



Expanding Behavioral Health Data Collection: Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) in Children

*Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration*

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OVERVIEW OF SED STUDY

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Introduction

- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services seeks to expand behavioral health data collection.
- Require guidance on how to best measure and collect these data.
- SAMHSA working through ASPE to engage the Committee on National Statistics (CNSTAT)/National Research Council (NRC).

Expand Behavioral Health Data

- Guidance needed on how to measure and collect data on these behavioral health topics:
 - Topic 1: Specific adult mental illness including functional impairment
 - Topic 2: Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) in children
 - Topic 3: Trauma
 - Topic 4: Recovery

Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED): Legislation

- In 1992, the Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration (ADAMHA) Reorganization Act established a block grant for Community Mental Health Services to be administered by SAMHSA.
- This block grant provides funds to States to support services for children with serious emotional disturbance (SED) and adults with serious mental illness (SMI).

SED Background

- SAMHSA has a legislative mandate to collect SED estimates at the national and state level.
- SED has a set definition.
- The definition of past year SED has two main components – mental disorders and impairment.

SED Definition in 1993 *Federal Register*

- "Children from birth up to age 18
- who currently or any time during the past year
- have had a diagnosable mental, behavioral, or emotional disorder of sufficient duration to meet diagnostic criteria specified within [the then current] DSM III R
- which has resulted in functional impairment which substantially interferes with or limits the child's role or functioning in family, school, or community activities."

SAMHSA SED Work

- SAMHSA convened two non-NRC expert panels; they provided
 - guidance on which DSM 5 disorders should and should not be included in the SED definition
 - research on what instruments are currently available to measure these disorders and impairment within SED definition

Challenges to Collecting SED Data

- There are instrumentation development and measurement challenges.
- Need guidance on best and appropriate instruments to use for measuring SED.
- If certain instruments are not appropriate for study or data collection mode, need specific instrumentation development work.

Challenges to Collecting SED Data

- Instrumentation-related guidance should take estimation methods and design features into account. For example:
 - Instrumentation validation across the mode of data collection and the population of interest.
 - Impact of different age-appropriate instruments on the effect of continuity of estimates.
 - Availability of Spanish instrumentation.

Collect SED Data

Possible means of collecting the data:

- Use the National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH) ,
- Reinstate the Mental Health Surveillance Study (MHSS),
- Develop a new data collection program,
- Use existing data, and/or

Guidance needed on estimation method (which may effect design options and vice versa):

- Construct model-based estimation procedures using existing data sources.

SED Workshop Charge

- Provide guidance on how to measure Serious Emotional Disturbance (SED) in children
- Consider survey and questionnaire design tradeoffs
- Assess mechanisms for collecting the data and provide suggestions
- Provide suggestions for measuring these data and assess potential impact of changes to NSDUH
- Discuss or present commissioned papers