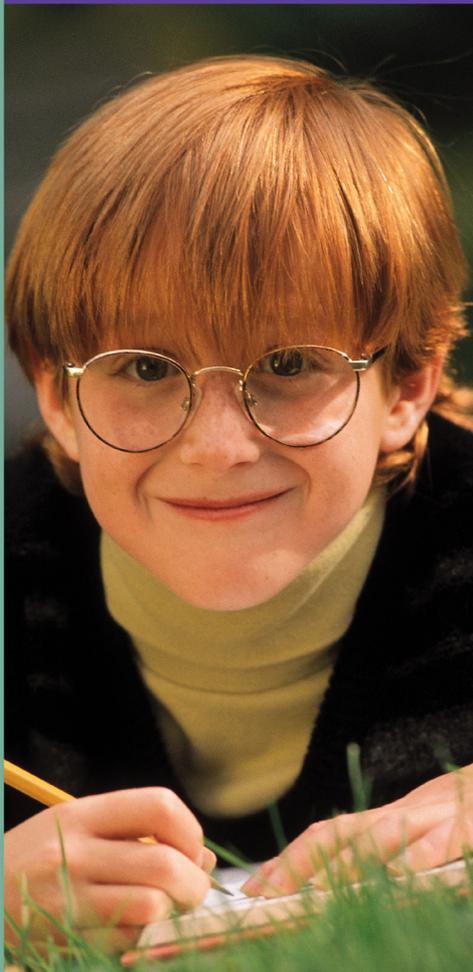


Vision Impairment Among Children

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention's (CDC) Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (MADDSP) is one of the few programs in the world that actively tracks the number of children with vision impairment in a large, diverse metropolitan area over time.



FACT: About 1 of every 1,000 school-aged child in metropolitan Atlanta has low vision or is legally blind, measured as visual acuity of 20/70 or worse in the better eye.

Not being able to see well can affect the way a child understands and functions. Vision impairment can limit the range of experiences and the kinds of information to which a child is exposed. Those limitations can affect a child's emotional, neurological, and physical development. Children with vision impairment often need special education and other services to help in their development. The average lifetime cost associated with vision impairment is about \$566,000 per person in 2003 dollars.

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MADDSP tracks the number of school-aged children living in five counties of metropolitan Atlanta who have vision impairment, cerebral palsy, intellectual disability, hearing loss, or autism spectrum disorder, or any combination thereof. In 2006, an estimated 1.3 per 1,000 8-year-olds in metropolitan Atlanta, or about 1 in 770, had vision impairment. About one-half to three-quarters of children with vision impairment also had one or more other developmental disabilities tracked by MADDSP.

MADDSP also allows CDC and other researchers to do special studies to identify risk factors for these disabilities and to determine whether efforts to prevent disabilities have been effective.

Related CDC Activities

- The Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Study (MADDSP) Follow-Up Study of Young Adults followed a subset of children identified in MADDSP who had vision impairment, hearing loss, intellectual disability, cerebral palsy, or epilepsy, or a combination thereof. The study assessed participants' current functioning and their transition to adulthood, as measured by employment, education after high school, and living arrangements. It also examined their mental and physical health and their lifestyles and behaviors.
- The National Health Interview Survey examines health status and health care among children with vision impairment.

To read more about CDC's publications related to vision impairment, visit www.cdc.gov/visionimpairment.

National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities
Division of Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

