A Deeper Dive
Frequently Asked Questions About ADDM Network Data
A Deeper Dive
Frequently Asked Questions About the ADDM Network Data

How was this information collected?
The ADDM Network uses a systematic record-review method. Specifically, the information reported by the ADDM Network is based on the analysis of data collected from the health and special education records (if available) of 8-year-old and 4-year-old children who lived in one of 11 different areas throughout the United States in 2018.

Where was this information collected? Which children does it include?
The 2018 tracking area included specific areas of Arizona, Arkansas, California, Georgia, Maryland, Minnesota, Missouri, New Jersey, Tennessee, Utah, and Wisconsin (see site pages for more information).

What is the key take-away message?
There continue to be many children with ASD who need services and support, both now and as they grow into adolescence and adulthood. Efforts to ensure that all children with ASD are evaluated and diagnosed as early as possible can help them be connected to the services they need.

*Estimates may not sum to 100% due to rounding.
Why was the percentage of children identified with ASD higher in some areas compared to others?

Currently, research does not show that living in certain communities puts children at greater risk for developing ASD. These differences in the percentage of children identified with ASD across areas may be due to differences in availability of services for early detection and evaluation, diagnostic practices, and other differences in documentation of ASD symptoms. For example, there may be differences in whether children have insurance or meet the eligibility criteria for access to early intervention services (1). These differences can help us learn more about the policies and programs that have contributed to advancements in early identification and better support for children.

Why does the ADDM ASD prevalence estimate differ from other ASD prevalence estimates?

Estimates from the ADDM Network, the National Survey of Children's Health (NSCH), and the National Health Interview Survey (NHIS) cannot be directly compared because they use different methods to collect their information and look at different age groups. NSCH and NHIS, based on national surveys of parental experiences, can provide insight into how many children have been diagnosed with ASD and other developmental disabilities. The ADDM Network further enriches our understanding of ASD by working with communities across the United States to collect information on specific characteristics of children with ASD and track changes over time in those communities and within groups with similar characteristics.