



# VCU



Dear MATR Twin Family,

We are sending this letter to let you know that we will be contacting you by phone soon regarding a new study, called the *Adolescent Brain Cognitive Development (ABCD) Study*. This is a landmark study on brain development from childhood through early adulthood. The depth and magnitude of this study is exceptional and the MATR is pleased to be able to invite MATR twins to learn more about participation.

#### *How will this study be helpful?*

Adolescence is a timeframe of remarkable change and development, particularly dramatic brain development. Environmental, social, genetic, and other biological factors all play a role in how a child's brain and cognition develop which goes on to have a profound impact on a person's physical and mental health, behavioral choices, academic success, and life achievements throughout childhood and well into adulthood. Despite this, our understanding of how all these influencing factors interact with each other to boost or undermine brain development and its associated outcomes is very limited. To help meet this challenge, VCU, along with eighteen other academic institutions are joining up to help establish what will likely be one of the largest, most comprehensive efforts to further our understanding of all the factors that impact brain development.

#### *How can you participate?*

A MATR Interviewer will call you soon about this study. When calling, MATR Interviewers always identify themselves by name and say that they are calling from Virginia Commonwealth University and/or from the Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry. During the call, the Interviewer will provide information about the study, such as what participation involves, how twins are compensated for their time, etc. S/he will then request your permission to ask a few questions and see if you would be interested in having the study contact you with more information. The entire phone call will take approximately twenty minutes.

#### *How do you tell us you are interested?*

Please return the enclosed form using the postage-free envelope provided or email the code: [445566] to [matr@vcu.edu](mailto:matr@vcu.edu) for a link to an online version of the form. If you prefer, you can call us at the toll-free number provided below, and leave us a message letting us know you are interested in hearing from us.

#### *Does your family have to participate?*

You do NOT have to participate in the phone call or the study. We are sending this letter just to let you know to expect to hear from us. If you already know you do not want to participate in the phone call, it is helpful to answer or return our call so that you can tell us that you prefer not to participate in this study. That way, we know not to try and call you back or contact you further about this study.

#### *Questions for the MATR?*

Please call our toll-free telephone number, 1-800-URA-TWIN (1-800-872-8946). When calling, please reference the barcode number [«barcode»] and/or say that you are calling in regards to the *ABCD Study*.

Regards,

Judy L Silberg  
Judy Silberg, Ph.D.  
Scientific Director;  
Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry

P. S. For more information, please review the information on the back of this letter.

Virginia Commonwealth University  
Office of Research and Innovation  
Mid-Atlantic Twin Registry (MATR)

BioTech One, 3<sup>rd</sup> Floor, Suite 3000  
800 East Leigh Street  
Box 980617  
Richmond, Virginia 23298-0617

800 URA-TWIN • Fax: 804 827-0087  
TDD: 1-800-828-1120  
[matr@vcu.edu](mailto:matr@vcu.edu)  
[vcu.edu/matr](http://vcu.edu/matr)

## *ABCD General Study Information*

### *Who is doing this research and why is the study needed?*

Adolescence is marked by dramatic developmental changes, particularly brain development. A child's brain and cognitive development go on to influence their lives throughout adulthood. Despite this, there is still much to learn about how childhood experiences (playing video games; participation in sports, music, art; sleep patterns; screen time; etc) affect brain development. The National Institutes of Health (NIH) challenged researchers to develop a comprehensive investigative approach to learn more about brain and cognitive development from childhood to young adulthood. To meet this challenge, a consortium of nineteen distinguished academic institutions, including VCU, have come together to establish this landmark study on brain development covering childhood, adolescence, and young adulthood. *VCU's MATR has been chosen as one of only four twin-recruitment sites. The twin sites play a singular role because twin participants will help provide unique insight needed to unravel important gene-environment interactions influencing brain development.*

### *Who can participate?*

- Generally healthy MATR twin pairs (9 & 10 years old)
- One or both parents/legal guardians of the twin pair

### *What does participation involve?*

- *All participation is voluntary.*
- Parent(s) of juvenile twins complete a phone call with a MATR Interviewer. This call will include: more information about study participation, a few eligibility & contact preference questions, and possibly providing your permission for the study to contact you.
- If willing and eligible following the MATR call, the participants would need to come to VCU in Richmond, VA to complete the study over one day or, if preferred, split into two days (if needed, hotel accommodations can be provided):
  - Study tasks for the parent(s)/legal guardian(s) include: providing consent & completing surveys.
  - Study task for the twins include: Completing surveys and computerized tasks checking their memory, attention, and thinking—these are a lot like playing a game or solving puzzles; having 3-D pictures of their brain taken in a Magnetic Resonance Imaging (MRI) machine; providing some samples.

### *Will participants be compensated and how does compensation work?*

- Each twin receives up to \$100 for completing the study.
- Parent(s)/Legal Guardian(s) receive up to \$200.
- Depending upon distance travelled to the study site overnight accommodation as well as some level of travel compensation may be provided.

This information is just to provide an overview of some of the topics that may be helpful for you to know about prior to completing a phone call with a MATR Interviewer. You are also welcome to review this plus some additional information by visiting [go.vcu.edu/abcdtwin](http://go.vcu.edu/abcdtwin). If we haven't already, we will contact you soon by phone to discuss this further and to see if you might be willing to allow the study staff to contact you about participation.