



National Institute of Child Health
and Human Development (NICHD)
<http://www.nichd.nih.gov/>

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National Children's Study Seeks Proposals for New Study Centers Study Begins Next Phase

The National Children's Study has issued a request for proposals to award contracts to up to 20 new study centers. These centers will manage operations in up to a total of 30 communities across the United States.

The National Children's Study seeks to examine the effects of environmental influences on human health and development by enrolling a representative sample of more than 100,000 infants from across the United States and following them from before birth until age 21.

The request for proposals represents the next step in implementing the study, which began in 2005 with the awarding of contracts to seven initial, or Vanguard, centers in seven U.S. communities.

The study is led by a consortium of federal agencies: the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services—including the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences at the NIH, and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention—and the Environmental Protection Agency.

“The National Children's Study will improve the health and well-being of children and adults by identifying the root causes of many diseases and conditions,” said Duane Alexander, M.D., Director of the NICHD.

Study researchers hope to gain insight into the genesis of important health issues, including: birth defects and pregnancy-related problems, injuries, asthma, obesity and diabetes, as well as behavior, learning, and mental health. The study will examine environmental factors such as: air, water, and house dust; what children eat; how they are cared for; the safety of their neighborhoods; and how often they see a doctor. Findings from the study will provide the basis for new disease prevention strategies, health and safety guidelines, and potential new treatments and cures for disease.

The study has identified a statistically representative group of 105 communities across the United States where it will recruit and enroll eligible participants. Contracts for the

study centers will be awarded to interested medical research organizations based on the quality of their proposals and geographic proximity to the study communities.

These new study centers must successfully demonstrate such capabilities as collection and management of biological and environmental specimens; the capacity to develop community networks for identifying, recruiting, and retaining eligible mothers and infants; and the ability to secure the privacy of the data collected.

The National Children's Study has received an appropriation of \$69 million from Congress for fiscal year 2007 to support the implementation of the study.

The National Children's Study was authorized by the Children's Health Act of 2000, a directive from Congress to undertake a national, long-term study of children's health and development in relation to environmental exposures. The NICHD was directed to lead the effort in conjunction with other federal agencies.

Detailed information on the National Children's Study is available at <http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov>. The request for proposals is available at <http://www1.fbo.gov/spg/HHS/NIH/NICHD/RFP%2DNIH%2DNICHD%2DNCS%2D07%2D11/Attachments.html>.

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The National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS), a component of the National Institutes of Health, supports research to understand the effects of the environment on human health. For more information on environmental health topics, please visit our website at <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/>.

The NICHD sponsors research on development, before and after birth; maternal, child, and family health; reproductive biology and population issues; and medical rehabilitation. For more information, visit the Web site at <http://www.nichd.nih.gov/>.

The NIH, the nation's medical research agency, includes 27 Institutes and Centers and is a component of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The NIH is the primary federal agency for conducting and supporting basic, clinical, and translational medical research, and it investigates the causes, treatments, and cures for both common and rare diseases. For more information about the NIH and its programs, visit <http://www.nih.gov>.