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SRCD Urges NIH to Inform Impacted Families and Increase Transparency Following Data Misuse

In partnership with the SRCD Black Caucus, and with the support of more than 160 SRCD members, SRCD has submitted a letter to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) calling for stronger protection for children's data and greater accountability for the impacted families.



The Society for Research in Child Development (SRCD), in partnership with more than 160 members of the scientific community, has submitted a letter to the National Institutes of Health (NIH) urging immediate action to strengthen the protection, governance, and ethical use of children's developmental and genetic data.

This effort builds on SRCD's longstanding commitment to advancing rigorous, ethical, and anti-racist developmental science, and reflects the principles outlined in our recent Presidential Statement addressing the misuse of children's data and its implications for public trust in research.

Presidential Statement on Ethical Science and the Protection of Research Participants

We are especially grateful for the leadership and collaboration of the SRCD Black Caucus, especially Dr. Keisha Bentley-Edwards, Dr. Valerie Adams-Bass, Dr. Naila A. Smith, and SRCD GC Member Dr. Eleanor K. Seaton, whose guidance was instrumental in shaping both the framing and substance of this work.

Their contributions ensured that this response not only addressed the immediate issue but also reflected the broader historical and ethical context in which research involving Black, Latinx and Asian communities takes place.

SRCD Letter to NIH Leadership

Our Recommendations to NIH

In our letter, SRCD calls on NIH leadership to take immediate steps to:

- Strengthen oversight of data access and use;
- Enhance protocols for notifying participants when misuse occurs; and
- Clearly communicate to impacted families the actions taken to ensure accountability and prevent future harm.

These actions are critical to restoring trust and ensuring that the research enterprise continues to operate with integrity. SRCD remains committed to working collaboratively with NIH leadership and the broader research community to advance policies and practices that uphold the highest standards of ethical and responsible science.

For questions, please contact SRCD's Policy Department at policy@srcd.org

Quick Links:

- SRCD Ethical Principles and Standards for Developmental Scientists
- SRCD Anti-Racism Task Force Full Final Report
- SRCD Letters & Endorsements in 2026
- SRCD Caucuses