

# Arizona

## Tracking Autism Spectrum Disorder and Other Developmental Disabilities in Arizona:

### What You Need To Know

#### A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Arizona

The following estimates are based on information collected from the health and special education records of children who were 8 years old and living in metropolitan Phoenix in 2010 (see sidebar). Overall, the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (ADDSP) identified 530 children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), including children with and without a diagnosis documented in their records.

#### How many children were identified with ASD?

**1 in 64** children (or 15.7 per 1,000 8-year-olds) was identified with ASD.

This estimate is slightly higher than the average number of children identified with ASD (1 in 68) in all areas of the United States where CDC tracks ASD.

#### Which children were more likely to be identified with ASD?

Boys were 4 times more likely to be identified with ASD than girls.

- 1 in 40 boys was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 167 girls was identified with ASD.

White and black children were more likely to be identified with ASD than Hispanic children<sup>1</sup>.

- 1 in 53 white children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 61 black children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 94 Hispanic children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 52 Asian or Pacific Islander children was identified with ASD.

#### When were children first evaluated for developmental concerns?

36% of children identified with ASD were evaluated for developmental concerns by the time they were 3 years old.

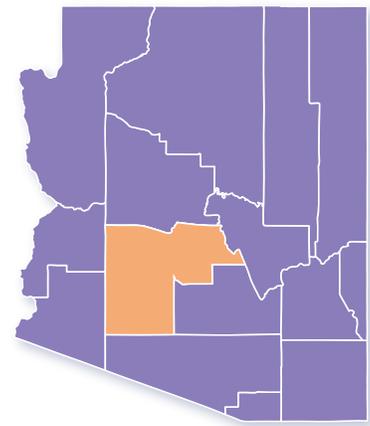
#### When were children first diagnosed with ASD by a community provider<sup>2</sup>?

On average, children were diagnosed at age 4 years and 11 months, even though children can be diagnosed as early as age 2 years. When looking at age of first diagnosis by subtype, on average, children were diagnosed with:

- Autistic disorder at age 4 years and 10 months.
- Pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) at age 4 years and 7 months.
- Asperger disorder at age 6 years and 7 months.

#### How many children had an eligibility for autism special education services at school or had an ASD diagnosis?

74% of children either had an eligibility for autism special education services at school or had an ASD diagnosis. The remaining 26% of children identified with ASD had documented symptoms of ASD, but had not yet been classified as having ASD by a community provider.



#### Site Information

Tracking area: Part of Maricopa County that included metropolitan Phoenix (including 15 school districts).

Children in tracking area: 33,768 8-year-old children, of whom about 48% were white, 6% were black, 41% were Hispanic, 3% were Asian or Pacific Islander, and 2% were American Indian/Alaska Native



More is understood about ASD than ever before, but there is an urgent need to continue the search for answers and provide help for people living with ASD.

### **Public Health Action**

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds programs to track the number and characteristics of children with ASD and other developmental disabilities as part of the CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. The Arizona Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (ADDSP) was established in 2000 as an ADDM Network site in collaboration with the Arizona Department of Health Services and investigators from University of Arizona (Department of Pediatrics and Mel and Enid Zuckerman College of Public Health). ADDSP partners with the Arizona Department of Education and numerous local agencies that serve children with developmental disabilities to track the number of 4-year-old and 8-year-old children with ASD, intellectual disability, or both living in select areas of Arizona. This program also contributes information on the characteristics of children with ASD and on factors that put children at risk for this condition. ADDSP data can be used to promote early identification, plan for training and service needs, guide research, and inform policy so that children and families in our community get the help they need.

### **Training and Education on Autism Spectrum Disorder**

ADDSP staff offer workshops to healthcare and other service providers to increase recognition of the early signs of ASD and to enhance their capacity to diagnose and report ASD.

#### **For more information about ADDSP, please contact:**

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#### **Access Resources and Help Connect Families to Services and Supports in Arizona**

##### **Arizona Early Intervention Program**

Phone: 602-532-9960  
OR 888-439-5609.  
Web: <http://azdes.gov/AzEIP/>

##### **Arizona Department of Education, Exceptional Student Services.**

Web: [www.azed.gov/  
special-education](http://www.azed.gov/special-education)

##### **Arizona Autism Coalition**

Phone: 480-268-1453  
Web: <http://azautism.org>

##### **Autism Society of Greater Tucson**

Phone: 520-770-1541.  
Web: [www.autismsociety  
greatertucson.org](http://www.autismsocietygreatertucson.org)

##### **Autism Society of Greater Phoenix**

Phone: 480-940-1093  
Web: [www.phxautism.org](http://www.phxautism.org)

##### **Learn the Signs. Act Early.**

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<sup>1</sup>. Due to small numbers of children, we are unable to detect statistical differences between certain racial and ethnic groups.

<sup>2</sup>. This information is based on children who had a diagnosis from a community provider documented in their records. Because the diagnoses were made in 2010 or earlier, they reflect DSM-IV-TR subtypes. This excludes children whose only ASD classification was an ICD-9 billing code or an eligibility for autism special education services.