ABCD Study News

May 2019

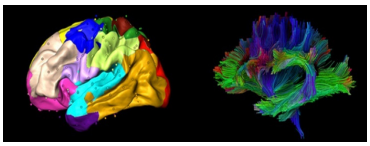
Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development®
Teen Brains. Today's Science. Brighter Future.

Happy Spring to all our ABCD Families! We hope you are enjoying the new and improved ABCD newsletter layout:

- Scientists of any age can learn more about the science behind ABCD and see how data are used in the academic community.
- Student artwork, quotes, and questions are highlighted in the updated Students' Space section.
- Our new Families' Place features evidence-based information about child and adolescent development.

ABCD Science

ABCD baseline data available to scientists worldwide



Many families have asked how data from the ABCD Study are used by the scientific community. The ABCD Study recently made the comprehensive baseline dataset from all the participants available to researchers worldwide. This includes nearly 12,000 youth and their families, including about 2,000 who are twins or triplets. All the data are de-identified, which means they can't be linked to individual participants. Now scientists around the globe can conduct research on the many factors that influence adolescent brain, cognitive, social, and emotional development. This data release contains images of the brain, as well as other assessment data related to physical & mental health, culture, learning and memory, and results from blood and saliva tests. The next data release will be in early summer 2020 and will include the first longitudinal data from the 6-month and 1-year follow-up visits. For more information, visit the data sharing page of the ABCD Study website (https://abcdstudy.org/scientists/data-sharing/). As always, we thank our dedicated and enthusiastic ABCD families for making this study possible!

ABCD Study investigators publish research about the benefits of sports participation

Lisa Gorham and Dr. Deanna Barch, both at Washington University in St. Louis, Missouri, along with several other ABCD Study researchers, published a scientific article about the effects of sports participation on brain development and mental health. The data summarized in the article were collected from ABCD Study participants across all 21 sites. The researchers found that sports participation is related to greater volume in the hippocampus, a brain region important for mental health. The researchers also found that involvement in sports was related to fewer depressive symptoms in boys, but not in girls. These relationships were strongest for children who participated in team sports or regular sports lessons, compared to less structured activities. More research is needed to understand the relationships among sports participation, mental health, and brain development over time. Click here (https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2019/03/190321135154.htm) for a detailed summary of this research. (Photo: www.sciencedaily.com)

Families' Place

Teen Health Week (THW): Teens taking charge of their physical and mental health

Happy (belated) Teen Health Week! (April 1-7, 2019) Teen Health Week (THW) is a global initiative "to raise awareness of the unique health issues facing teens all over the world." It originally started in Pennsylvania as a statewide health initiative, and has expanded globally, with participating events in **37 countries on 6 continents!**

Families' Place (continued from front side)

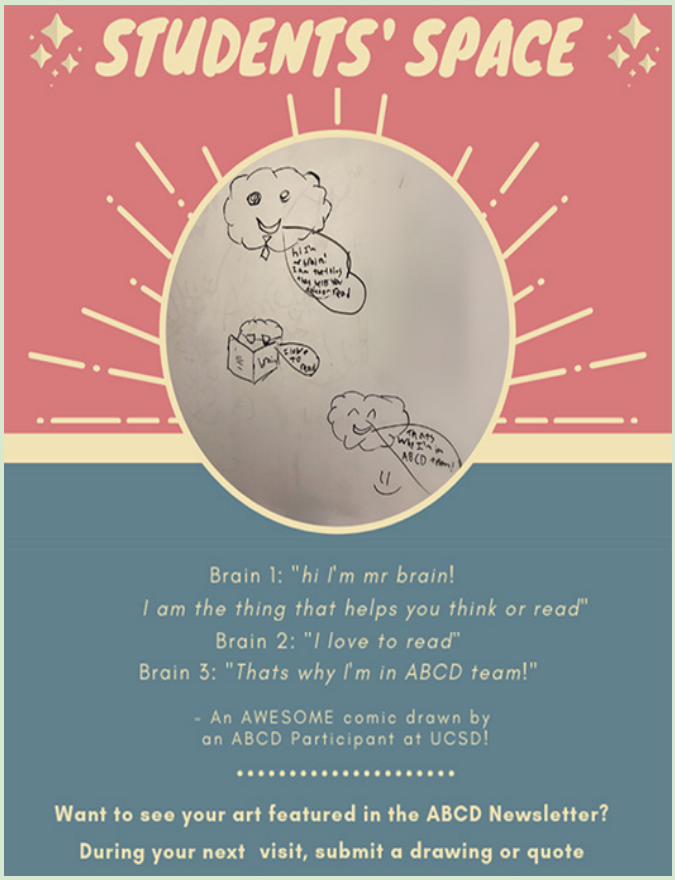
Each day during the first week of April, THW focused on a specific theme related to teen health. This year's themes were gender and sexual development, nutrition and oral health, preventive care, violence, mental health, and substance use. You can download resources and read about each theme here: https://collegeofphysicians.org/thw. The event is sponsored jointly by the Center for Education of the College of Physicians of Philadelphia, Real Talk with Dr. Offutt, and the Pennsylvania Department of Public health. Learn how you can participate in next year's THW, to encourage your teen(s) to become involved in their own health decisions and to develop healthy habits they will carry with them throughout their lives! For a list of federal resources related to teen health topics, including development, eating and nutrition, physical activity, healthy relationships, immunizations/vaccinations, substance use, safety, and health services, click here: https://collegeofphysicians.org/uploads/attachments/cjrs2yopd3z76dczh8h60bs4j-federal-resources-for-adolescent-health.pdf (photos: THW on Instagram)

Students' Space

Since we love hearing what our participants are curious about, we have added a new feature to the assessment feedback form to give students and parents/guardians a forum where they can ask questions about study procedures and findings, teen health, and development. Here's a recent question from a student participant about brain development:

"At what age does our brain stop developing?"
Your brain never really stops changing, but it is most flexible during childhood and adolescence. Early experiences like speech, hearing, and movement set the stage for healthy brain development. Later, as you move through childhood and adolescence, you continue to build and strengthen connections in your brain as you experience the world. These experiences will shape your learning, behavior, and social-emotional health for a lifetime.

Scientists think that emotional centers of your brain have the upper hand during adolescence while you are exploring your world. The prefrontal cortex (located above your forehead) develops by the mid-20s and helps to smooth out the emotional storm of the teen years.



For More Information, Please Visit:

ABCDStudy.org

** This project is supported by grants from the National Institutes of Health (NIH), but the content of this newsletter does not necessarily reflect the views of NIH. References or links in this newsletter to an external website or any specific commercial products, processes, services, manufacturers, or companies do not constitute endorsement or recommendation by the NIH or any of the ABCD Study Sites.*