

CDC's Study to Explore Early Development

Frequently Asked Questions

- **What is CADDRE?**
CDC established regional centers of excellence for ASDs and other developmental disabilities. These centers make up the Centers for Autism and Developmental Disabilities Research and Epidemiology (CADDRE) Network. Currently, the CADDRE Network is working on the Study to Explore Early Development (SEED).
- **What are the SEED sites?**
The SEED research study sites are: California, Colorado, Georgia, Maryland, North Carolina, and Pennsylvania. The Data Coordinating Center is in Michigan and is responsible for data information systems and technology.
- **Why is CDC looking at children in only six states and how were the sites chosen?**
The six SEED research sites were picked through an open competitive review process in 2001 and were funded for five years. In 2006, CDC had a limited competitive review process and funded the sites for another five years.

Understanding Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Developmental Disabilities

- **In the United States, about 1 in 110 children has an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and about 1 in 8 children aged 3-17 has a developmental disability.**
- **The median age of earliest ASD diagnosis is between 4.5 and 5.5 years, but for 51–91 percent of children with an ASD, developmental concerns had been recorded before three years of age.**
- **Studies have shown that about one third of parents of children with an ASD noticed a problem before their child's first birthday, and 80% saw problems by 24 months.**
- **Recent studies have estimated that the lifetime cost to care for an individual with an ASD is \$3.2 million.**



Identifying Risk Factors for Autism Spectrum Disorders and Other Developmental Disabilities

There is still a lot to learn about ASDs. Research on ASDs has increased a great deal in recent years and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) is part of the larger group of public and private organizations working to better understand ASDs through research. CDC is undertaking efforts to find out how many children have ASDs, discover the risk factors and causes, and raise awareness of the signs and symptoms.

- The **Study to Explore Early Development (SEED)** is a multi-year, multi-site study in six diverse areas that looks at possible causes and risks for ASDs and other developmental delays.
- SEED is currently the largest multi-site study in the United States to help identify factors that may put children at risk for ASDs and other developmental disabilities.
- SEED is looking at many possible risk factors for ASDs, including genetic, environmental, pregnancy, and behavioral factors.

Over 3,500 children and their parents are enrolled across all the study sites. The research goals for SEED include learning about:

- **Physical and behavioral characteristics of children with ASDs, children with other developmental disabilities, and children without a developmental delay or disability**

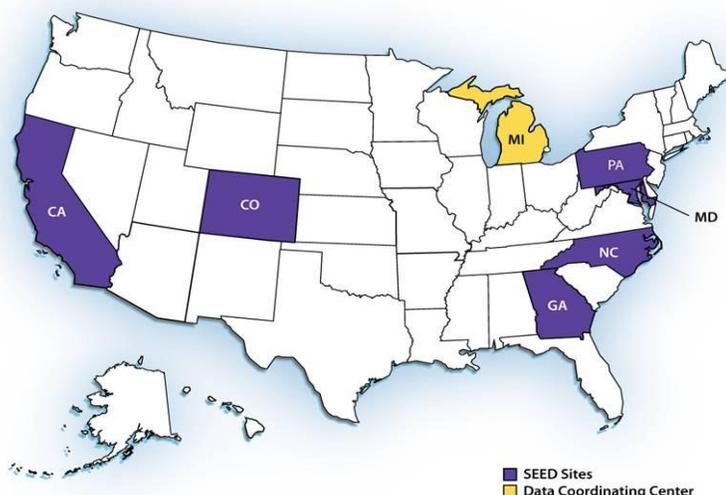
ASD is a complex disorder. We want to learn more about why people with ASD are the way they are—how they behave, grow, think, and interact with the world around them. We also want to know the same things about children with other developmental disabilities and those with typical development.

- **Health conditions among children with and without ASDs**

SEED provides an opportunity to compare health conditions and health-related issues such as sleeping and eating patterns in children with ASD, in children with other developmental disabilities, and in children without a developmental delay or disability.

- **Factors associated with a child's risk for developing ASDs**

We hope that SEED will give us a better idea which of the many possible risk factors that we will be evaluating seem to be associated with or related to ASDs. The risk factors may be related to genes, health conditions, experiences of the mother during pregnancy, and the health and development of the child during infancy and the first few years of life.



"Usually our child isn't given the chance to participate in studies like these due to her disability, but it means a lot when you all go the extra mile to accommodate us. Studies like SEED will do a lot for children now and in the future."

-Parent of a child participating in SEED

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

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