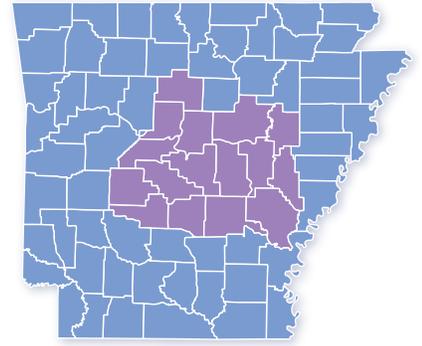
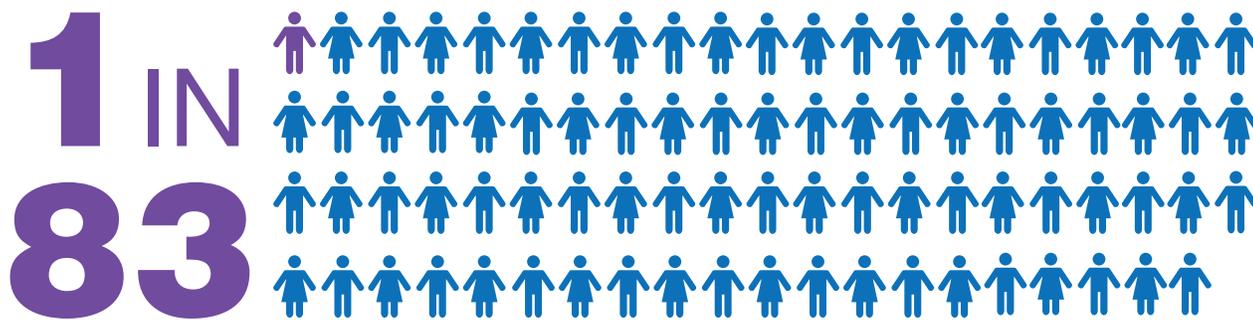


# A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Arkansas



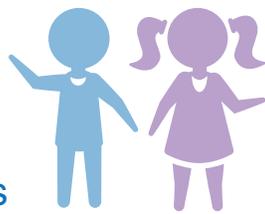
Findings from the Arkansas Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (AR ADDM) Program help us understand more about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the characteristics of those children, and the age at which they are first evaluated and diagnosed. Read on to learn more about ASD in Arkansas and how this important information can be useful to you.

About 1 in 83 or 1.2% of 8-year-old children were identified with ASD by AR ADDM in 2012. This percentage is lower than the average percentage identified with ASD (1.5%) in all communities in the United States where CDC tracked ASD in 2012.



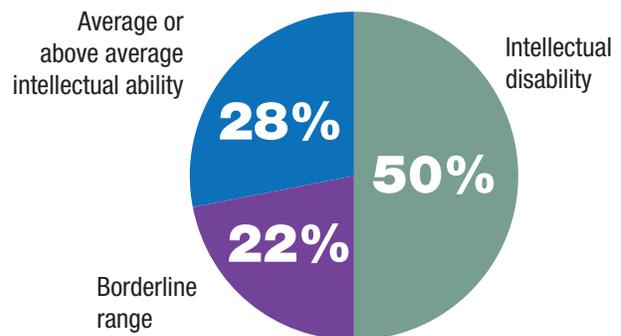
Boys were more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. No significant differences were found in the percentage of white and black children identified with ASD.

**4.2x**  
MORE LIKELY  
among boys vs girls



\* No data available on Hispanic children with ASD

Among children identified with ASD who had IQ test scores available, half also had intellectual disability.



\* Intelligence quotient (IQ) scores available for at least 70% of children identified with ASD by AR ADDM. Intellectual disability defined as IQ score  $\leq 70$ .



About 88% of children identified with ASD had concerns about their development noted in their health and/or education records by age 3 years.



About 24% of children identified with ASD received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by age 3 years.



Even though ASD can be diagnosed as early as age 2 years, about half of children were not diagnosed with ASD by a community provider until after age 5 years.

# 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 other factors, such as how providers diagnose and document ASD symptoms among boys versus girls.

## *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 by community providers.

## *How and where was this information collected?*

This information is based on the analysis of data collected from the health records of children who were 8 years old and living in one of 16 counties (Arkansas, Conway, Faulkner, Garland, Grant, Hot Spring, Jefferson, Lonoke, Monroe, Perry, Prairie, Pulaski, Saline, Van Buren, White, Woodruff) in central Arkansas in 2012. Overall, the tracking area included 14,153 8-year-olds (64% white, 26% black, 7% Hispanic, 2% Asian or Pacific Islander, less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native).

## *What else does AR ADDM do besides tracking 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.

**“For the Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Autism, having current prevalence data for this developmental disorder is of primary importance in offering guidance to legislative efforts to parcel resources efficiently and appropriately. I am certain that the AR ADDM data will fuel the Task Force's sense of the ‘fierce urgency’ of addressing needs now, and planning for lifelong needs for Arkansas families.”**

**-Tyra Reid, MD  
Member, Arkansas Legislative Task Force on Autism**

## *Get Resources and Connect Families to Services and Support in Arkansas*

### **First Connections**

1-800-643-8258

[www.arkansas.gov/dhs/ddds/FirstConn](http://www.arkansas.gov/dhs/ddds/FirstConn)

### **Department of Education's Special Education Unit**

1-800-482-8437

[arksped.k12.ar.us](http://arksped.k12.ar.us)

### **Arkansas site of Autism Treatment Network**

Stefanie Jernigan

501-364-4665

### **Arkansas Autism Resource and Outreach Center**

1-800-342-2923

[aaroc.org](http://aaroc.org)

### **The Dennis Developmental Center**

501-364-1830

[www.uams.edu/ddc](http://www.uams.edu/ddc)

### **Connect with AR ADDM**

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