Updates from NICHD

Brett Miller
Child Development & Behavior Branch
II. New Leadership

- New NIH Director – Francis Collins (2009)

- New NICHD Director – Dr. Alan Guttmacher, Pediatrician and Geneticist (Acting as of December 2009, now Permanent Director of NICHD)
III. NICHD Vision Process

- Goal: Develop a scientific Vision that sets an ambitious agenda and inspires the NICHD, its many partners, and the research community to achieve critical scientific goals and meet pressing public health needs.

- Held 9 workshops this spring to gather input
  - White papers are available (or coming soon)
  - Opportunity for community to comment on outcomes from meetings

- Info available at: www.nichd.nih.gov/vision
Why a Scientific Vision?

- Identify the most promising scientific opportunities of the next ten years.
- Set an ambitious agenda that inspires the research community to achieve critical scientific goals and meet pressing public health needs.
- Catalyze interdisciplinary discussion and thinking.
It Is About…

• The future, **not** the past
• Science, **not** about strategic planning (that will follow - based upon the science)
• Although defined by the areas of the NICHD mission (which certainly includes cognitive development), it is about what the entire research community might do, **not** NICHD-centric
Workshop Scientific Themes

- Plasticity
- Reproduction
- Development
- Developmental Origins of Health & Disease
- Behavior
- Pregnancy & Pregnancy Outcomes
- Diagnostics & Therapeutics
- Environment
- Cognition
Cross-Cutting Elements

- Analytic and measurement tools and methods
- Animal and computational models
- Bioethics, Bioinformatics
- Biotechnology/bioengineering, including high-throughput and assistive technologies
- Developmental lens
- Differences/disparities across populations
Cross-Cutting Elements (cont’d)

- Epigenetics, Functional status
- Global health, Nutrition
- Implementation science and health economics
- Prevention/personalized medicine
- Stem cells
- Systems biology
- Training and mentoring
Key Steps

• Nine Workshops (January-March 2011) organized by external scientists

• White Papers (March-May 2011) Posted online for public input*

• Large Meeting (June 2011) of invited external experts and NIH leaders to refine white papers

* Please RESPOND
Key Steps

- NICHD Council Review (September 2011)
- NICHD Scientific Vision (December 2011) to be published in leading journal and posted online
- Further Dissemination (2012) Via scientific presentations, newsletters, etc.
NICHD staff and our advisory groups will determine how NICHD can best help achieve the Scientific Vision.
Learning Disability Research Centers' Consortium

- Four LDRCs
- Support research on a range of issues related to learning disabilities
  - E.g., Etiologies, neurobiological and genetic factors, and RTI characteristics of children, adolescents, and adults with LDs.
  - Substantial investment: ~ $30 million over 5 years
  - Recompeting NOW, with focus on writing, executive function, comorbidities.
Learning & LD Research at NICHD: A team effort

- Lisa Freund - Developmental Cognitive Psychology, Behavioral Neuroscience, & Psychobiology
- James Griffin - Early Learning and School Readiness
- Kathy Mann Koepke - Math & Science, Cognition & Learning: Development and Disorders
- Peggy McCordle - Language, Bilingualism & Biliteracy
- Brett Miller - Reading, Writing and Related Learning Disabilities
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