THE NATIONAL CHILDREN'S STUDY

Core Hypotheses and Study Areas: The New Frontier

Purpose of presentation

- Update NCSAC on core hypotheses
- Introduce priority outcomes and exposures
- Refocus efforts on development of NCS measures

Background

- NCS attribute – Hypothesis driven study
  - Ability to answer specific research questions
  - Not another general survey of child health
- Development by
  - NCSAC Working Groups
  - ICC
  - Others
- Presented at Dec ’02 Assembly meeting

Core Hypothesis review

- Establish framework for study design
- Draft protocol
  - Sampling strategy
  - Periodicity of follow-up
  - Collection of data
- Prioritize pilot studies

Core Hypothesis review (cont.)

- Provide “public identity” for NCS
- Help funders understand what the study would do

Core Hypothesis review (cont.)

- The **SET** of hypotheses also intended to:
  - Be considered as a set
  - Move the discussion to the next level
    - Specific measurement issues
- NOT intended to:
  - Represent entirety of NCS
  - Exclude all other areas of study

Evolutionary process

- Focus on development and inclusion of individual hypotheses
- Does not successfully convey scope of NCS
- Draws attention from important areas not having separate, specific hypotheses
- Necessary to refocus on
  - Entirety of NCS
  - Development of measures

Priority Study Areas

- Outcomes
  - Previously codified in original set of core hypotheses
  - Represent key components of child health and development
- Exposures
  - Mentioned in authorizing legislation
  - Included in original document
  - Now explicitly enumerated

Priority Outcomes

- Pregnancy outcomes
- Neurodevelopment and behavior
- Injury
- Asthma
- Obesity and physical development

Priority Exposures

- Physical environment
- Chemical exposures
- Biologic environment
- Genetics
- Psychosocial milieu

Next Steps

- Acknowledge that the **SET** of core hypotheses is necessary but not sufficient for NCS planning and communication
- As planning proceeds will be necessary to
  - Specifically define outcome and exposure measurements
  - Adjust core hypotheses accordingly
    - Feasibility
    - Importance - add or subtract