

# A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Jersey

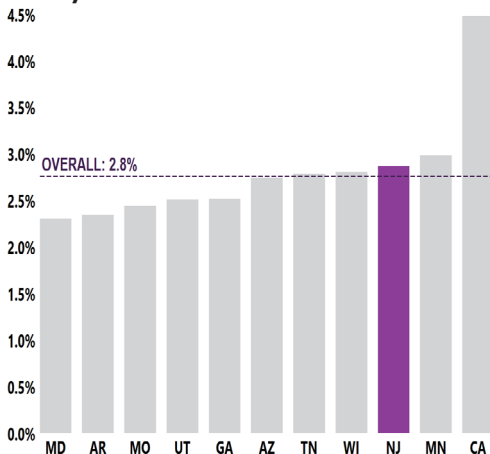
Findings from the New Jersey Autism Study (NJAS) help us to understand more about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the characteristics of those children and the age at which they are first evaluated and diagnosed.



**SITE TRACKING AREA**

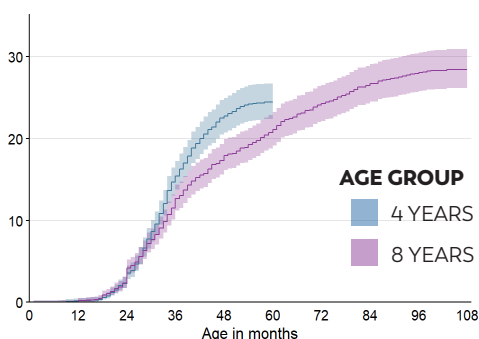
## 1 in 35

Or **2.9%** of 8-year-old children in New Jersey were identified with ASD by in 2020.



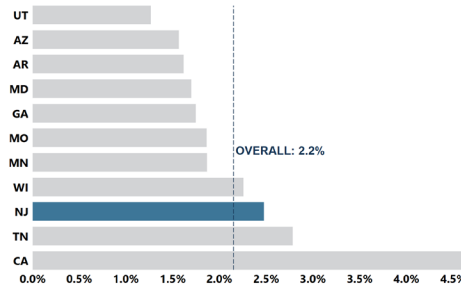
This is higher than the average identified with ASD (2.8%) across US communities where the ADDM Network tracked ASD among school-age children.

**Children aged 4 years** were 1.3 times as likely to receive an ASD diagnosis by 48 months of age compared to **children aged 8 years in NJAS.**



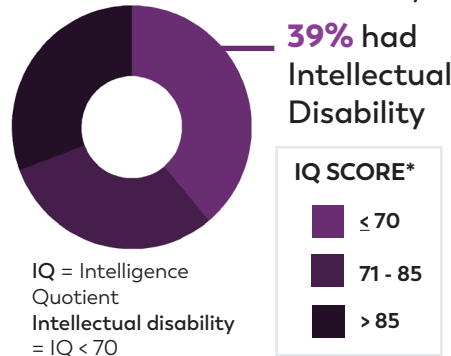
## 1 in 40

Or **2.5%** of 4-year-old children were identified with ASD by NJAS.



## IQ data available for 63%

Of children identified with ASD by NJAS



IQ = Intelligence Quotient  
Intellectual disability = IQ ≤ 70

### IQ SCORE\*

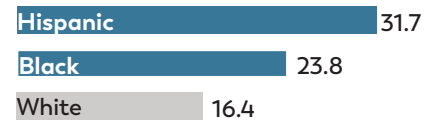
- ≤ 70
- 71 - 85
- > 85

## 58% of 8-year-old children

were identified with ASD received a Comprehensive Developmental Evaluation by age 3 years



**Among NJAS 4-year-olds,** Hispanic children were 1.9 times as likely to be identified with ASD and Black children were 1.4 times as likely to be identified with ASD compared to White children.

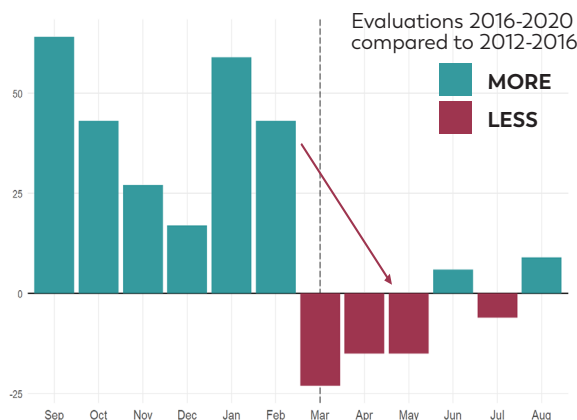


Values indicate prevalence per 1000.

**Among 8 year olds,** Hispanic, and Black children were 1.7 times as likely to be identified with ASD as White children.



Values indicate prevalence per 1,000 children. No significant differences in ASD prevalence were found between white and A/PI children in NJAS.



**The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many aspects of life, including the ability to evaluate children for autism.** Before the pandemic, 4-year-old children had higher ASD identification than 8-year-old children had when they were aged 4 years. In the first few months of the pandemic, **4-year-old children were less likely to have an evaluation than 8-year-old children had when they were the same age.**

## What are the key take-away messages from NJAS data?

- The ADDM Network ASD prevalence estimate was higher than the 2018 estimate.
- 2020 ASD prevalence estimates for 8-year-olds ranged from 2.3% (Maryland) to 4.5% (California). New Jersey had the third highest estimate (2.9%). These differences underscore the differences in ASD diagnoses across the ADDM Network.
- ASD estimates for 4-year-olds ranged from 1.3% (Utah) to 4.6% (California), in 2020, indicating differences in ASD diagnosis across the ADDM Network.
- Among 8-year-olds, the combined ADDM estimates showed ASD prevalence was higher for Black and Hispanic children compared with White children. More Black children with ASD also had intellectual disability compared with children from other racial ethnicity groups.

## How can this information be useful?

The latest findings about ASD prevalence may be used to

- Raise awareness of increasing ASD in the United States.
- Quantify the scope of ASD across US regions.
- Provide New Jersey-specific information for service planning.
- Guide future research of ASD risk factors.

## How and where was this information collected?

NJAS used a comprehensive record review method. Information is from 4- and 8-year-old children who were diagnosed with ASD, as indicated in health and education records in two New Jersey counties, in 2020.

### Tracking area

Essex, and Union counties

### 8-year-old children in tracking area: 18,940 4-year-old children in tracking area: 19,120

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| • 27% White                            | • 26% White                            |
| • 31% Black                            | • 29% Black                            |
| • 34% Hispanic                         | • 35% Hispanic                         |
| • 6% Asian or Pacific Islander         | • 6% Asian or Pacific Islander         |
| • <1% American Indian or Alaska Native | • <1% American Indian or Alaska Native |

## What else does the New Jersey Autism Study do besides provide ASD estimates?

NJAS used a comprehensive record review method. Information is from 4- and 8-year-old children who were diagnosed with ASD, as indicated in health and education records in two New Jersey counties, in 2020.

*“Rigorous surveillance research by the New Jersey Autism Study has provided a compelling foundation for statewide policy changes that have improved access to healthcare, education, treatment, and lifelong services. These supporting data and systemic changes are life-changing for children and adults with autism.” –*

**SUZANNE BUCHANAN, PsyD, BCBA-D**  
Executive Director, Autism New Jersey

## Resources

### RESOURCES TO CONNECT FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND SUPPORT IN NEW JERSEY

#### AUTISM NEW JERSEY

Information, education, and policy initiatives related to ASD  
800-4-AUTISM  
[www.autismnj.org](http://www.autismnj.org)

#### NJ EARLY INTERVENTION SYSTEM

Services for children under the age of 3 years with developmental delays or disabilities  
[www.nj.gov/health/fhs/eis/](http://www.nj.gov/health/fhs/eis/)

#### AUTISM FAMILY SERVICES OF NEW JERSEY

Support services for families living with ASD  
877-237-4477  
[www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org](http://www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org)

#### NJ DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S OFFICE OF SPECIAL EDUCATION PROGRAMS

Special education services for school-aged children with disabilities  
[www.nj.gov/education/special/](http://www.nj.gov/education/special/)

#### MOM2MOM

24/7 peer-support for parents of children with special needs  
877-914-6662  
[www.mom2mom.us.com](http://www.mom2mom.us.com)

#### STATEWIDE PARENT ADVOCACY NETWORK

Support for parents, including parents of children with special needs  
800-654-7726  
<https://spanadvocacy.org>

#### NJ PARENT LINK

Early childhood, parenting, and professional resource center  
<https://nj.gov/njparentlink/>

#### LEARN THE SIGNS. ACT EARLY.

Deepa Srinivasavaradan  
New Jersey Act Early Ambassador  
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/ambassadors-list.html>

#### CONNECT WITH NJAS

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