

Largest multistate study for autism launching second phase

August 23 2012

The Centers for Disease Control has launched its second phase of a multistate study on autism and JFK Partners at the University of Colorado School of Medicine, the Colorado School of Public Health and the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment are collaborating at the Colorado site for the study.

The Study to Explore Early Development (SEED) will look at [autism spectrum disorders](#) and other [developmental disabilities](#) in Colorado. It is the largest multistate collaborative study in the United States to help identify factors that may put children at risk for autism [spectrum disorders](#) ([ASDs](#)) and other developmental disabilities.

SEED's main research goals are to compare young children (2 through 5 years of age) who have ASDs, children who have developmental problems other than ASDs, and children in the general population without a developmental disability. This comparison will yield a better understanding of the characteristics of ASDs and genetic and environmental factors that might affect child development. In SEED, the environmental factors studied are very broad and include characteristics of the pregnancy, the birth and newborn period, and the first few years of life to see what might affect a child's risk for having an ASD. A key strength of SEED is its ability to look not only at detailed information on the characteristics of ASDs, but also at environmental and [genetic factors](#) at the same time to see how they all interact.

The information will be obtained by directly evaluating the children

using several established developmental instruments and procedures, conducting interviews with the mothers, reviewing medical records, and collecting saliva and blood samples from the children and their parents.

Cordelia Robinson Rosenberg, PhD, RN, professor of pediatrics at the University of Colorado School of Medicine and director of JFK Partners said, "This study represents an important opportunity to understand the causes of autism spectrum disorders and developmental disabilities. We are grateful to our study partners and the many parents who have participated in earlier studies and who have already expressed interest in this next phase."

University of Colorado Denver

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