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The Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development Study External Advisory Board

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"I get by with a little help from my friends"
John Lennon and Paul McCartney

Why should the Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development study (ABCD Study) have an External Advisory Board (EAB)? ABCD Study has approximately two-dozen principal investigators, all experts and leaders in the diverse fields of study required to accomplish ABCD Study's goals. Furthermore, as part of an NIH consortium, ABCD Study investigators work in close collaboration with scientific experts from multiple National Institutes of Health (NIH) Institutes and Offices (<https://abcdstudy.org/nih-collaborators.html>) and have ready access to their expertise. And NIH has constituted an Observational Study Management Board (OSMB) to offer oversight and counsel to ABCD Study regarding myriad ethical issues that might arise in the course of a 10-year longitudinal study of 10,000 children. So why also have an EAB? In a way, it is the organizational structure of ABCD Study, its cost, its complexity, its extraordinarily ambitious goals, and its importance to the scientific community and public health that together obligate oversight from an unbiased set of experts who can advise ABCD Study across a wide range of issues.

A nascent EAB for the ABCD Study existed before the ABCD Study was fully conceived or funded. On May 27-28, 2014, the Collaborative Research on Addiction at the NIH (CRAN), an initiative of the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism (NIAAA), and National Cancer Institute (NCI), in collaboration with The Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute on Child Health and Development (NICHD), convened a public expert panel workshop (Table 1) to help envision the ABCD Study (<https://addictionresearch.nih.gov/national-longitudinal-study-neurodevelopmental-consequences-substance-use-meeting-agenda>) and to provide guidance on the development of a funding opportunity announcement (FOA). The goals of this public meeting were announced by NIH leadership in a public message on May 16, 2014 (<https://www.niaaa.nih.gov/news-events/news-noteworthy/national-longitudinal-study-neurodevelopmental-consequences-substance>). Working with NIH leadership and with input from the scientific community, the public expert panel considered general design parameters for a longitudinal study that would deploy cutting-edge technologies in brain imaging, genetics, and neurocognitive assessment to characterize normal

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