What is the ABCD Study?

ABCD is an ongoing landmark study on brain development and child health supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH). Since its inception in 2015, ABCD has already begun to increase our understanding of environmental, social, genetic, and other biological factors that affect brain and cognitive development, as well as enhance or disrupt a young person's trajectory.

Why "Adolescent" Brain and Cognitive Development?

Adolescence is a period of dramatic brain development during which children are exposed to all sorts of experiences. Our goal is to develop an understanding of how these experiences interact with each other and a child's biology to affect brain development, as well as social, behavioral, health, and other outcomes. By examining these factors, ABCD aims to provide critical insights into how adolescence mediates and shapes a person's future.

ABCD is interested in:

- Your child's experiences with and understanding of their culture and environment
  - This includes their neighborhood, school, friends, and family
- Your child's health and wellbeing
  - Such as their sleep patterns, activities, screen time, physical health, and more
- Your child's different moods, thoughts, feelings, and experiences
- Things that influence and are impacted by tobacco, alcohol, caffeine and other substances

ABCD works to:

- Identify individuals' developmental trajectories and the factors that mediate them
- Examine the onset and progression of mental health disorders
- Explore screen time, sleep, and physical activity in the context of brain development and other outcomes
- Form an understanding of how exposure to substances affects developmental outcomes and how changing state laws influence health
- Map the role of genetic vs. environmental factors in development