

Research and Intervention with Children at Risk



RTI International uses science to promote the health and well-being of children and families. We are particularly interested in children at risk due to known stressors such as poverty; involvement in the child welfare system; and parental deployment, incarceration, or substance abuse. Without intervention, many of these children face a high risk of negative outcomes. We strive to break this cycle by researching the causes and prevention of child problem behaviors including violence, substance abuse, sexual risk-taking, poor school performance, and mental health problems.

Overview

Childhood stress can lead to harmful effects on brain development, well-being, and learning. RTI is committed to understanding the stressors that place children at risk. Our researchers are experienced in examining issues that affect the well-being of children and in performing rigorous evaluations of interventions aimed to improve child outcomes by addressing various stressors and risks.

Our clients include

- Administration for Children and Families (ACF)
- Department of Defense (DOD)
- Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)
- Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD)
- National Institute of Justice (NIJ)
- Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP)
- Office of Public Affairs (OPA)
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA, CSAP)
- U.S. Department of Education (ED)

Comprehensive, Developmental Research

RTI conducts research to ensure healthy development from infancy through the transition to adulthood. We work within the child welfare, criminal justice, school, mental health, and community systems that affect at-risk children and their families.

Early Childhood

Family Financial Stability Initiative (ACF). The aim of this study is to increase knowledge about financial education and asset building strategies among the early childhood community of providers. Several pilot sites will test approaches for providing these services for families with young children. RTI will also help ACF host forums to highlight effective strategies with experts from the early childhood community, the financial education and asset building fields, and others.

Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Birth Cohort (ED). This study's objective is to increase understanding of children's early learning experiences and school readiness and performance. RTI is following over 6,000 families with kindergarten-age children, collecting data from parents, children, and child care providers. Findings will be critical for informing early childhood education policies and practices.



Childhood and Adolescence

National Survey of Child and Adolescent Well-Being (ACF).

RTI is leading nationally representative studies of children and families involved in the U.S. child welfare system. The first cohort involved over 6,000 children under the age of 15 who were followed for 5–7 years to assess their well-being and service utilization. Results answer fundamental questions about how to improve policy and practice for abused and neglected children.

Spouse Abuse, Child Abuse, and Substance Abuse Among Army Families: Co-occurrence and Service Delivery Issues (DOD). This study investigates the occurrence of family violence, the role of alcohol, and the use of services by Army families. RTI analyzed case studies and findings from a Web-based survey to inform best practices for at-risk military families.

The Girls Study Group (OJJDP). To understand the rising rates of delinquency among girls, this study brings together a group of national experts to examine the state of the literature on the etiology and prevention of girls' criminal and violent behavior. A major emphasis is communicating findings to policy makers, practitioners, and researchers.

Emerging Adulthood

The Campus Sexual Assault Study (NIJ). RTI is working with several state universities and historically black colleges to examine the prevalence, nature, and reporting of sexual assault among undergraduate students. Results will be used to develop education and prevention programs designed to reduce the incidence of sexual assault.

Young Adults in the Workplace (SAMHSA, CSAP). The goal of this study is to evaluate the effectiveness of workplace health promotion programs to reduce substance use and improve health and productivity for youth and young working adults. RTI is conducting a multi-site evaluation of six evidenced-based programs in the workplace adapted for 16- to 24-year-olds. The evaluation will provide policy-relevant information to the federal government and the nation's employers regarding the effectiveness and costs related to substance abuse prevention.

Programs Evaluation and Policy/System Assessments

RTI's expertise encompasses the full cycle of research from etiologic studies to program evaluations and policy assessments. We bring state-of-the-art methods to our research, including both qualitative and quantitative techniques.

Evaluation of the Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative (ED, DHHS, NIJ). In this study of public schools, law enforcement agencies, and mental health agencies, we investigated the implementation and effects of interventions designed to reduce violence and substance use and to promote mental health and school safety among youth. Findings have focused on changes in policies and programs and related changes in outcomes.

Evaluation of Adolescent Family Life Programs (OPA, DHHS). RTI designed core evaluation tools and provided training and technical assistance on instruments and data collection for a national cross-site evaluation of the Title XX demonstration projects. These projects provide abstinence education and services for pregnant and parenting adolescents.

Neonatal Research Network (NICHD). RTI is the data coordinating center for the Neonatal Research Network, a group of 16 U.S. hospitals that enroll newborn, mostly premature, babies into treatment efficacy studies. Findings provide critical information to inform policy and practice regarding treatment modalities for critically ill neonates.

More Information

Anupa Bir, ScD, MPH
Program Director, Research on Women, Children, and Families
Phone: 781.434.1708
E-mail: abir@rti.org
RTI International
3040 Cornwallis Road, PO Box 12194
Research Triangle Park, NC 27709-2194 USA

RTI 6988 0410



RTI International is one of the world's leading research institutes, dedicated to improving the human condition by turning knowledge into practice. Our staff of more than 2,800 provides research and technical expertise to governments and businesses in more than 40 countries in the areas of health and pharmaceuticals, education and training, surveys and statistics, advanced technology, international development, economic and social policy, energy and the environment, and laboratory and chemistry services. For more information, visit www.rti.org.

RTI International is a trade name of Research Triangle Institute.

