



National Center on Birth Defects and Developmental Disabilities

Partner Alert

12.2.2021

CDC Releases Reports on the Number and Characteristics of Children with Autism Spectrum Disorder from Communities in the United States

Today, CDC's Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR) Surveillance Summaries published two new reports on the prevalence and early identification of autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in children in 2018. The data come from 11 communities in the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) network.

Key findings include the following:

An estimated 2.3% or 1 in 44, 8-year-old children have been identified with ASD according to an analysis of 2018 data. This is higher than the previous estimate published in March 2020, which found a prevalence of 1 in 54 eight-year-old children. The data come from 11 communities in the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) network.

Some racial and ethnic disparities persist. In several of the 11 communities studied, the prevalence of ASD among Hispanic children was lower than that of Black or White children. In addition, a higher percent of Black children with ASD were identified with intellectual disability compared to White or Hispanic children with ASD.



1 in 44

8 year old children living in ADDM Network sites* were identified with ASD in 2018

*11 U.S. communities

This is consistent with previous reports. These differences could relate in part to access to services that diagnose and support children with autism.

Data suggest progress in the early identification of children with ASD. Children born in 2014 (4-year-olds) were 50% more likely to receive an ASD diagnosis or special education classification by 48 months of age compared to children born in 2010 (8-year-olds).

Community differences in ASD identification exist. ASD prevalence in the 11 ADDM communities ranged from 1 in 60 (1.7%) children in Missouri to 1 in 26 (3.9%) children in California. These variations could be due to how communities are identifying children with autism.

Read the Full Reports

- [Surveillance Summaries: Early Identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children Aged 4 Years — Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 Sites, United States, 2018](#)
- [Surveillance Summaries: Prevalence and Characteristics of Autism Spectrum Disorder Among Children Aged 8 Years — Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 11 Sites, United States, 2018](#)

[Learn more about the findings from these reports.](#)

Tools and Resources

Download free resources for families, health care professionals, and other early childhood providers:

[Community Report on Autism:](#) A resource to empower stakeholders working in communities across the United States—from public health agencies to healthcare organizations to school systems and beyond—to use the new findings on ASD for action.

[Autism Data Visualization Tool:](#) A web-based platform that provides an in-depth look at autism prevalence estimates by state. The data come from four different sources: CDC's ADDM Network, Special Education Child

Count, the National Survey of Children's Health, and Medicaid. Each data source adds to our greater understanding of ASD and its impact across the United States.

[Learn the Signs. Act Early.](#) Offers free, customizable materials in English, Spanish, and other languages to help parents and other care providers track young children's development and take early action when there is a concern.

- **[State and Territorial Act Early Ambassadors](#)**: Professionals that can help you promote developmental monitoring and screening in your community through your already-established early childhood programs such as WIC, childcare, home visiting, and others. Ambassadors support their respective state or territory's work toward improving early identification of children with developmental delays and disabilities, including autism. Find [contact information](#) for your Act Early Ambassador.
- **[Milestone Tracker App](#)**: A mobile app that makes it easy for parents to track, support, and discuss their young child's development with their child's healthcare provider. The app is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). Download it for FREE in the [App Store](#) and on [Google Play](#).
- **[Watch Me! Celebrating Milestones and Sharing Concerns](#)**: Free online training course for early educators. Continuing Education is available.

Publications

Progress and Disparities in Early Identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder: Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring Network, 2002-2016

A CDC [study](#) of 8-year-old children in sites across the United States found that children were four times as likely to receive an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) diagnosis or special education classification by age 48 months in 2016 as in 2002, suggesting progress in early ASD identification. Disparities by race/ethnicity and co-occurring intellectual disability (ID) remain: in 2016, by age 48 months, Black and Hispanic children without ID were 30% less likely to be identified with ASD than White children without ID, but Black children were 50% times more likely than White children to be identified with ASD and ID. Ensuring equitable early ASD identification is important so children can receive services and supports they may need as early as possible.



Time Trends in Emergency Department Use Among Adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities

A new CDC-funded [study](#) looked at trends in emergency department (ED) use among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities who are enrolled in Medicaid to learn more about the effects of state-level Medicaid policy changes. Findings showed that Medicaid expansion was effective in reducing or limiting increases in ED visits among adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities.



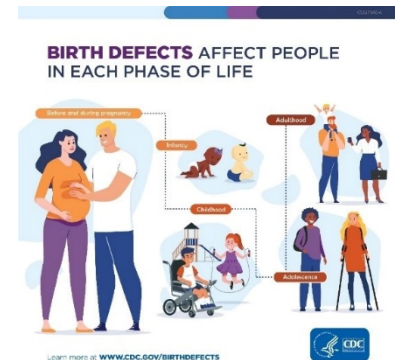
New Tools and Resources

Join NCBDDD in Recognizing National Birth Defects Awareness Month!

NCBDDD recognizes January as National Birth Defects Awareness Month. This is a time to raise awareness about birth defects and highlight efforts to improve the health of people living with these conditions across their lifespan. Join the nationwide effort to raise awareness of birth defects and their impact on individuals, parents, and families.

How Can Partners Recognize National Birth Defects Awareness Month?

1. Awareness of birth defects across the lifespan helps provide individuals, parents, and families affected by birth defects the information they need to seek proper care. Share our new [National Birth Defects Awareness Month Digital Toolkit](#) and [graphics](#).
2. [Connect with NCBDDD on social media!](#) Use the National Birth Defects Awareness Month hashtags ([#AcrossTheLifepsan](#) and [#BirthDefects](#)) to help us track tweets, likes, clicks, and other engagement. NCBDDD has [sample posts](#) that you can modify to fit your organization's mission or individual preferences.



3. Read real stories from people living with birth defects to learn what it's like to live with these conditions and how families and caregivers are affected.

[Learn more about CDC's work on birth defects.](#)

New Website: Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network (SET-NET)

NCBDDD has launched a [new website](#) for our Surveillance for Emerging Threats to Mothers and Babies Network (SET-NET). Our new website explains how SET-NET works using graphics outlining the data collection process, highlights several stories that state health departments have shared showing the value of SET-NET in their jurisdictions, includes links to the latest data on COVID-19 during pregnancy, and highlights publications that have used SET-NET data.

Help Expectant and New Moms Learn their Blood Clot Risk

Did you know that women are five times more likely to experience a blood clot during pregnancy, childbirth, and the three-month period after delivery?

This holiday season, the [Stop the Clot, Spread the Word®](#) campaign, a joint effort of the [National Blood Clot Alliance](#) and the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, is aiming a spotlight on the risks for blood clots in pregnant women and new moms.

We hope you will join us this holiday season in raising awareness about pregnancy-related blood clots! View our promotional toolkit, available in [English](#) and [Spanish](#), which includes messages, graphics, and animated videos outlining 4 tips to prevent pregnancy-



related blood clots. Share them with your networks through social media, blogs, and more.

COVID-19 Resources

[Subscribe to Mailing Lists to Learn More About COVID-19](#). Search for the newsletters listed below.

- Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19): Receive updates from CDC's COVID-19 Response
- COCA - Clinician Outreach and Communication Activity: Join the COCA Mailing List for updates on upcoming COCA Calls

[What's New?](#) Features a running list of web pages that have been updated