

Factors Influencing Retention and Participation of Girls in a Longitudinal Study

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Background

The Growing Up Female study is the epidemiology project within the Cincinnati Breast Cancer and the Environment Research Center (CBCERC). For the past six years, study participants have been seen semiannually at one of two locations: Cincinnati Children's Hospital Medical Center ("Clinic-Based Girls") or their local schools ("School-Based Girls"). During the planning stages of future studies, it is important to reflect upon the efficacy of the study design as it relates to retention and participation of young females.

Hypotheses

The purpose of this study is to determine the impact of various factors on retention and participation of Growing Up Female subjects. We intend to analyze the impact of socioeconomic status, race, and visit site on the following outcomes: retention, completed visits, phlebotomy rate, and questionnaire return rate. We hypothesize that site will be the most influential variable on these outcomes. We will look at race and socioeconomic status as contributing factors.

Hypothesis 1: School-Based Girls will be more likely to complete visits than Clinic-Based Girls

Hypothesis 2: Clinic-Based Girls will be more likely to complete phlebotomy than School-Based Girls

Hypothesis 3: Clinic-Based Girls will be more likely to return questionnaires than School-Based Girls

Hypothesis 4: Clinic-Based Girls will be more likely to no-show or drop than School-Based Girls

Methods

Participation and retention data will be obtained from study logs. Race and socioeconomic status will be derived from questionnaires obtained during years one and two of the study. Statistical Analysis Software (SAS) will be used to perform the analyses.

Results and conclusions

Results and proposed explanations will be presented. The implications of these findings on future longitudinal studies in this age group will be translated.

Category: Transdisciplinary research approaches/findings