



ADDM Network Data for Action

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How Can You Use the ADDM Network Findings?

There are many children and families living 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:

- **Measure progress toward public health goals.**

ADDM Network findings are used to measure progress toward the [Healthy People 2020 goals](#) to increase the proportion of children with ASD with a first evaluation by 36 months of age and enrolled in special services by 48 months of age (1).

- **Guide research on ASD.**

ADDM Network findings have helped inform the Interagency Autism Coordinating Committee's Strategic Plan for ASD research (2).

- **Promote early identification efforts.**

ADDM Network findings on average age of diagnosis of ASD support CDC's [Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#) program, which aims to lower the average age of diagnosis 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 in order to lower the age when children are first evaluated for developmental concerns, diagnosed with ASD, and enrolled in community-based support systems.**

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 their outreach to under-identified groups of children, such as Hispanic children.**



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 living with ASD.
- Develop policies and 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.

Researchers can use this information to:

- Document the need for accelerated ASD research.
- 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 community research groups in local communities.
- Develop standard tools for measuring and documenting abilities and challenges among children with ASD.