

# Newsletter

Fall 2023



## Welcome HBCD Families and Partners!

We are excited to announce the launch of the HBCD Study and want to thank everyone who has joined us on this amazing journey. Your participation and support are so important. We couldn't do this study without you! With your help, we hope to make a difference in the health of children for generations to come.

Right now, study teams are getting ready to recruit 7,500 families from **27 different sites** all over the United States. Our goal is to create a welcoming and supportive environment from the first visit to the last. We can't wait to get to know everyone better.

Through this newsletter, we will introduce you to the many faces and partners of HBCD, keep you updated on progress, and celebrate achievements along the way. We look forward to the incredible discoveries that await us. Let's make a difference, together!



Study team representatives from all 27 sites at the HBCD Annual Training, University of California San Diego, April 2023. This is only a small part of the whole HBCD team.



## Site Spotlight

### Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences




Our focus at **Oklahoma State University Center for Health Sciences** is to create the "HBCD Experience" for families to feel welcome, safe, and to share their life experiences. Our space has been designed with families in mind. We have a small research center with big capabilities—we collect 100% of our data in one location. When families are on-site, they will experience convenient parking, flexible and individualized scheduling, with additional supports like meals, childcare, transportation assistance, and access to a resource closet containing items to meet their needs. Support and love for HBCD extends beyond our research center into the community. We have many partners excited to join our efforts to recruit and provide services to families. We are excited to launch HBCD enrollment in Tulsa!


## Getting Ready for Baby's First MRI

One of the goals of HBCD is to understand how children's brains grow and develop. To do this, we will use special tools to create pictures of your baby's brain.

One of these tools is magnetic resonance imaging (MRI). The MRI scanner—that sometimes looks like a large donut or tunnel—uses a strong magnet to create a picture of baby's brain while they are sleeping. You might be wondering what the MRI will be like for you and baby. To help, we've put together some commonly asked questions and tips on how to get ready for the big day.

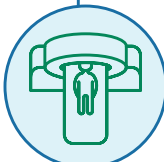
### Answers to some commonly asked questions about MRI.


 **What is MRI?**  
MRI uses a powerful magnet, radio waves, and a computer to create images of the brain.

  
Strong Magnetic Field

 **Is it safe? Does it hurt?**  
MRI is safe and painless.

  
No metal snaps

 **How do we prepare for an MRI?**  
You will be by your child's side to help them fall asleep. Once your baby is asleep, they will be placed securely on a bed that slides into the MRI machine.

 **What does baby experience?**  
Your baby will be asleep. The MRI machine is loud (~140 dB). Your baby will wear headphones to block out the sound.

## Site Spotlight

### University of Maryland



The **University of Maryland** is excited to launch the HBCD study! Our Neuroimaging Center and EEG facilities are both family-friendly and include a room with a mock scanner so families and children can explore an MRI before they are scanned. We worked hard to create a space so that parents, baby, and even siblings feel comfortable and at home while they are participating in study activities. We have a "family room" complete with a crib, changing table, comfortable furniture, colorful child size tables and chairs, and fun decals on the walls. A lactation room is located next to the family room to make infant feeding convenient. We also have a resource closet stocked with supplies, diapers, and children's clothing and can even offer childcare for siblings while the HBCD parent and child are completing study activities. We are happy to offer participants home visits for study activities that do not need to be completed on site. With the help of our seven partner hospitals and our Community Advisory Board, we are looking forward to recruiting and getting to know our HBCD families!



## Tips on preparing for baby's first MRI.

### Scheduling baby's MRI

Members of the study team will work with you to find a time that is best for you and baby. The actual time in the MRI scanner is only 45-60 minutes. Your MRI appointment will be longer than that to give you and baby time to get ready and for baby to fall asleep.

### Dress comfortably

On the day of your MRI, you and baby should dress comfortably. The MRI uses magnets to take pictures, so please no metal sequins, snaps, zippers, or buttons. A loose-fitting, metal-free outfit would be best. If baby doesn't have any metal-free clothes, don't worry. We will have something they can wear during the scan.

### Make baby feel at home

We know babies may not have a bedtime routine before the first scan. But if you can, try to put your baby to sleep in the same way you would at home. This could include bringing a favorite toy or book with you to the scan.

### Don't worry if baby takes a while to fall asleep

It might be stressful to you if your baby is crying, fussing, or not falling asleep. Please don't worry! Every baby is different, and it can be hard putting your child to sleep in a new place. You and the study team will work together to get your baby to sleep.

### Learn more about our MRI process from a parent participant.

*"It was so cool to be able to see my baby's brain and...I think it was super cool that my family got to be able to be a part of science and hopefully help babies in the future."*



YouTube



For more information, please visit [HBCDStudy.org](https://HBCDStudy.org)  
Follow us on Facebook and Instagram @HBCDStudy



## Site Spotlight

### University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill



The HBCD team at the [University of North Carolina \(UNC\) at Chapel Hill](https://www.unc.edu) loves working with parents and their babies! Led by Dr. Karen Grewen & Dr. Weili Lin, our team has studied infant and child brain development using MRI & EEG for more than 15 years, building positive experiences with families who come back for study visits as their children grow up. We also have experience working with parents and children from diverse backgrounds, including moms experiencing difficulties with mental health and substance use. Our multi-disciplinary team includes nine coordinators, a neuroradiologist, epidemiologist, pediatrician, maternal psychiatrist, imaging physicists, and developmental cognitive neuroscientists. We also have two new moms on our team who share their unique perspective about working with pregnant and new moms, and their babies. Our team is so grateful to all the families who join the HBCD study, and we do all we can to create a comfortable, welcoming experience for each family at every study visit!



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