

# ABCD Study Newsletter



Happy Fall from the ABCD Study! We're excited to share our latest discoveries, resources, and updates with you!

## ABCD Social Media Launch

Stay Connected with the ABCD Study® on Social Media!



ABCD is on [Instagram](#), [Facebook](#), [Bluesky](#), [X](#) (formerly Twitter), and [LinkedIn](#). Follow us for study highlights and milestones, research takeaways, and behind-the-scenes peeks!

## ABCD Science

### Wearables May Offer Clues to Mental Health Problems



Mental health conditions like attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and anxiety affect 1 in 7 youth in the U.S., yet diagnoses remain difficult due to their complexity and reliance on “all-or-nothing” symptom thresholds. To address this, researchers at Yale University developed a more precise way to characterize mental health among youth. They asked ABCD participants to wear Fitbits to capture continuous measures of activity, calories burned, heart rate, and sleep. The resulting data provided unique digital signatures of daily functioning. These signatures more accurately reflected mental health than categorical labels. The study suggests that low-cost wearables may be able to improve identification of mental health problems, paving the way for more personalized treatments.

**Read more**

#### ***Yale Alumni Magazine***

[www.yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/6008-wearables-may-offer-clues-to-psychiatric-diagnoses](http://www.yalealumnimagazine.com/articles/6008-wearables-may-offer-clues-to-psychiatric-diagnoses)

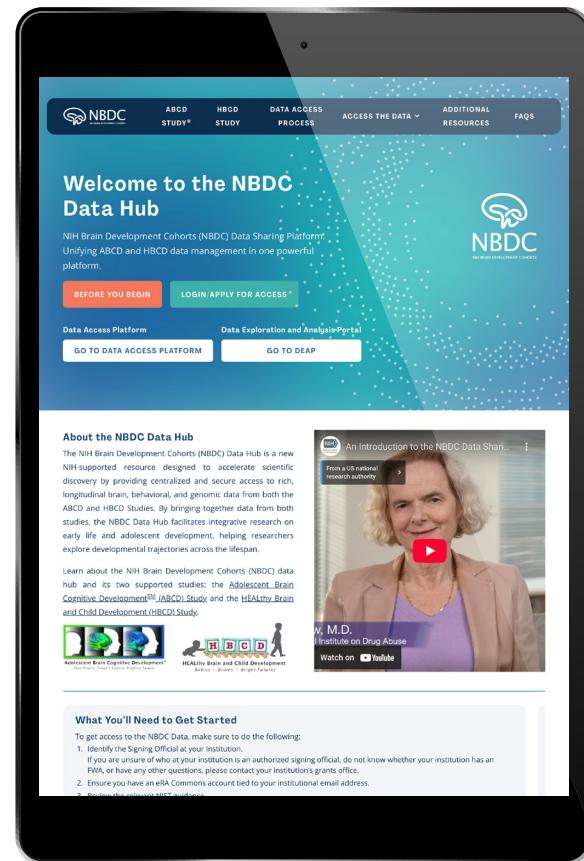
#### ***Cell***

[www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092-8674\(24\)01329-1](http://www.cell.com/cell/fulltext/S0092-8674(24)01329-1)



## NBDC Data Hub Launch

We are excited to announce the launch of the NIH Brain Development Cohorts (NBDC) Data Hub. This new data ecosystem hosts data from both the ABCD Study and the HEALthy Brain and Child Development (HBCD) Study. The platform launched with the sixth ABCD data release and the inaugural release for the HBCD Study. The platform launched with the inaugural data release for the HBCD Study and the sixth ABCD data release, which includes a large amount of longitudinal data. Making these data available to the scientific community is an exciting step for open science, giving researchers across the globe access to novel data about brain development and social and environmental experiences from birth through adolescence. So far, over 1,400 papers have been published using ABCD data. Visit the [NBDC Data Hub](#) to learn more!

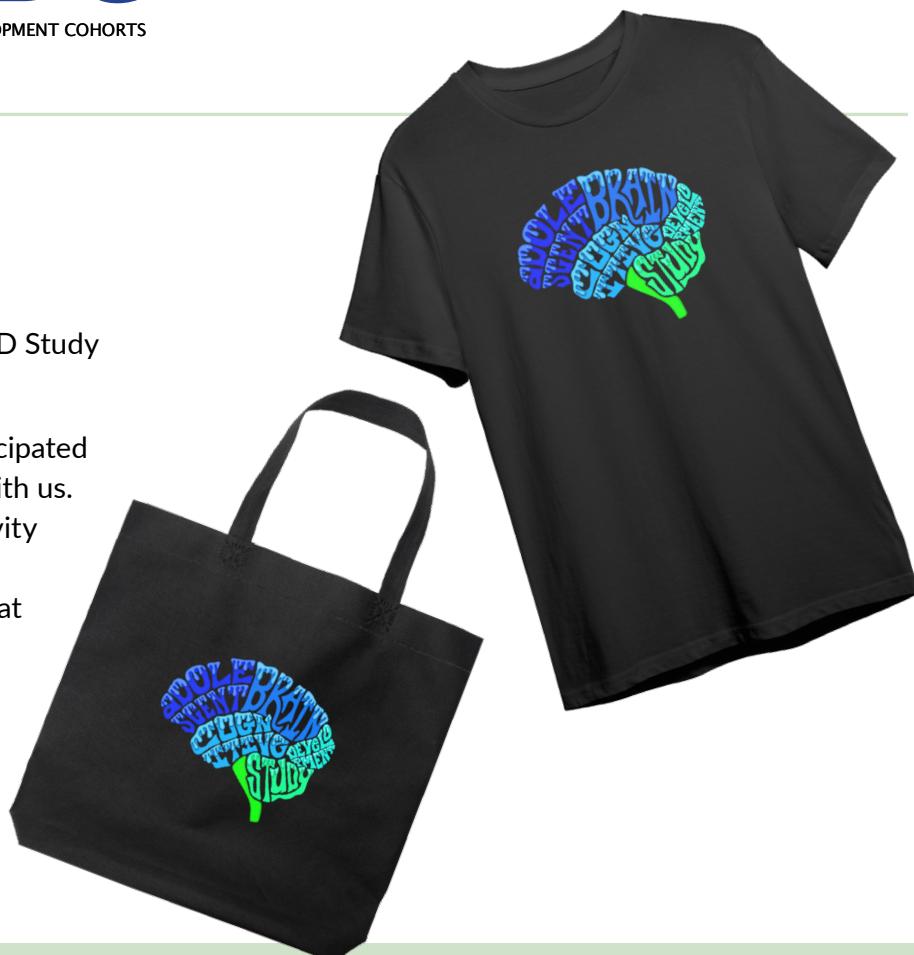


## Student Space

### Design Contest

Congratulations to the 2025 ABCD Study Design Contest Winner!

Thank you to everyone who participated and shared their artistic visions with us. We were impressed by the creativity and effort put into each design! T-shirts or tote bags are available at your study site.



## Over 18? You Can Now Get Your Personal Genetic Results



We added new genetic information to the ABCD Study using DNA from blood or saliva samples you provided, which includes a specific list of genes identified by the American College of Medical Genetics (ACMG). These genes are known to increase the risk of developing certain diseases or health conditions, like some cancers and types of heart disease. These conditions are substantially treatable or preventable when diagnosed early.

You can decide whether you want these results or not. To help you decide, we will give you information before your visit, which you can also find on the [ABCD website](#).

There is no cost to you for your participation in any part of this process.



## Looking Ahead: Continuing the Arc of Development

In July, NIH hosted a public meeting that brought together experts from multiple disciplines to provide recommendations on the future of the ABCD Study. Panelists included leading developmental scientists as well as ABCD participants, ensuring that both research expertise and participant voices were part of the conversation. You can watch the recordings here:

<https://nida.nih.gov/news-events/meetings-events/2025/07/abcd-continuing-arc-development>



## Generation Z's Shift Toward Alternative Career Paths

Gen Z is leading a new trend, with many young adults forgoing traditional 4-year college degrees in favor of attending vocational training schools.

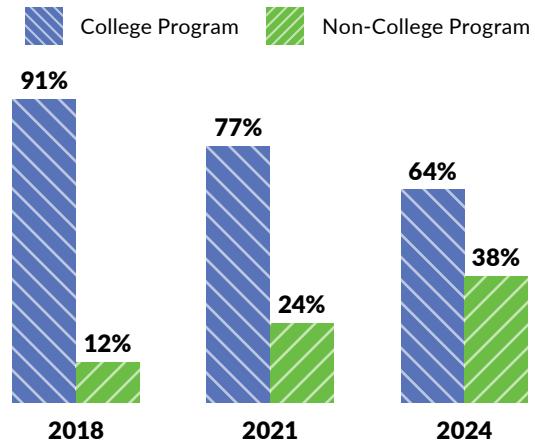
These programs provide hands-on experience and specialized skills for quick entry into the workforce as electricians, mechanics, and plumbers. This shift is driven by factors like job security, and growing concerns regarding the value and affordability of college, especially when degrees and certifications from trade schools are often cheaper and shorter than typical bachelor's degrees.

Recently, more and more young adults have been forging their own paths with the help of vocational schools. Diego, 25, never saw himself at a desk job, and instead completed training at a vocational program allowing him to work with his hands, instead of sitting behind a computer. One Gen Z-er, Morgan, discovered her love of welding while in high school, and now works on U.S. Navy ships thanks to a welding certification program.

While it might be tough to get exposure to trade skills in class, some high schools offer an alternative: Work-Based Learning. These are semester- or year-long programs where during the school day students can shadow a local business, gain practical skills, and explore career interests, all while receiving class credit. Students who have enrolled in Work-Based Learning programs can even gain certifications. In Indianapolis, the Ascension St. Vincent Hospital teamed up with local high schoolers to offer a program allowing students to become Certified Nursing Assistants (CNAs).



### Education Plans Teens Are Considering, by Year



Each year, fewer teens are considering 4-year colleges, and an increasing number are considering non-college programs.

Considering	2018	2021	2024	Δ 2018-2024
4-Year College	68%	56%	43%	-25%
2-Year College	23%	21%	21%	-2%
Vocational/Trade School	8%	13%	16%	+8%
Apprenticeship Program	2%	8%	12%	+10%
Tech Boot Camp/Certification	1%	4%	9%	+8%

#### American Student Assistance

[www.asa.org/research/teens-next-steps-report-2025/](http://www.asa.org/research/teens-next-steps-report-2025/)

#### NPR

[www.npr.org/2024/04/22/1245858737/gen-z-trade-vocational-schools-jobs-college](http://www.npr.org/2024/04/22/1245858737/gen-z-trade-vocational-schools-jobs-college)

#### Indianapolis Business Journal

[www.ibj.com/articles/2023-hr-impact-awards-ascension-st-vincent-hospital](http://www.ibj.com/articles/2023-hr-impact-awards-ascension-st-vincent-hospital)

#### CNBC

[www.cnbc.com/2025/04/24/gen-z-workers-opt-out-of-college-and-go-into-trades.html](http://www.cnbc.com/2025/04/24/gen-z-workers-opt-out-of-college-and-go-into-trades.html)

Read more

# Family Place

## Infographic – Fentanyl: What You Need to Know

Fentanyl is a prescription drug that is also made and used illegally. It is frequently mixed into prescription opioids, anti-anxiety medication, and other drugs without the individual knowing. Even a very small amount of fentanyl, the size of five to seven grains of salt, can be deadly.

[Read and share this infographic](#) to learn more about fentanyl and how you can keep yourself and others safe. Learn to recognize the signs of overdose, how fentanyl test strips can help, and how to use naloxone—a lifesaving medicine that can reverse an overdose.



## Staff Member of the Month

Kirsten Cline, MPA



Congratulations to Kirsten Cline, MPA, August Staff Member of the Month! Kirsten is the Lab Manager for the Diagnostic Neuroimaging Lab at the University of Utah. She holds a BS in Cognitive Psychology from Brigham Young University and a master's in Public Administration from the University of Utah. Since joining the ABCD Study team in 2016, Kirsten has played a central role in managing daily operations, training staff, and supporting participant engagement and retention. "One of the things I love most about my job is the people. Getting to know our incredible study participants, working alongside dedicated ABCD staff, and collaborating with such thoughtful and committed colleagues—truly the best part of what I do."



Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development<sup>®</sup>  
Teen Brains. Today's Science. Brighter Future.

Copyright ©2025 ABCD Study,  
All rights reserved.

For more information about the ABCD Study,  
please visit: [ABCDStudy.org](http://ABCDStudy.org)

Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development, Teen Brains, Today's Science, Brighter Future, and logo are unregistered service marks of HHS.

\*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 an endorsement or recommendation by NIH or any of the [ABCD Study Sites](#).