



ADDM Network Data for Action

Data for Action

How can the ADDM Network Findings Be Used?

There are many children with ASD across the United States. The ADDM Network's information on the number and characteristics of children with ASD provides data for action. These findings can be used in local communities and nationwide to advance initiatives, policies, and research that help children with ASD.

The federal government is using this information to

- Guide research on ASD.
- ADDM Network findings have helped inform the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee's Strategic Plan for ASD research (2).
- Inform and promote early identification efforts.
- ADDM Network findings on age of diagnosis of ASD support CDC's [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#) Program, which aims to improve early identification by promoting early childhood developmental monitoring by parents, childcare providers, and healthcare providers.

Service providers, such as healthcare organizations and school systems, can use this information to

- Promote early identification efforts for developmental concerns in children and help get those children diagnosed with ASD enroll in community-based support systems as soon as possible.
- CDC's *Learn the Signs. Act Early.* Program offers free tools, including the [Milestone Tracker](#) app, that service providers can promote among parents to help

improve developmental monitoring, a critical step in the early identification of developmental delays.

- Plan for resource and service needs.
- Target outreach to communities with higher rates of ASD and those living in low-income neighborhoods.

Policymakers and community leaders can use this information to

- Promote awareness of ASD and bring the community together to address the growing needs of families with ASD.
- Develop policies that promote early identification and equal access to services and supports so that all children get the help they need.
- Serve as the basis for the creation of a task force or commission focused on the coordination of ASD activities in local communities.
- Assess current service needs following disruptions in evaluations and services during the COVID-19 pandemic.



- Study the long-term impact of COVID-19 on ASD evaluation and early identification and consider strategies to lessen service disruptions during future public health.
- Strengthen community infrastructure to provide equitable diagnostic, treatment, and support services for all children with ASD.
- Develop standard tools for measuring and documenting abilities and challenges among children with ASD.
- Identify risk or protective factors leading to differences in intellectual ability among children with ASD.

Researchers can use this information to

- Guide future research projects.
- Examine more closely why and how ASD affects children differently by sex, race/ethnicity, intellectual ability, and community.
- Support the creation of ASD research groups in local communities.