

## **Brown University and Women & Infants National Children's Study Center**

**Stephen Buka, Sc.D. and Maureen Phipps, M.D., Principal Investigators**

### **Announcement of Funds Available for Local Researchers to Collaborate with the National Children's Study**

The National Institute of Child Health and Human Development has awarded Brown University a major five-year contract to join the National Children's Study, a landmark research project aimed at improving children's health. Brown will partner with Women & Infants Hospital of Rhode Island and others to enroll 1,000 pregnant and pre-pregnant women in Providence County, RI and a comparable number from Bristol County, MA and follow them and their offspring until age 21 years to examine the effects of environmental and genetic influences on their health and well-being. This document provides a brief overview of the NCS and invites letters of intent to develop new adjunct studies related to the NCS.

#### **Study Overview**

The National Children's Study will examine the effects of environmental and genetic influences on the health and development of more than 100,000 children across the United States, following them from before birth until age 21. The goal of the Study is to improve the health and well-being of children.

The Study defines "environment" broadly and will take a number of issues into account, including:

- natural and man-made environmental factors
- biological and chemical factors
- physical surroundings
- social factors
- behavioral influences and outcomes
- genetics
- cultural and family influences and differences
- geographic locations

Researchers will analyze how these elements interact with each other and what helpful and/or harmful effects they might have on children's health.

Data collected from the NCS participants will include biological specimens from mother, father and infant; physical measurements of mother, father and infant; environmental samples from homes, schools and daycare centers frequented by the participants; and questionnaires related to participants' social, behavioral, cultural and geographic influences.

Enrollment will be staggered across the study locations, with the first wave of enrollment beginning in July 2010 (including Providence County), the second wave beginning July, 2011 (including Bristol County, MA), and the final wave beginning July, 2012. A key feature of the NCS design is that pregnant women will be enrolled through random household sampling. In each county, the NCS team will be selecting and enumerating approximately 12,000 households. Following basic household screening, women in the first trimester of pregnancy (and a smaller sample of pre-conceptual women) will be enrolled into the study and followed through pregnancy and for the first 21 years of the life of her child.

For more information about the National Children's Study, see the following resources:  
[www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov](http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov)

## **ADJUNCT STUDIES TO THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STUDY**

The Brown University National Children's Study Center is inviting letters of intent from local researchers and plans to provide funds to support the development of Adjunct Study proposals for submission to NIH, foundations or other sponsored research agencies. We anticipate several possible types of Adjunct Studies: 1) secondary analyses that would involve analyses of materials gathered through the basic NCS protocol (e.g., air pollution levels and risk for preterm delivery); 2) new data collection efforts that would involve supplemental data collection for NCS participants; 3) new data collection efforts that make use of the basic NCS design and infrastructure, but that do not involve NCS participants. Accordingly, proposals would most likely use information collected as part of the NCS, for example participant data, bio-specimens, and/or environmental samples, or use the sampling frame of the NCS.

At this time, we are inviting brief letters of intent to develop applications for new Adjunct Studies of this type. These letters will then be reviewed by members of the Brown University NCS investigative team and Scientific Advisory Board. Those letters of intent which are regarded as particularly promising will be awarded funds to support the development of a full proposal. At this time, funds from this announcement are available to Brown-affiliated investigators only. However other interested investigators are encouraged to submit letters of intent which will also be reviewed by the Brown NCS team for possible development into full adjunct proposals (although without seed funding).

### **Letters of Intent (2-3 pages) should include the following:**

- Brief background/significance of the project
- Statement of research goals
- Brief overview of methods and research plan
- Relevance to NCS (what data will be used)
- Anticipated date of planned proposal submission
- Anticipated collaborators (\*see footnote below)
- Targeted funding agency, anticipated grant mechanism (e.g., RO3; RO1), number of years of support requested, and rough estimate of total budget

### **Procedure for submitting Letter of Intent:**

The letter of intent and any supporting documents should be submitted via email to Hailee Dunn (Hailee\_Dunn@brown.edu) no later than **December 15, 2008**. Selections will be announced by January 12, 2009 and award period will begin upon approval.

### **Amount and Duration of Awards**

Awards will range from \$3,000 to \$5,000, distributed as follows:

- 25% upon initial approval
- 50% upon completion of full draft application - expected by April 30, 2009
- Final 25% once submitted

### **Criteria for selection**

The overall merit of the proposed project will be considered and evaluated by an ad hoc committee consisting of members of the NCS leadership team and Scientific Advisory Board.

Criteria for selection include:

- Qualifications of investigators
- Relevance to child, family and/or community health
- Potential for advancing knowledge in the field
- Innovation and creativity
- Anticipated likelihood of funding

*Please check with your institutional research administration to determine whether this small grant proposal needs to go through your institution's grant routing procedure.*

\*The National NCS office requires the participation of an NCS investigator as part of an adjunct study. For more information: [www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov/research/adjunctstudies/Pages/default.aspx](http://www.nationalchildrensstudy.gov/research/adjunctstudies/Pages/default.aspx)