  
IASWR Listserv Announcements May 12, 2004

*Compiled as a resource to advance social work education, practice, and policy through social work research.*

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# CALL FOR ABSTRACTS [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**DEADLINE EXTENDED SOUTH CAROLINA POLICY CONFERENCE**

Theme: "Social Policy Change in a Polarized Nation" August 7-10, 2004 Charleston, SC

The deadline for submission of abstracts for the Policy Conference has been extended to May 16.

Please submit your proposal electronically to <http://cosw.sc.edu/conf/policy/index.htm>. Click 'Abstract Submission' on the left side of the screen. This will download your abstract and contact information into our database. Please contact Julie Miller-Cribbs for further information

jmcribbs@sc.edu or 803-777-1546. Two plenary speakers are confirmed: Dr. Bruce Jansson on "Why the Glass Isn't Half Empty: How We Can Advance a Progressive Agenda in a Polarized Nation," and Dr. Mimi Abramovitz on "From the Have Nots to the Haves: The Rise and

Fall of the Welfare State." Contact: Julie Miller-Cribbs, PhD

University of South Carolina College of Social Work

Columbia, SC 29208 (803) 777-1546 FAX (803) 777-3498 [jmcribbs@sc.edu](mailto:jmcribbs@sc.edu) <http://www.cosw.sc.edu/faculty/millercribbsj.htm>

**CALL FOR ABSTRACTS: ASA/NCOA**

<http://www.agingconference.org/jc05/call/index.cfm> March 10-13,2005 Philadelphia, PA

**Deadline of June 4, 2004**. Theme of "The Changing Face of Aging".

The Call for the 2005 Joint conference of ASA/NCOA is on line at the site above.

# CALL FOR INFORMATION (NIH) [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**NIH: REQUEST FOR INFORMATION: DESIGN AND IMPLEMENTATION OF A LARGE-SCALE PROSPECTIVE COHORT STUDY OF GENETIC AND ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCES ON COMMON DISEASES** (NOT-OD-04-041)

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-OD-04-041.html>

**Response Due Date: May 28, 2004**

This request for information seeks advice on approaches to developing a large-scale U.S. study of genetic and environmental influences on common diseases. Advice could include recommendations on optimal characteristics of such a study, such as some of the items described above; recommendations on combining existing cohorts for such efforts; and characteristics of existing studies that might lend themselves to inclusion in such efforts. Respondents are asked to comment on one or more of the issues listed below (using the link to the online form at the end of this document if possible) but should not feel compelled to address all issues. (There follows a list of 14 items.) Responses in any of the 14 areas are welcome; respondents should not feel compelled to address all 14 issues. Responses will be compiled and shared with advisory committees involved in the development and approval of this study concept. Should the responses be shared with other individuals, the names of the respondents will be withheld.

# CONFERENCES/TRAINING [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**IASWR RIGOROUS & RELEVANT RESEARCH METHODS TRAINING – META-ANALYSIS**

[www.iaswresearch.org](http://www.iaswresearch.org/) June 25-26, 2004 Washington, DC

An intensive two-day workshop on Meta-Analysis and hands-on introduction to the use of Hierarchical Linear Modeling (HLM) software will be led by William R. Nugent, PhD, MSW, Professor, University of Tennessee, Knoxville. This training is open to social work researchers at all levels of experience, from doctoral students to senior researchers. The first day will include an introduction to theory and uses of Meta-Analysis, and the second day will include experience in working with data sets with HLM software. A limited number of openings are still available. To register visit the website above and click on Upcoming Events and then click on Print Registration Form. To see additional information which includes Frequently Asked Questions (FAQS) about the event [**Click here to learn more!**](http://www.charityadvantage.com/iaswr/images/faq324.doc) In order to receive the special housing rate at the hotel, reservations must be made by May 25.

**CHILD WELFARE PROFESSIONAL ENHANCEMENT**

<http://www.conferencepros.com/conferences/CWPEP/index.htm> July 12-14, 2004 Santa Fe, NM

The University of Oklahoma, School of Social Work's Child Welfare Professional Enhancement Program (Title IV-E) is hosting a national conference with the theme "Weaving Resources for Better Child Welfare Outcomes". Register online (above) or call 405.325.2907 to request a brochure. The conference offers a variety of workshops on Child Welfare practice and university/state/federal partnership issues. Registration will be limited to 250 slots.

**12TH ANNUAL COCHRANE COLLABORATION COLLOQUIUM**

[www.colloquium.info](http://www.colloquium.info) October 2 - 6, 2004 Ottawa, Canada

Theme: "Building Bridges Between Health and Social Science Research.” The Cochrane Collaboration (C1) sibling to the Campbell Collaboration (C2), is holding its colloquium on "Bridging the Gaps." Through plenary sessions, oral presentations, posters, and workshops, The Cochrane Collaboration will identify and address the gaps that exist between The Cochrane Collaboration and clinical practice, between high-income and low-income economies, between methodologists and reviewers, and between producers and users of Cochrane reviews.

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# FUNDING OPPORTUNITIES [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**CDC: STEPS TO A HEALTHIERUS: A COMMUNITY-FOCUSED INITIATIVE TO REDUCE THE BURDEN OF ASTHMA, DIABETES, AND OBESITY** (CDC PA04234)

<http://www.cdc.gov/od/pgo/funding/04234.htm> **Deadline: Jun 21, 2004 by 4:00 p.m.**

CDC’s Procurement and Grants Office has published a program announcement entitled, “Steps to a HealthierUS: A Community-Focused Initiative to Reduce the Burden of Asthma, Diabetes, and Obesity.” Approximately $10,500,000 will be available in fiscal year 2004 to fund a total of 8-12 awards; up to 5 Large City and Urban Communities awardees, up to 2 Tribal awardees, and up to 3 State-Coordinated Small City and Urban Community awardees. The purpose of STEPS is to enable communities to reduce the burden of chronic disease, including: preventing diabetes among populations with pre-diabetes; increasing the likelihood that persons with undiagnosed diabetes are diagnosed; reducing complications of diabetes; preventing overweight and obesity; reducing overweight and obesity; and reducing the complications of asthma. STEPS will achieve these outcomes by: improving nutrition; increasing physical activity; preventing tobacco use and exposure, targeting adults who are diabetic or who live with persons with asthma; increasing use of appropriate healthcare services; improving the quality of care; and increasing effective self-management of chronic diseases and associated risk factors. The estimated funding date is September 22, 2004.

**DHHS: FAMILY PLANNING PUBLIC EDUCATION AND INFORMATION ACTIVITIES**

<http://www.fedgrants.gov/Applicants/HHS/OS/OPHS/PA-FPEI%26%23032%3B-04-003/Grant.html>

**Deadline: July 06, 2004** (PA-FPEI -04-003)

The DHHS Office of the Secretary, Office of Public Health and Science, Office of Family Planning (OFP), announces availability of fiscal year (FY) 2004 funds for a grant program for family planning public education and information conference support. Grants will be awarded to provide partial support for non-Federal conference activities in topic areas relevant to the delivery of family planning services. Successful applicants will conduct public education and information activities (as part of a larger conference) that will enhance and support the mission of the Title X family planning program. This announcement seeks proposals from public and private non-profit entities for the purpose of providing partial support for specific non-Federal one-time conference program activities in the area of family planning and related preventive health. A conference is a symposium, seminar, workshop, or any other organized and formal meeting lasting one day or more, where persons assemble to exchange information and views, explore, or clarify a defined subject, problem, or area of knowledge, whether or not a published report results from such meeting. The OFP will not consider applications which seek funding for a series of conferences. The funding conference program activity or activities should support OFP principles in furtherance of the family planning program mission.

**DHHS: 2004 CHILDREN'S BUREAU DISCRETIONARY GRANTS**

**1. Previous Abandoned Infant Comprehensive Service Demonstration Projects**

(HHS-2004-ACF-ACYF-CB-0018)

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-10556.htm>

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide support for the comprehensive service demonstration projects initially funded in FY 2000. Applicants should document continuing need for the project and propose ways of improving service provision to meet the needs of abandoned infants and young children or those who are at risk of abandonment and their families. Applicants should also propose methods to continue the program evaluation including proposed outcome measures and summary evaluative data on the current program.

**2. Family Support Services for Grandparents and Other Relatives Providing Caregiving for Children of Substance Abusing and/or HIV-Positive Women** (HHS-2004-ACF-ACYF-CB-0017)

<http://a257.g.akamaitech.net/7/257/2422/14mar20010800/edocket.access.gpo.gov/2004/04-10557.htm>

The purpose of this funding opportunity is to provide counseling and other support services to family caregivers for drug-exposed, HIV-exposed, HIV-positive or HIV/AIDS affected children. The funds will be used to establish or enhance a system of support services that should include, but are not limited to, social services, counseling, legal and financial services, and assistance with custodial issues. Projects supported under this funding opportunity are expected to serve as models for service provision to children and adolescents affected by HIV/AIDS. A model project funded under this initiative must:

1. Develop and implement an evidence-based project with specific components or strategies that are based on theory, research, or evaluation data; or, replicate or test the transferability of successfully evaluated program models;
2. Determine the effectiveness of the model and its components or strategies; and
3. Produce materials that will enable others to replicate the model.

Applicants should have an understanding of family caregiver support and service needs and a history of involvement with grandparent groups or other family member caregiver groups that specifically address the needs of drug-exposed and/or HIV-positive children in their applications. Applicants should coordinate and collaborate, as appropriate, with other related programs, such as SAMSHA and Ryan White CARE Act.

**NIH: EPIDEMIOLOGY OF DRUG ABUSE**

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-04-100.html> (PA-04-100)

The major goal of this PA is to stimulate innovative investigations that enhance our understanding of: (1) drug use patterns and trends within and across populations; (2) interplay of social interactions, social environment, structural context with individual behavioral characteristics and genetic vulnerability; (3) the phenotypic heterogeneity of drug abuse; (4) causal mechanisms leading to onset, maintenance, and remittance of drug abuse, as well as protective mechanisms that reduce the risk of drug abuse; and (5) drug abuse over the life course, including developmental processes that influence drug use trajectories and behavioral, health, and social consequences of drug abuse. In addition, research is encouraged to develop methodologies to improve the accuracy, efficiency, scope, timeliness, and analytic yield of drug abuse epidemiologic data. Because of the breadth of epidemiology research, applications are anticipated to reflect diverse and multidisciplinary putative approaches and multiple levels of causation.

**NIH: TESTING TOBACCO PRODUCTS PROMOTED TO REDUCE HARM**

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/pa-files/PA-04-103.html> (PA-04-103)

The purpose of this Program Announcement (PA) is to stimulate multidisciplinary research on potential reduced-exposure tobacco products, both smoked and smokeless, through the interplay of basic, biological, and behavioral research, surveillance, and epidemiology. The tobacco industry is currently promoting some new products with claims that they are less harmful or less addictive because these products purportedly deliver lower amounts of toxic, carcinogenic, and/or addictive agents to the user compared with conventional products. However, to date, the scientific evidence is insufficient to evaluate whether these new products actually reduce the users’ exposure or risk for tobacco-related diseases. The key research question of this PA is, “Do potential reduced-exposure tobacco products provide a truly, less-harmful alternative to conventional tobacco products, both on the individual and population level?”

**SAMHSA: $45 MILLION AVAILABLE TO LAUNCH STRATEGIC PREVENTION FRAMEWORK**

[www.samhsa.gov/grants/index.html](http://www.samhsa.gov/grants/index.html) **Deadline: July 2, 2004** (SP 04-002)

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) announces $45 million in cooperative agreements with states to implement a new Strategic Prevention Framework to advance community-based programs for substance abuse prevention and mental health promotion. The Strategic Prevention Framework will provide grants to states through the office of governor for programs that will: prevent onset and reduce progression of substance abuse, including childhood and underage drinking programs; reduce substance abuse-related problems in communities; and build prevention capacity and infrastructure in states and communities. States will be funded up to five years and up to $3 million per year to create a Strategic Prevention Framework in partnership with community level organizations. Application kits are available at the website above or by calling (800) 729-6686.

**FULBRIGHT SCHOLAR PROGRAM**

<http://www.cies.org>

The Fulbright Scholar Program is offering 7 lecturing, research, and lecturing/research awards in the field of social work for the 2005-2006 academic year. Awards for both faculty and professionals range from two months to an academic year. While many awards specify project and host institution, there are a number of open "All Disciplines" awards that allow candidates to propose their own project and determine their host institution affiliation. Foreign language skills are needed in some countries, but most Fulbright lecturing assignments are in English. The application **deadline for Fulbright traditional lecturing and research grants worldwide is August 1, 2004.** U.S. citizenship is required.

**NARSAD YOUNG INVESTIGATOR AWARD**

<http://www.narsad.org/research/apply/young/guidelines.html>

**Deadline: 07/26/2004** (Applications are accepted between June 1, 2004 and July 26, 2004.)

The National Alliance For Research On Schizophrenia And Depression (NARSAD) Young Investigator Award (Program Number: 56297) offers up to $30,000 a year for up to two years to enable promising investigators to either extend their research fellowship training or to begin careers as independent research faculty. Link to full program description: <http://www.infoed.org/new_spin/spin_prog.asp?56297>

E-mail: [grants@narsad.orgLink](mailto:grants@narsad.orgLink)

**NASI: JOHN HEINZ DISSERTATION AWARD**

<http://www.nasi.org/info-url_nocat3815/info-url_nocat_show.htm?doc_id=149375>

**Deadline, Jul. 31, 2004**

This National Academy of Social Insurance dissertation award is for any dissertation addressing topics relevant to the planning and implementation of social insurance policy is eligible for nomination. This might include analysis of long-term care financing, the labor market effects of Social Security, cross-national comparisons and family social insurance protections. Nominations are encouraged from many disciplines and professions, including, but not limited to, actuarial science, economics, health policy, history, philosophy, political science, social work, and sociology.

**NSF FACULTY EARLY CAREER DEVELOPMENT (CAREER) PROGRAM**

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubs/2002/nsf02111/nsf02111.htm> **Deadline: 07/22/2004**

These National Science Foundation (NSF) Directorate for Social, Behavioral and Economic Sciences/NSF (Program Number: 15099) Awards support outstanding new faculty who intend to develop academic careers involving both research and education in the social, behavioral and economic sciences. The minimum award size is $400,000 total for a duration of five years. Applicants will also be considered for Presidential Early Career Awards for Scientists and Engineers. E-mail: [kbenson@nsf.gov](mailto:kbenson@nsf.gov) Link to full program description:

<http://www.infoed.org/new_spin/spin_prog.asp?15099>

**RWJF: HEALTH & SOCIETY SCHOLARS PROGRAM**

**Building Human Capital** and **Public Health Leadership**. **Deadline: Oct 15, 2004**

<http://www.healthandsocietyscholars.org/>

The Robert Wood Johnson Health & Society Scholars Program is designed to build the field of population health, which takes a broad approach to understanding why some groups of people are healthy and others are not. The goal of this interdisciplinary program is to improve health by training scholars to investigate rigorously the connections among biological, behavioral, environmental, economic and social determinants of health; and, to develop, evaluate and disseminate knowledge and interventions based upon integration of these determinants.

The program intends to produce leaders who will change the questions asked, the methods employed to analyze problems and the range of solutions offered to improve the health of all Americans. For additional information, visit [The Robert Wood Johnson Health & Society Scholars Web site.](http://www.healthandsocietyscholars.org) More details and how to apply: <http://www.rwjf.org/applying/cfpDetail.jsp?cfpCode=HSS&emailid=1110+000007!000008!+05122004>

**TIDES FOUNDATION: FUND FOR DRUG POLICY REFORM**

<http://fundfordrugpolicyreform.org/gs_policy_change_RFP.html> **Deadline: May 14, 2004**

A program of the Tides Foundation ( <http://tidesfoundation.org/> ), the Fund for Drug Policy Reform promotes innovative policies and approaches to reduce the harm of both drug use and drug prohibition and increase public and political support for alternatives to the war on drugs. The fund's 2004 Promoting Policy Change sub-cycle will support efforts to change and shape drug policies through advocacy, community mobilization, and education. The fund seeks to broaden public and political support for drug policy reform and will fund strategic and innovative approaches to increase such support. The fund invites proposals designed to motivate policy makers to embrace and promote alternatives and reforms to current local, state, or national drug policies; mobilize and empower organizations and constituencies working to promote drug policy reform; promote better awareness and under- standing of alternatives to current drug policies; and broaden awareness and understanding of the extent to which punitive prohibitionist policies are responsible for most drug-related problems around the country. The fund will provide both general operating support and project-specific grants. All grantmaking will be directed to organizations working within the U.S., with particular emphasis on state-based activity. Strategic, geographic, or thematic collaborations are strongly encouraged. The total amount available to the 2004 Promoting Policy Change cycle is roughly $1.25 million; approximately two-thirds will be earmarked for distribution to organizations working on state-based drug policy reform.

# NEWS AND NOTICES [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**NIH: SECONDARY ANALYSIS OF DATA ON CAM USE IN MINORITY POPULATIONS**

<http://grants.nih.gov/grants/guide/notice-files/NOT-AT-04-005.html> (NOT-AT-04-005)

This provides update on previous solicitation.

**SABBATICALS IN WASHINGTON, DC**

<http://www.opm.gov/Career_Opportunities/index.asp>

If you are interested in taking a sabbatical here in DC or finding a government position (career transitions) or even have access to special opportunities for your students, there is a useful website that shows the possibilities, including career tips and suggestions.

# ONLINE RESOURCES [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**AARP REPORTS, BULLETIN**

<http://research.aarp.org/il/beyond_50_il.html>

"A Report to the Nation on Independent Living and Disability," by Mary Jo Gibson, Marc Freiman, Steven Gregory, Enid Kassner, Andrew Kochera, Faith Mullen, Sheel Pandya, Don Redfoot, Audrey Straight and Bernadette Wright (AARP Public Policy Institute, Beyond 50.03, April 2004, PDF format, 213p.).

**BOSTON COLLEGE CENTER FOR RETIREMENT RESEARCH ISSUES IN BRIEF**

<http://www.bc.edu/centers/crr/ib_16.shtml>

Population Aging: It's Not Just the Baby Boom," by Alicia H. Munnell (IB #16, March 2004, .PDF format, 7p.). "The retirement of the baby boom - those people born between 1946 and 1964 - is almost upon us. The leading edge of this famous cohort turns 62 in 2008. With the aging of the baby boom, the population of the nation is about to gray rapidly over the next three decades. The purpose of the brief is to put the baby boom and its impact on population aging in perspective. Specifically, the baby boom is not the reason for the aging of the population; the aging is the result of long-term trends of increasing longevity and declining fertility. The bust/boom/bust pattern in fertility rates that resulted in the baby boom simply changes the path to an older society. Thus, the baby boom is not "a pig in a python," a somewhat graphic metaphor frequently used to suggest that the large cohort is just passing through, and life will return to normal once the last member dies. Rather, the nation is facing a permanent change in its demographic profile."

**THE GREEN BOOK 2004 – POLICY DATA**

<http://waysandmeans.house.gov/Documents.asp?section=813>

US HOUSE WAYS AND MEANS COMMITTEE COMPENDIUM: \_Green Book: 2004\_ (.PDF format) have been released by the House Ways and Means Committee. The Green Book provides updated data on major programs within the Committees jurisdiction, as well as related programs and issues. Compiled by the Ways and Means staff with the assistance of the Congressional Research Service and various Federal agencies, since its first publication in 1981 the Green Book has become an important reference guide for legislators, program administrators, scholars, and interested citizens. The 2004 edition contains over 500 detailed tables and charts and spans more than 1,500 pages, providing detailed data on Medicare, Social Security, tax expenditures, trade, welfare, poverty, the elderly, and children and families, among other issues and programs." Of special interest to researchers may be specific chapters on Social Security, Medicare, the Pension Benefit Guarantee Corporation, along with appendices on "Data on the Elderly," "Health Status and Expenditures of the Elderly, and Background Data on Long-Term Care," "Medicare Payment Policies," and "Medicare Payment Policies." The \_Green Book\_ is split into .PDF chapters for ease of download.

**THE CAMPBELL COLLABORATION (C2) QUARTERLY**

[www.campbellcollaboration.org](http://www.campbellcollaboration.org)

This issue 2, volume 1 includes a number of articles on social sciences research including:

**The Methodologists' Corner**

by Jeff Valentine *(from The Campbell Collaboration (C2) Quarterly, 5/11/04)*

Effect sizes are the most important statistics arising from a study. They address the question "How much did the intervention impact the individuals who received it, relative to those who did not?" Often, consumers are tempted to treat the results of the statistical tests as effect sizes, regarding statistically significant effects as if they were important and statistically non-significant effects as if they were unimportant. Unfortunately, the test of statistical significance is not a good indicator of how much an intervention mattered, because it actually confounds two pieces of information: the size of the intervention's effect and the size of the sample. Very important effects may be statistically non-significant when sample sizes are small, and very trivial effects may be statistically significant when sample sizes are large. The most common types of effect sizes are the (1) standardized mean difference (d), (2) correlation coefficient (r), and (3) odds ratio. To learn more about interpreting effect sizes and about meta-analysis in general, see Lipsey & Wilson's (2001) Practical Meta-Analysis. To learn about calculating effect sizes, see Shadish, Robinson, & Lu (1999) who developed software with flexible features for this purpose. The software is available at (<http://www.assess.com>)

**LABOR DEPARTMENT LAUNCHES NEW FAITH-BASED WEB SITE**

<http://www.dol-tlc.org/>

The U.S. Department of Labor's Center for Faith-Based and Community Initiatives has launched a new website Touching Lives and Communities. The site is designed to facilitate peer-to-peer dialogue between faith-based and community organizations, Workforce Boards, One-Stop Career Center leaders, and businesses about successful initiatives and partnerships. The site will also bring together representatives from over 40 successful Department of Labor grantees. Other features include discussion areas where peers can post messages about important issues. These "Learning Circles" include topics such as: Employability Skills / Mentoring Program, Prisoner Reentry Programs, Success Stories, Business Partnerships as well as the Welcome Section to ask general questions. Those interested in training on how to use the website should email [contact-cfbci@dol.gov](mailto:contact-cfbci@dol.gov).

**NIMH WEBSITE UPGRADED**

<http://www.nimh.nih.gov/nimhhome/nimhfeatures.cfm>

The NIMH (<http://www.nimh.nih.gov>) Web site has been redesigned to better communicate research-based information for the public, researchers, health care providers and policy makers.

Included are a number of new features including Google searching, e-mail to a friend, new interface and menu displays, and more. Details and help on using our site can be found: <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/tools/helpusing.cfm>. Examples found there are:

* Brain Signal Predicts Working Memory <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/press/prwmprowess.cfm>
* Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/adhd.cfm>
* A Look at Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/alookatadhd.cfm>
* Autism Spectrum Disorders <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/publicat/autism.cfm>
* HHS Report to Congress on Autism Activities (\*PDF file, 14 pages) <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/autismiacc/autismreport2004.pdf>
* Congressional Appropriations Committee Report on the State of Autism Research and Autism Research Matrix (PDF file, 31 pages) <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/autismiacc/CongApprCommRep.pdf>
* The Science of Public Health Messages for Suicide Prevention: A Workshop Summary (\*PDF file, 3 pages) <http://www.nimh.nih.gov/SuicideResearch/suicprevmsgwkshop2p3-26.pdf>

**NSF: R&D AND ACADEME EXPANSION**

<http://www.nsf.gov/pubsys/ods/getpub.cfm?nsf04319>

U.S. Academic R&D Continues to Grow as More Universities and Colleges Expand Their R&D Activities is now available from the NSF Online Document System.

National Science Foundation Statistical Reports on U.S. Science - Research and Development Funding and Performance.

# RESEARCH FINDINGS [j0395699](#_THIS_WEEK_IN)TOP

**NEW RESEARCH SHOWS STARK DIFFERENCES IN TEEN BRAINS**

*(From Scripps Howard News Service May 11, 2004)*

<http://www.shns.com/shns/g_index2.cfm?action=detail&pk=TEENBRAINS-ABR-05-11-04>

The latest brain research has found strong evidence that when it comes to maturity, organization and control, key parts of the brain related to emotions, judgment and "thinking ahead" are the last to arrive. Until recently, most brain experts thought the human command center stopped growing at around 18 months and that neurons were pretty much set for life by age 3. In fact, the brain's gray matter has a final growth spurt around the ages of 11 to 13 in the frontal lobes of the brain, the regions that guide human intellect and planning. But it seems to take most of the teen years for youngsters to link these new cells to the rest of their brains and solidify the millions of connections that allow them to think and behave like adults. At the same time, the release of adolescent hormones during and after puberty causes other areas of the brain, particularly the amygdala, which governs basic emotional response, to fire up or expand. The result is that teens look at things differently than adults. This has tremendous implications for education, mental health, drug abuse and moral and legal responsibility of adolescents. Deborah Yurgelun-Todd of Harvard Medical School and McClean Hospital in Boston has studied how teenagers and adults respond differently to the same images. They usedfunctional magnetic resonance imaging of the subject's brains and found a stark difference in the parts being used. Adults used both the advanced prefrontal cortex and the more basic amygdala to evaluate what they had seen; younger teens relied entirely on the amygdala, while older teens (top age in the group was 17) showed a progressive shift toward using the frontal area of the brain. There is more evidence of the differences:

* A recent imaging study by researchers at the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism found that teens taking an experimental gambling test are less likely to activate a region in the base of the brain that motivates behavior to work to obtain rewards than a control group of young adults, ages 22-28, playing the same games.
* Numerous studies show alcohol and perhaps other drugs hit teen brains harder than they do adult brains. The frontal lobes and the hippocampus, which is involved in memory formation, are particularly vulnerable.
* It has been known for some time that children have sharp growth spurts in brain connections among regions specialized for language and spatial relationships between ages 6 and 12. That language capacity tends to reside mostly in a person's nondominant side \_ the left hemisphere of the brain in right-handers, for instance. But a recent imaging study by researchers at the University of Cincinnati Medical Center found that this distinction ends in the mid-20s when the brain shifts to use both sides in language processing.

The story of teen brain development lies in a process called myelinization, in which a layer of fat coats wire-like fibers connecting regions of the brain, back-to-front, side-to-side, and everywhere in between. Over time, this makes the operation of the brain more precise and efficient, affecting not just thinking and problem-solving, but also coordination and mastery of skills ranging from throwing a baseball to playing the trombone. The new understanding of adolescent brains also leads to questions of ethics and legalities. The Supreme Court already has decided that people should not be executed for crimes committed when they were age 15 or younger, and in the fall is scheduled to consider whether the restriction should be extended to everyone under 18.

**JUVENILE AWARENESS PROGRAMS DON'T SCARE KIDS STRAIGHT**

Anthony Petrosino and Carolyn Turpin-Petrosino found that attempts to scare kids straight by taking them on tours of prison facilities, and interacting with adult offenders, does not prevent crime. They previously reported in their C2 review of May 2002 that the experimental groups (attending these tours) commit more crimes, on average, than the control groups that received no intervention (<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/doc-pdf/ssa.pdf>). The update, in accord with C2 guidelines, extends the search strategies, adds additional analyses, and again reports the same result: according to these experimental studies, doing nothing to kids is better than exposing them to a juvenile awareness or "Scared Straight" program. (<http://www.campbellcollaboration.org/doc-pdf/ssr.pdf>).

**PHILANTHROPY AND VOLUNTARISM**

<http://www.urban.org/url.cfm?ID=310986> *(from PND Connections, May 2, 2004)*

According to a new study from the Urban Institute, grantmaking foundations hold different views of effectiveness and, in many cases, do not engage in practices that, according to their own standards, produce it. Among its findings, the report, [Attitudes and Practices Concerning Effective Philanthropy](http://www.urban.org/Template.cfm?Section=Home&NavMenuID=3&Template=/TaggedContent/ViewPublication.cfm&PublicationID=8836), by researcher Francie Ostrower, found that among foundations that say it is important to collaborate with external groups, 41 percent had not participated in a formal co-funding arrangement in the past two years and 34 percent had not convened people from outside the foundation to inform foundation activities. Similarly, among those that say formal evaluations of funded work are important for effectiveness, fully 33 percent did not conduct them. And of those that say it is important to solicit outside advice, 62 percent had not solicited grantee feedback through surveys, focus groups, or interviews. An [executive summary](http://www.urban.org/UploadedPDF/310986_attitudes_practices_ES.pdf) (20 pages, PDF) of the report, which was funded by the [David and Lucile Packard Foundation](http://www.packard.org/) in partnership with [Grantmakers for Effective Organizations](http://www.geofunders.org/), can be downloaded from the Urban Institute Web site.

**LIVING WILLS DON'T WORK: TIME TO ABANDON FAILED POLICY IN FAVOR OF DURABLE POWERS OF ATTORNEY**

*(From EurekAlert, 5/10/04)*

The failure of the living will is highlighted in an article that will be published this week in the new issue of the bioethics journal the Hastings Center Report by a University of Michigan internal medicine researcher and a professor of law and internal medicine. What they find is provocative: The documents designed to help people choose the treatments they would like when dying fail to meet five key criteria for success. Worse, the evidence suggests they don't work. They base their conclusions on a comprehensive review of hundreds of studies of living wills, end-of-life decisions and the psychology of making choices….The U-M team (Fagerlin and Schneider) can imagine circumstances where the living wills may be useful for patients who are imminently facing death, who know their medical circumstances and who have strong and specific beliefs about them. But the researchers conclude that living wills offer a false promise of control over end-of-life treatment. The best patients can do, the researchers argue, is to use a "durable power of attorney" to appoint someone to make decisions for them when they can no longer make their own decisions. The living will, Fagerlin explains, was designed by bioethicists who wanted to give patients a chance to spell out what treatment they would want and what treatment they would reject if they became unconscious or unable to make their own decisions for some other reason. The idea of the living will is to allow people to maintain control even at the end of life……The functional illiteracy of many Americans, and the difficulty even for skilled writers of expressing their wishes well, add to the problem, Fagerlin notes. And, people's preferences often change as their situations or medical technology changes. For most people, Fagerlin and Schneider say, a durable power of attorney for health care may be adequate. DPA's allow people to name someone whom they would want to make decisions about their care. That person is usually the patient's spouse or child, but it can be any trusted individual.

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Institute for the Advancement of Social Work Research

**750 First Street, NE, Suite 700**

Washington, DC 20002

**Phone: 202-336-8385 Fax: 202-336-8351**

**Email:** [**iaswr@naswdc.org**](mailto:iaswr@naswdc.org)

**Web site:** [**www.iaswresearch.org**](http://www.iaswresearch.org)