

*Wednesday, January 21, 8:00-9:30AM  
Opening Plenary Session*

***NBDPN 2004: Advances and Opportunities for Birth  
Defects Surveillance, Research and Prevention***

Moderator: Laurie Seaver, 2004 NBDPN President

**National Children's Study**

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The National Children's Study is a longitudinal cohort study of environmental influences on child health and development. The proposal for this study grew out of the President's Task Force on Environmental Health Risks and Safety Risks to Children, which was charged with developing strategies to reduce or eliminate adverse effects on children caused by environmental exposures. Subsequently, the Children's Health Act of 2000 authorized the National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD) to conduct the study along with a consortium of Federal agencies, including the United States Environmental Protection Agency (US EPA), the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and the National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences (NIEHS).

Planning and protocol development for the National Children's Study are well underway, and the study is expected to be launched in late 2005. Information about the study may be obtained from the website: [www.NationalChildren'sStudy.gov](http://www.NationalChildren'sStudy.gov).

The National Children's Study will enroll women as early as possible in pregnancy, and perhaps some before conception, and will follow their children into adulthood (approximately 21 years of age). Outcomes of interest include pregnancy outcomes, growth and neurobehavioral development, asthma, injuries, and obesity and physical development. Factors to be studied include genetic, chemical, physical, biological, behavioral, and social factors, as well as their interactions in the context of life-stages of development. The study will serve as a national repository in that it will include collection of information to address specific hypotheses, as well as data and sample storage to address hypotheses that arise in the future.