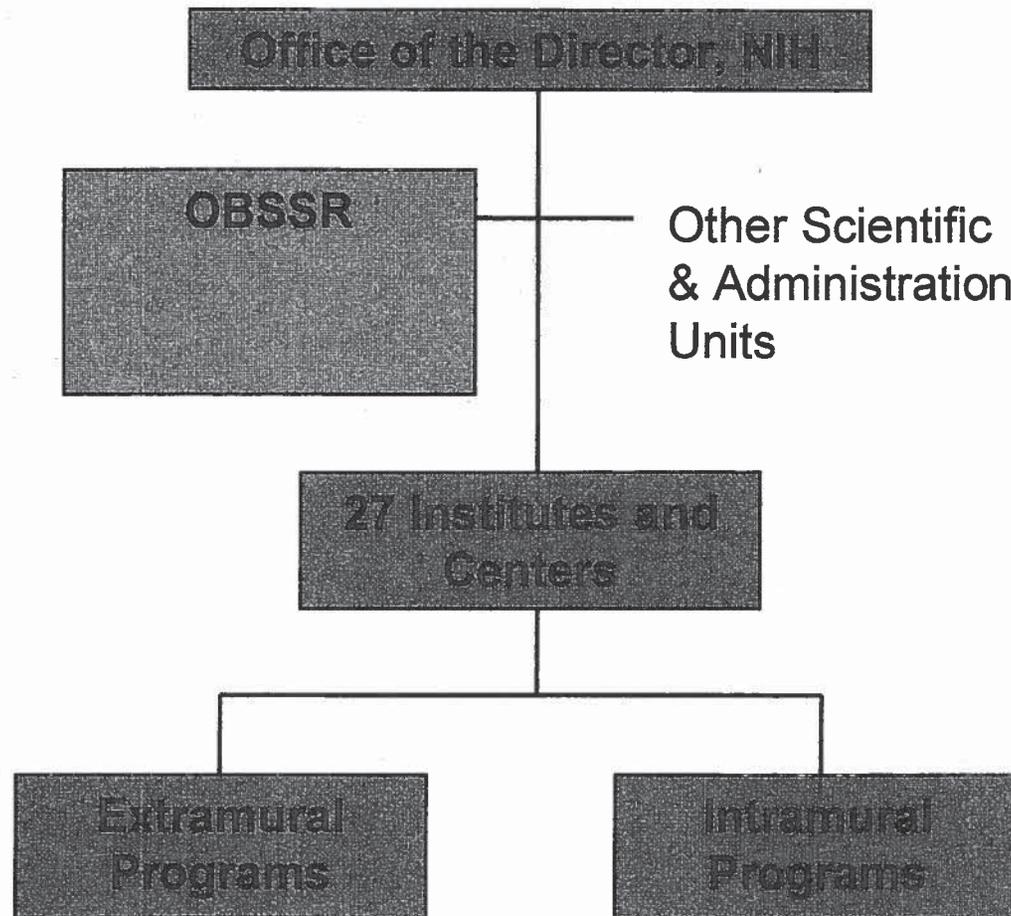


***Future Directions for NIH  
Research in the Behavioral  
and Social Sciences***

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# *OBSSR at NIH*



## *OBSSR Mission*

- Enhance behavioral and social sciences research and training
- Promote a biobehavioral, interdisciplinary perspective across NIH
- Improve communication among health scientists and the public

## *OBSSR Charge to NRC*

- Develop a research plan to guide NIH in supporting areas of high priority in behavioral and social sciences with focus on:
  - Common interest across ICs
  - Greatest scientific payoff
  - Most important to public health

# *NRC New Horizons*

## *Ten Areas of Focus*

- Predisease pathways
- Environment and Gene Expression
- Personal Ties
- Healthy Communities
- Population Health
- Health Promotion
- Inequalities
- Interventions
- Methodology and Training
- Research Infrastructure

# *Predisease pathways*

- Early-warning system defined by biomarkers and markers of behavioral and social factors

# *The Environment and Gene Expression*

- Connect advances in genetics to behavioral and social environmental factors
- Study the dynamic interactions over the life course that produce positive and negative health outcomes

# *Social Factors*

- Personal Ties
- Healthy Communities
- Population Health
  - Examine individuals within social systems AND social systems as units of analysis
  - Link to biological processes

# *Positive Health*

- Shift focus from illness and disease to wellness, good health, and optimal human functioning
- Study mechanisms through which behavioral and social factors lead to good health

# *Inequalities*

- Study how SES, racial, and ethnic hierarchies, discrimination, and stigmatization influence health

# *Interventions*

- Expand scope and effectiveness of social and behavioral interventions
- IOM Report **Promoting Health: Intervention Strategies from Social and Behavioral Research**

# *Methodology and Training and Infrastructure*

- Measurement techniques and study designs to link information across levels of analysis and across time
- Longitudinal study populations
- Train scientists who can integrate health-related knowledge across multiple disciplines

## *OBSSR Priorities*

- Collaborate with ICs on cross-cutting initiatives
- Strategic investments in key steps for advancing behavioral and social sciences
- Related NAS/IOM reports and NIH Sociocultural Report

## *OBSSR Next Steps*

- Collaborate with IC's on health disparities research
- Support methods workshops and training with focus on strengthening BSSR methods
- Study the pathways linking education and health