

Alvarado, Steven (2011). The Effect of neighborhood context on children's health and education outcomes.

Abstract

This dissertation uses over twenty years of restricted geo-coded data from the National Longitudinal Survey of Youth (NLSY) 1979 and Child and Young adult sample to examine the effect of neighborhood context on children's odds of being obese and their reading and math achievement. I used a within-child fixed effects approach to identify causal estimates for separate indicators of neighborhood racial/ethnic composition and socioeconomic status. The panel data allows for an estimation of neighborhood effects that incorporates the changing nature of social context over time. The NLSY also allows for the analysis of separate effects for both movers and stayers. Within the stayers approach, I can assess the impact of gentrification on children's outcomes. The findings suggest that many associations drawn from OLS and logistic models are spurious. However, the findings also suggest real neighborhood effects that vary by child's socioeconomic status and race/ethnicity.