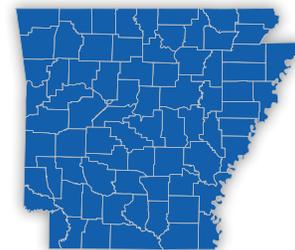
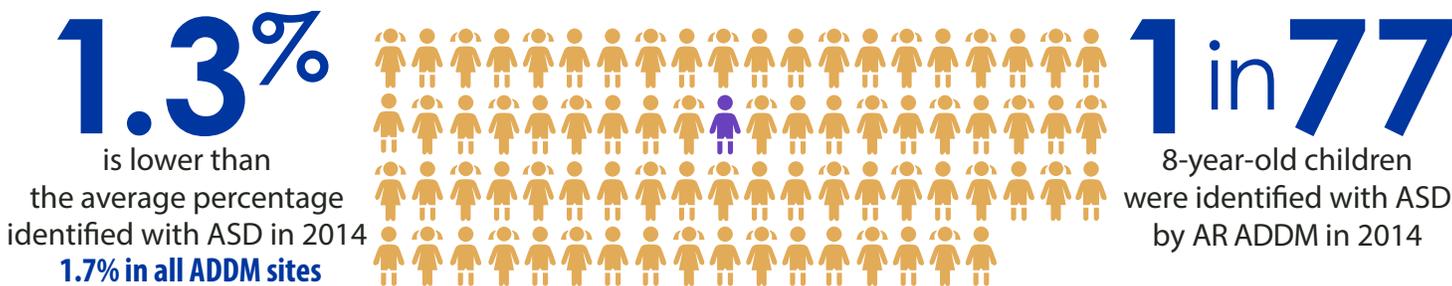


A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in

Arkansas



Findings from the Arkansas Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (AR ADDM) Program 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.



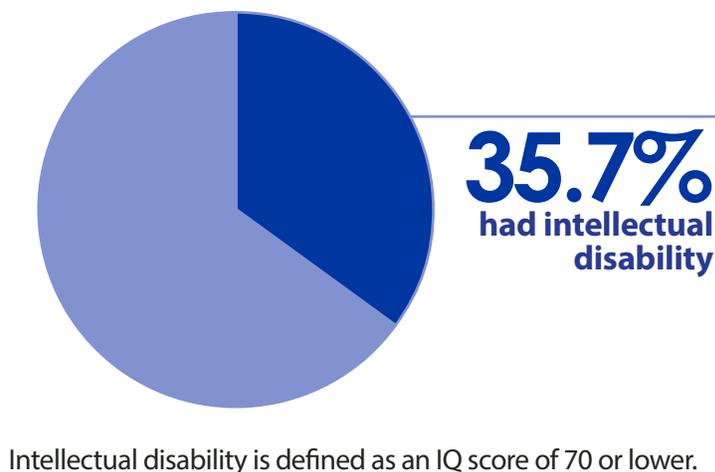
Disparities in Identification

Boys were more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. Black children were more likely than Hispanic children to be identified with ASD, but white children were still most likely to be identified with ASD.



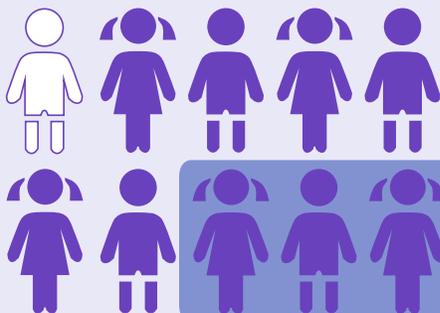
Intellectual Disability in Arkansas

Arkansas had **intelligence quotient (IQ) data available for 88.3% of children identified with ASD**. Of those children, 35.7% had intellectual disability.



Of children identified with ASD...

...about 92% had developmental concerns by 3 years of age.



...but only about 31% received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by 3 years of age.

Arkansas

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 others factors, such as how providers diagnose and document ASD symptoms among boys versus girls.
- ASD can be diagnosed as early as 2 years of age; however, about half of children were diagnosed with ASD by a community provider by 4 years, 11 months of age.
- Efforts may be directed toward evaluating and diagnosing all children with ASD as early as possible so that they can be connected to the services they need.

How can this information be useful?

AR ADDM'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 Arkansas might consider different ways to lower the age of first evaluation and diagnosis by community providers.

How and where was this information collected?

AR ADDM uses a record review method. Specifically, 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 one of the 75 counties in Arkansas in 2014.

- Children in tracking area: 39,992 8-year-olds
 - 65 percent white
 - 19 percent black
 - 13 percent Hispanic
 - 2 percent Asian or Pacific Islander
 - Less than 1 percent American Indian or Alaska Native

What else does AR ADDM do besides track ASD among 8-year-olds?

AR ADDM collaborates with the Arkansas Department of Health and investigators from the University of Arkansas for Medical Services (UAMS) to track the number and characteristics of 8-year-olds with ASD and/or intellectual disability. In addition, AR ADDM offers individualized presentations on the number and characteristics of children with ASD and partners with UAMS Department of Pediatrics and Arkansas Children's Hospital to provide training to physicians and staff. AR ADDM also co-sponsors educational events for families and educators (such as TeamUP), and collaborates on developmental disabilities awareness events such as Walk Now for Autism Speaks.

"The work of AR ADDM has been very valuable to me in my role as a local special education director for three rural school districts in Van Buren County. Prevalence of autism in schools has skyrocketed, growing so quickly that it makes it difficult to keep adequate resources and supports in place for students, staff members, and families. When I examine our data I find that autism is no longer a low incidence disability in my three districts and it requires that I be diligent in supporting staff with resources and supports. The work of AR ADDM has allowed us to look at real data that has meaning around the prevalence of autism in our state. I have used the data over the years when I do presentations locally and at the state level. I hope that work continues- it is so very important!"

- Deb Swink, Special Education Director
Clinton, Shirley, and South Side School Districts

Get Resources and Connect Families to Services and Support in Arkansas

First Connections

Services for children under the age of 3 years with developmental delays or disabilities
1-800-643-8258
www.arkansas.gov/dhs/ddds/FirstConn

Department of Education's Special Education Unit

Special education services for school-aged children with disabilities
1-800-482-8437
arksped.k12.ar.us

Arkansas Autism Resource and Outreach Center

Support, education, and advocacy for families of individuals with ASD
1-800-342-2923
aaroc.org

Dennis Development Center (DDC) and Schmieding Development Center (SDC)

Diagnostic multidisciplinary team evaluations for children presenting with developmental and behavioral concerns. Provides comprehensive developmental assessments of children from birth to 21 years of age
DDC 501-364-1830
SDC 479-750-0125
<https://pediatrics.uams.edu/clinical-programs-affiliates/>

CDC's Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Alan Mease, Arkansas' Act Early Ambassador
Alan.Mease@arkansas.gov

Project Connect Resource Guide

Arkansas resources for families and professionals on child development and what to do if there is a concern
www.adcpi.org/Assets/projectconnect_resourceguide_smallsize.pdf

Spotting Autism in Early Child Care Settings

Training for child care providers on identifying children at risk for being diagnosed with autism. Available through Healthy Child Care Arkansas
www.healthychildcareAR.org

Community-Based Autism Liaison and Treatment (CoBALT) Project

Comprehensive diagnostic assessments, early intervention services, and family support
www.pediatrics.uams.edu/specialties/developmental-pediatrics/cobalt-program/

Connect with AR ADDM

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