On January 26, 2012, at a meeting of the National Advisory Child Health and Human Development Council, Dr. Alan Guttmacher, Director, Eunice Kennedy Shriver National Institute of Child Health and Human Development (NICHD), presented a proposed Institute reorganization plan. The proposal is related to the Institute’s ongoing Scientific Vision initiative, which NICHD launched last year to “identify the most promising scientific opportunities of the next decade across the breadth of the Institute’s mission.” In presenting the proposal, Dr. Guttmacher stated that the reorganization will “maximize opportunities for interdisciplinary work” and “maximize clarity to the external community.”

While there are many components to the reorganization plan, the major changes are:

- Creation of a Division of Extramural Research to be managed by the new Associate Director for Extramural Research (search ongoing)
- Elimination of the current “center” structure, housing the current scientific branches. Specifically, the Center for Population Research, Center for Developmental Biology and Perinatal Medicine, and Center for Research for Mothers and Children will be abolished. The National Center for Medical Rehabilitation Research will not be abolished since it has its own legislative authority.
- All extramural scientific branches will report to the new Associate Director of Extramural Research as well the Grants Management Branch, Scientific Review Branch, Office of Committee Management, and Office of Extramural Policy.
- No existing extramural scientific branches are being eliminated. However, most are being renamed and three new branches are being created.
- The current plan proposes changing the name of the Demographic and Behavioral Sciences Branch to the Demography and Population Sciences Branch.
- Once the reorganization proposal is finalized this year, the Institute will analyze each branch’s scientific portfolio.
- Comments on the proposed reorganization proposal are being accepted through March 1 and may be sent to: NICHDDirectorsOffice@mail.nih.gov.

Click here to view slide show on the reorganization proposal:
http://www.nichd.nih.gov/about/overview/advisory/nachhd/upload/Reorg_201201.pdf