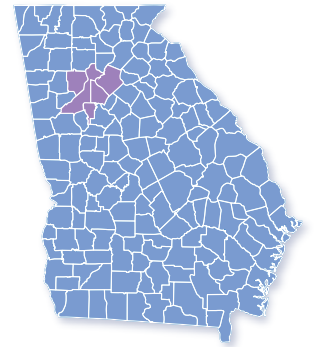


A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Georgia



Findings from the Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (MADDSP) 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 Georgia and how this important information can be useful to you.

About 1 in 64 or 1.6% of 8-year-old children were identified with ASD by MADDSP in 2012. This percentage is about the same as the average percentage identified with ASD (1.5%) in all communities in the United States where CDC tracked ASD in 2012.



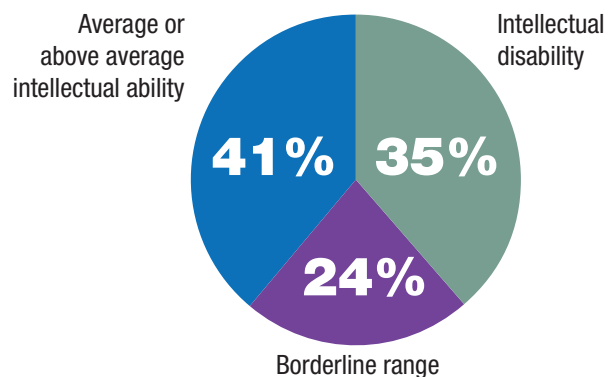
Boys were more likely to be identified with ASD than girls. White children were more likely to be identified with ASD than black and Hispanic children.

4.9x MORE LIKELY among boys vs girls

1.3x MORE LIKELY among white vs black children

2.0x MORE LIKELY among white vs Hispanic children

Among children identified with ASD, slightly more than a third also had intellectual disability.



* Intelligence quotient (IQ) scores available for at least 70% of children identified with ASD by MADDSP. Intellectual disability defined as IQ score ≤ 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 41% 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 4 years and 3 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.
- Hispanic and black children are less likely to be identified with ASD than white children. This may reflect cultural and/or socioeconomic differences, such as delayed or lack of access to services, as compared to white children in Georgia.
- 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?

MADDSP'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 Georgia might consider different ways to

1. Lower the age of first evaluation by community providers.
2. Increase awareness of ASD among black and Hispanic families, and identify and address barriers in order to decrease the age at which black and Hispanic children are evaluated and diagnosed.

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 5 counties (Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, Gwinnett) in Georgia in 2012. Overall, the tracking area included 49,720 8-year-olds (33% white, 41% black, 18% Hispanic, 7% Asian or Pacific Islander, less than 1% American Indian or Alaska Native).

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

MADDSP is an intramural program administered by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC). MADDSP collaborates with state agencies that serve children with developmental disabilities and their families to track the number and characteristics of 8-year-olds with ASD, cerebral palsy, hearing loss, intellectual disability, and/or vision impairment in select areas of Georgia. MADDSP also partners with community organizations to host annual ASD awareness month events. Upon request, MADDSP offers trainings for local professionals and provides tailored data reports and presentations on the number and characteristics of children with developmental disabilities.

“CDC’s ADDM Network provides essential information on the numbers of children with ASD from multiple areas in the U.S. Knowing that 1 in 64 children in metro Atlanta have been identified with ASD really hits home in Georgia, and makes it clear that everyone has a stake in improving the lives of people affected by ASD.”

**-Catherine Rice PhD
Director, Emory Autism Center**

Get Resources and Connect Families to Services and Support in Georgia

Atlanta Autism Consortium

www.atlantaautismconsortium.org/

Autism Society of Georgia

1-844-404-ASGa

www.autismsocietyga.org

Autism Speaks

770-451-0570

georgia@autismspeaks.org

Babies Can't Wait

1-888-777-4041

dph.georgia.gov/Babies-Cant-Wait

Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports

404-656-3963

www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Special-Education-Services/Pages/default.aspx

Connect with MADDSP

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