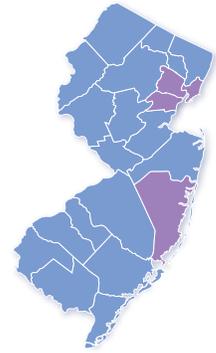


A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in New Jersey



Findings from the New Jersey Autism Study (NJAS) 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 New Jersey and how this important information can be useful to you.

About 1 in 41 or 2.5% of 8-year-old children were identified with ASD by NJAS in 2012. This percentage is higher than the average percentage identified with ASD (1.5%) in all communities in the United States where CDC tracked ASD in 2012.



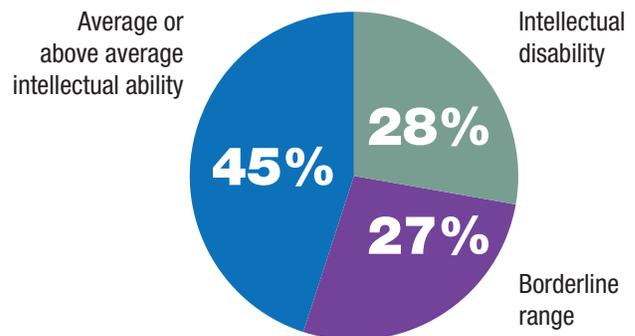
Boys were more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. White and black children were more likely to be identified with ASD than Hispanic children. No significant differences were found between the percentage of white and black children with ASD.

4.2x among boys
MORE LIKELY vs girls

1.5x among white vs
MORE LIKELY Hispanic children

1.3x among black vs
MORE LIKELY Hispanic children

Among children identified with ASD who had IQ scores available, less than a third also had intellectual disability.



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



About 82% of children identified with ASD had concerns about their development noted in their health and/or education records by age 3 years.



About 43% of children identified with ASD received comprehensive developmental evaluations 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 3 years and 11 months.

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.
- The percentage of children with ASD increased in this area, from about 2.1% in 2010 to about 2.5% in 2012.
- The percentage of children with ASD continues to be higher in this area compared to other areas in the United States where CDC tracks ASD—it is not known exactly why, but it could be related to how children are identified and connected to services in their local communities.
- Differences between the percentage of boys and girls identified with ASD continue—almost 4% of boys in the area were identified with ASD compared to about 1% of girls. 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.
- Despite the developmental concerns noted in many of the children's records by age 3 years, less than half of children identified with ASD received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by this same age. The lag between first concern and first developmental evaluation may affect when children are being diagnosed and connected to the services they need.

How can this information be useful?

NJAS' 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 New Jersey 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 and special education records of children who were 8 years old and living in one of 4 counties (Essex, Hudson, Union, Ocean) in New Jersey in 2012. Overall, the tracking area included 32,581 eight-year-olds (42% white, 22% black, 30% Hispanic, 6% Asian or Pacific Islander, less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native).

What else does NJAS do besides tracking ASD among 8-year-olds?

NJAS collaborates with the New Jersey Departments of Health and Education and local agencies and organizations that serve children with developmental disabilities and their families to track the number and characteristics of 4-year-olds and 8-year-olds with ASD and/or intellectual disability in select areas of New Jersey. NJAS offers information and training on the identification and diagnosis of ASD, sponsors presentations and workshops on ASD topics, and promotes innovative approaches to the detection of ASD.

“NJAS is essential to understanding the true scope of autism.”

-Cherie Castellano
Mom2Mom Program Director

Get Resources and Connect Families to Services and Support in New Jersey

Autism Family Services of New Jersey

877-237-4477

www.autismfamilyservicesnj.org

Autism New Jersey

800-4-AUTISM

www.autismnj.org

Department of Education's Office of Special Education Program

www.nj.gov/education/specialed/

Early Intervention System

www.nj.gov/health/fhs/eis/

Governor's Council for Medical Research and Treatment of Autism

www.state.nj.us/health/autism/

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