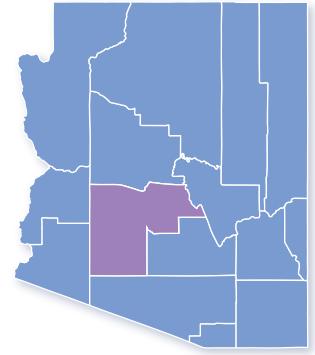


A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Arizona



Findings from the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (ADDSP) help us understand more about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the characteristics of those children, and the age at which they are first evaluated and diagnosed. Read on to learn more about ASD in Arizona and how this important information can be useful to you.

About 1 in 66 or 1.5% of 8-year-old children were identified with ASD by ADDSP in 2012. This percentage is about the same as the average percentage identified with ASD (1.5%) in all communities in the United States where CDC tracked ASD in 2012.



Boys were more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. White and black children were more likely to be identified with ASD than Hispanic children.

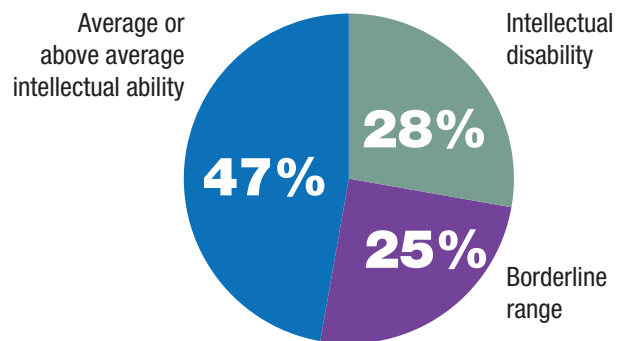
4.2x among boys
MORE LIKELY vs girls

1.5x among white vs
MORE LIKELY Hispanic children

1.7x among black vs
MORE LIKELY Hispanic children

* No significant differences between white and black children

Among children identified with ASD who had IQ test scores available, less than a third also had intellectual disability.



* Intelligence quotient (IQ) scores available for at least 70% of children identified with ASD by ADDSP. Intellectual disability defined as IQ score ≤ 70 .



About 90% of children identified with ASD had concerns about their development noted in their health and/or education records by age 3 years.



About 39% of children identified with ASD received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by age 3 years.



Even though ASD can be diagnosed as early as age 2 years, about half of children were not diagnosed with ASD by a community provider until after age 4 years and 7 months.

Frequently Asked Questions

What are the key take-away messages?

- Many children are living with ASD who need services and support, now and as they grow into adolescence and adulthood.
- Differences between the percentage of boys and girls identified with ASD continue. It may be that boys are at greater risk for ASD and/or it may be that girls are under-identified due to other factors, such as how providers diagnose and document ASD symptoms among boys versus girls.
- Hispanic children are less likely to be identified with ASD than white or black children. This may reflect cultural and/or socioeconomic differences, such as delayed or lack of access to services, as compared to other groups in Arizona.
- Despite the developmental concerns noted in many of the children's records by age 3 years, less than half of children identified with ASD received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by this same age. The lag between first concern and first developmental evaluation may affect when children are being diagnosed and connected to the services they need.

How can this information be useful?

ADDSP's latest findings can be used to promote early identification of ASD, plan for ASD services and training, guide future ASD research, and inform policies promoting improved outcomes in health care and education for individuals with ASD. Stakeholders in Arizona might consider different ways to

1. Lower the age of first evaluation by community providers.
2. Increase awareness of ASD among Hispanic families, and identify and address barriers in order to decrease the age at which Hispanic children are evaluated and diagnosed.

How and where was this information collected?

This information is based on the analysis of data collected from the health and special education records of children who were 8 years old and living in part of Maricopa County in metropolitan Phoenix in 2012. Overall, the tracking area included 32,615 8-year-olds (48% white, 6% black, 40% Hispanic, 4% Asian or Pacific Islander, 2% American Indian or Alaska Native).

What else does ADDSP do besides tracking ASD among 8-year-olds?

ADDSP is a collaboration between Arizona Department of Health Services, Arizona Department of Education, and investigators from the University of Arizona to track the percentage and characteristics of 4-year-olds and 8-year-olds with ASD and/or intellectual disability. In addition, ADDSP is involved in extensive ASD and developmental disabilities-related outreach and training of students, parents, educators, and clinicians. Training and outreach also extends to minority communities and rural service providers in Arizona.

"I use the information from ADDSP daily as I talk with families and professionals about what we are seeing in our community and across the state. The ADDM data are intrinsic to our understanding of the context of individuals with autism in the greater community of our state and nation."

**-Sydney Rice, MD
Arizona Developmental Pediatrician**

Get Resources and Connect Families to Services and Support in Arizona

Arizona Autism Coalition
azautism.org

Arizona Early Intervention Program
602-542-4446 des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-infant

AZ Find
800-352-4558
www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find/

AZA United
602-773-5773
www.azaunited.org/

Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC)
602-340-8717
www.autismcenter.org/

Connect with ADDSP
Sydney Pettygrove, PhD
Margaret Kurzius-Spencer, PhD

University of Arizona Health Sciences Center
PO Box 245073
Tucson, AZ 85724
sydneyp@u.arizona.edu
mkurzius@email.arizona.edu