

EXERCISE 3: Asking and Answering Questions

Example 1

Step 1: State question/curiosity in general terms.

In our agency/state/county, after children enter foster care, how long do they usually stay?

Step 2: Pick the type of population that you will use to answer the question (entry cohort, exit cohort, in care population)

Entry cohort: Children who enter foster care.

Step 3: Identify the specific population(s) you will use to answer the question.

Children who entered foster care during 2009.

Step 4: Pick the statistic or parameter: e.g., percent, median, average, survival curve

Median length of stay in foster care.

Step 5: Write the analytic question(s).

Of children who entered foster care during 2009, what was the median duration in care?

Example 2

Step 1: State question/curiosity in general terms.

Are we getting any better at placing children with kin?

Step 2: Pick the type of population that you will use to answer the question (entry cohort, exit cohort, in care population)

We will need at least two populations, to compare. Therefore, select two or more entry cohorts of children entering foster care.

Step 3: Identify the specific population(s) you will use to answer the question.

*Children who entered foster care during 2005.
Children who entered foster care during 2009.*

Step 4: Pick the statistic or parameter: e.g., percent, median, average, survival curve

Percent of children with predominant placement in kinship care, where "predominant" is defined as at least 50% of time in kinship care.

Step 5: Write the analytic question(s).

*Of children who entered foster care in 2005, what percent had a predominant placement of kinship care?
Of children who entered foster care in 2009, what percent had a predominant placement of kinship care?*

EXERCISE 3: Asking and Answering Questions

Question 1:

Step 1: State question/curiosity in general terms.

We have 150 children in foster care right now. What percent is likely to be discharged to permanency before the end of the year?

Step 2: Pick the type of population that you will use to answer the question (entry cohort, exit cohort, in care population)

Step 3: Identify the specific population(s) you will use to answer the question.

Step 4: Pick the statistic or parameter: e. g., percent, median, average, survival curve

Step 5: Write the analytic question(s).

Question 2:

Step 1: State question/curiosity in general terms.

Step 2: Pick the type of population that you will use to answer the question (entry cohort, exit cohort, in care population)

Step 3: Identify the specific population(s) you will use to answer the question.

Step 4: Pick the statistic or parameter: e. g., percent, median, average, survival curve

Step 5: Write the analytic question(s).