

Georgia

Tracking Autism Spectrum Disorder and Other Developmental Disabilities in Georgia:

What You Need To Know

A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Georgia

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 one of five counties in 2010 (see sidebar). Overall, the Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (MADDSP) identified 754 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 15.5 per 1,000 8-year-olds) was identified with ASD. This estimate is about the same as 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 almost 5 times more likely to be identified with ASD than girls.

- 1 in 39 boys was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 181 girls was identified with ASD.

White children were more likely to be identified with ASD than black children¹. White and black children were more likely to be identified with ASD than Hispanic children.

- 1 in 55 white children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 71 black children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 93 Hispanic children was identified with ASD.
- 1 in 81 Asian or Pacific Islander children was identified with ASD.

When were children first evaluated for developmental concerns?

45% of children identified with ASD were evaluated for developmental concerns by the time they were 3 years old.

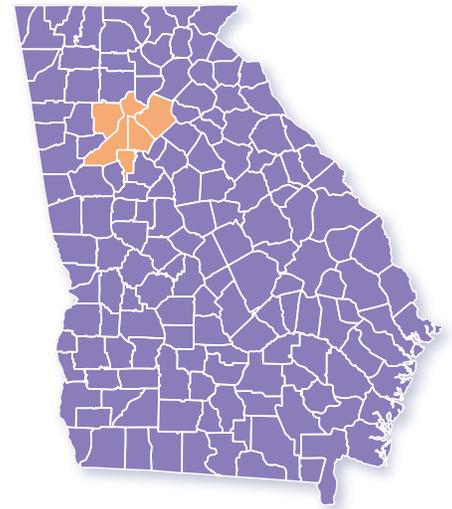
When were children first diagnosed with ASD by a community provider?

On average, children were diagnosed at age 4 years and 1 month, 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 3 years and 9 months.
- Pervasive developmental disorder-not otherwise specified (PDD-NOS) at age 4 years and 1 month.
- Asperger disorder at age 6 years.

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

87% of children either had an eligibility for autism special education services at school or had an ASD diagnosis. The remaining 13% 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: Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett counties

Children in tracking area: 48,529 8-year-old children, of whom about 33% were white, 43% were black, 18% were Hispanic, and 6% were Asian or Pacific Islander



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 Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (MADDSP) was established in 1991 by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), and, since 2000, MADDSP has served as the model site in CDC's Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. MADDSP partners with the Georgia Department of Public Health, the Georgia Department of Education, and other state and local agencies and organizations that serve children with developmental disabilities and their families to track the number of 8-year-old children with ASD, cerebral palsy, hearing loss, intellectual disability, and/or vision impairment in metro Atlanta. This program also contributes information on the characteristics of children with ASD and on factors that put children at risk for this condition. MADDSP 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

MADDSP collaborates with community organizations to host annual autism awareness month events in Georgia in order to engage with community partners that make MADDSP possible, and to raise awareness of ASD by portraying the lives of individuals with the condition. MADDSP staff offer workshops and trainings for parents, teachers, and healthcare providers to increase knowledge of ASD and build capacity among community members. MADDSP staff also offer tailored data reports and presentations on the number and characteristics of children with ASD and other developmental disabilities in metro Atlanta and across the ADDM Network.

For more information about MADDSP, please contact:

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Access Resources and Help Connect Families to Services and Supports in Georgia

Georgia's Babies Can't Wait early intervention system

Phone: 404-657-2762

Web: <http://dph.georgia.gov/Babies-Cant-Wait>

Georgia Department of Education's Special Education Services and Supports

Phone: 404-656-3963

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

Autism Society Georgia

Web: www.asaga.com

Autism Speaks

Phone: 770-451-0570

E-mail: georgia@autismspeaks.org

Parent 2 Parent of Georgia

Phone: 1-800-229-2038

Web: <http://p2pga.org/>

Atlanta Autism Consortium

E-mail: executive-director@atlantaautismconsortium.org

Web: www.hsi.gatech.edu/atl-autism/about

Autism Plan for Georgia

Donna Johnson

E-mail: DJohnson@Ga-AutismPlan.com

Web: <http://ga-autismplan.com/>

Learn the Signs. Act Early.

Web: www.cdc.gov/ActEarly

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

². 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.