, how does a county in Ohio become designated “Appalachian”?

According to this website <http://www.firstohio.com/>), how many counties in Ohio are designated Appalachian? _____.

Where in the state are these counties located?

Exploration #2 Poverty and Appalachia

Social Scientists as well as social policy makers are very interested in trying to understand the relationship between poverty and living in Appalachia. Hopefully, by understanding this information, various programs can be developed to help decrease poverty in this region.

In this exploration, you as a researcher will be exploring the relationship between three social indicators and living in an Appalachian county in Ohio. You will be asked to make a series of predictions before you examine the actual data.

Prediction Questions:

1. Do you think Appalachian counties will have higher levels of poverty than non-Appalachian counties? Why?
2. Do you think Appalachian counties will have higher levels of teen births than non-Appalachian counties? Why?
3. Do you think Appalachian counties will have higher levels of unemployment than non-Appalachian counties? Why?

In order to examine these relationships, you will need to use the KIDS COUNT DATA set. You can minimize the web site or close it. On the desktop of your computer, you will see a KIDS COUNT Ohio ICON. Click on this to start the Microsoft Excel Program using KIDS COUNT data (When the screen appears, there will be a messaging asking if you want to enable macros, you can click on enable macros).

Relationship 1

Click on Chart. On the Chart, in the area where it asks for the X variable click on **APPOhio** (1997). Then for the Y variable scroll down until you find **%Poverty** (Choose 1997). You will immediately see the two lines of data on the screen. For this data, 0 equals non-Appalachian counties and 1 indicates Appalachian counties. You can click Charts and Rankings below to examine the actual data that created this plot. In order to go back to scatter plots, just click on charts. We will do this one together in class.

Draw a Bar graph below to demonstrate your findings:



- Were your predictions accurate?

Relationship 2

Now repeat the above steps first using % Teen Births(1999) as your y variable and keep AppOhio as your X variable.

Draw a Bar graph below to demonstrate your findings:



- Were your predictions accurate?

Relationship 3

Now repeat the above steps using UNEMPLOYMENT (2000) as your y variable and keep AppOhio as your X variable.

Draw a Bar graph below to demonstrate your findings:



- Were your predictions accurate?

Final Exploration—Social Policy Implications

As we have learned in class, many states have adopted guidelines to help families get off poverty (TANF) based on federal guidelines. We have also discussed that different regions of the United States have different problems they are facing with issues like education, unemployment, and poverty. Answer the following questions using your sociological imagination and critical thinking skills:

1. Based on the information you learn in this exercise, does it make sense to have a macro-level statewide program to end poverty rather than a county level program? Why or Why not?
2. Why do you think Appalachian counties seem to be struggling with poverty more than non-Appalachian counties?
3. What do you think should be done from a social policy standpoint to decrease these differences? Why?

For further exploration for each county, go to <http://oh.profiles.iastate.edu/county>. This web site contains State of Ohio data for each county. You can examine some of the other economic and social factors inflicting this region.

