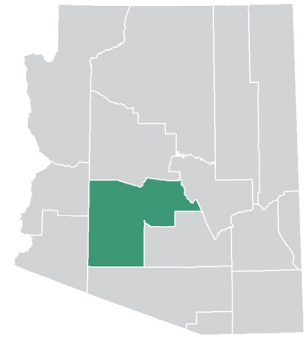


A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Arizona

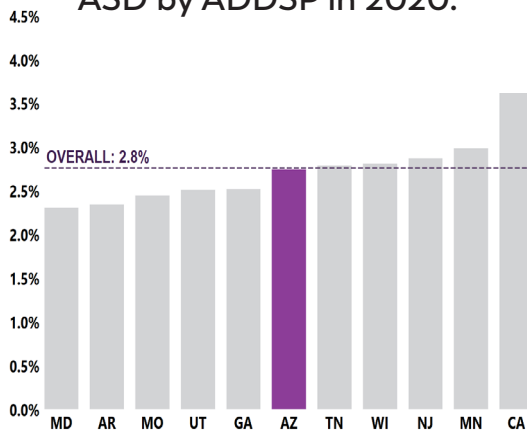
Findings from the Arizona Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (ADDSP) help us to understand more about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the characteristics of those children, and the age at which they are first evaluated and diagnosed.



SITE TRACKING AREA

1 in 36

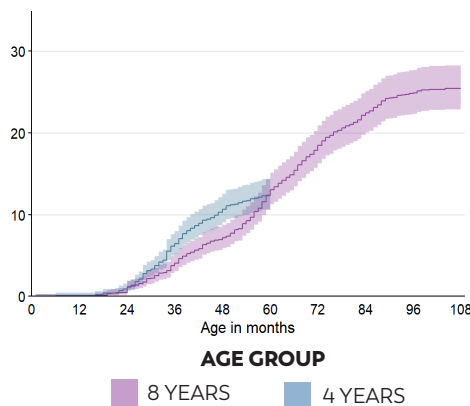
Or 2.7% of 8-year-old children were identified with ASD by ADDSP in 2020.



This percentage is similar to the overall percentage identified with ASD (2.8%) in all communities where CDC tracked ASD among 8-year-olds in 2020.

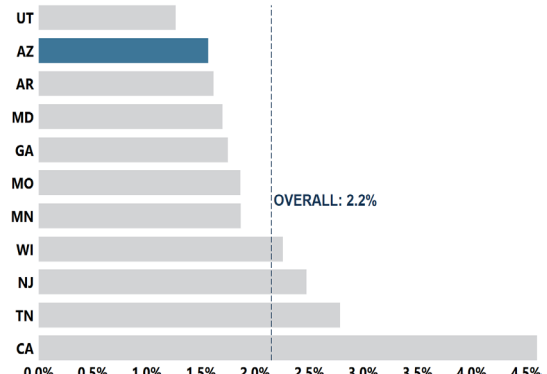
By 48 months

Children who were age 4 years (1.1%) were 1.5 times as likely to receive an ASD diagnosis or ASD special education classification by 48 months of age compared to children who were age 8 years (0.72%).



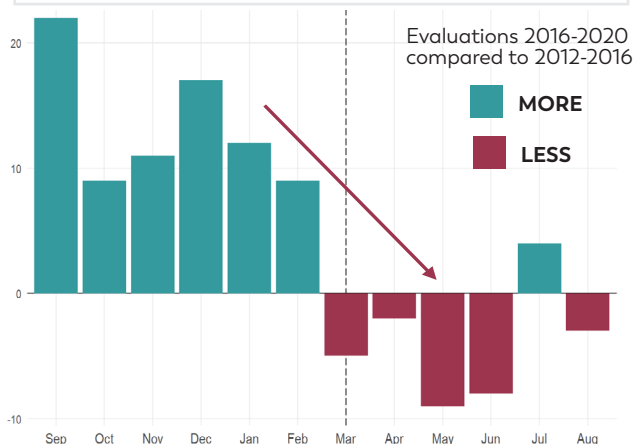
1 in 64

Or 1.6% of 4-year-old children were identified with ASD by ADDSP in 2020.



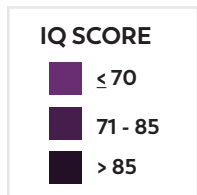
This percentage is lower than the overall percentage identified with ASD (2.2%) in all communities where CDC tracked ASD among 4-year-olds in 2020

The COVID-19 pandemic disrupted many aspects of life, including the ability to evaluate children for ASD. In the early months of the pandemic, 4-year-old children were less likely to have an evaluation than 8-year-old children when they were the same age.

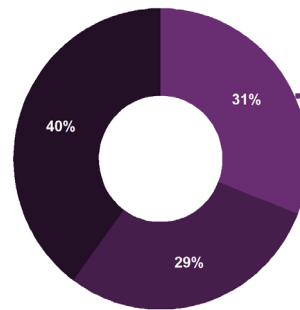


IQ data available for 81%

Of 8-year-old children identified with ASD by ADDSP

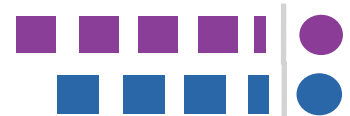


IQ = Intelligence Quotient
Intellectual disability = IQ ≤ 70



31% had Intellectual Disability

8 year-old boys were 4.3x and 4 year-old boys were 3.5x as likely as girls to be identified with ASD



What are the key take-away messages from Arizona's data?

- More children with average intelligence are being identified with ASD since ADDSP began tracking in 2000.
- As has been seen in previous years, the percentage of boys identified with ASD is higher than the percentage of girls; a better understanding of sex differences may also lead to the development of more effective screening tools for ASD in boys and girls.
- More children are being diagnosed with ASD by age 4 years than in previous reports.

How can this information be useful?

ADDSP's latest findings can be used to

- Promote early identification of ASD.
- Plan for the service needs of individuals with ASD and provide trainings related to ASD for healthcare providers and families.
- Guide ASD research.
- Inform policies that promote improved outcomes in health care and education for individuals with ASD.
- Identify cultural, educational, and economic barriers to decreasing the age of evaluation for and diagnosis of ASD.
- Inform efforts to improve screening tools for ASD.
- Improve screening tools to increase accuracy of screening for ASD.
- Improve collaborations in the ASD community among providers, researchers, and families.

Where was this information collected?

8-year-old children in tracking area: 13,118 **4-year-old children in tracking area: 13,349**

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • 40% White | • 38% White |
| • 7% Black | • 7% Black |
| • 42% Hispanic | • 44% Hispanic |
| • 3% Asian or Pacific Islander | • 3% Asian or Pacific Islander |
| • 3% American Indian or Alaska Native | • 3% American Indian or Alaska Native |

ADDSP uses a record review method. Specifically, this information is based on the analysis of data collected from the health and special education records of children who were 4 years old and 8 years old and living in part of Maricopa county in metropolitan Phoenix in 2020.

What else does ADDSP do besides provide estimates of ASD?

ADDSP collaborates with the Arizona Department of Health Services and scholars from the University of Arizona to track the percentage and characteristics of 4-year-old and 8-year-old children with ASD. ADDSP also provides extensive ASD and developmental disabilities-related outreach to and training of students, parents, educators, and clinicians. Further, ADDSP data help guide ASD research in the public health community. ADDSP seeks to expand research on adults with ASD.

"Before this surveillance initiative focused our collective attention on autism, prevalence was extremely underestimated. Since its inception, though, it has most certainly encouraged healthcare professionals and community members alike to better monitor autism in the U.S. The trends we see through data collected, continue to create awareness and urgency, as well as, add a watchful lens on the significant changes in our healthcare systems — like revisions in diagnostic criteria, or efforts to improve early detection and screening. But perhaps most important, surveillance has shown us there is an substantial need within our community for added support, resources and awareness."

CHRISTOPHER SMITH, PhD

Southwest Autism Research and Resource Center (SARRC).

Resources

GET RESOURCES AND CONNECT FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND SUPPORT IN ARIZONA

ARIZONA AUTISM COALITION
www.azautism.org

ARIZONA EARLY INTERVENTION PROGRAM
 602-542-4446
<https://des.az.gov/services/disabilities/developmental-infant>

AZ FIND
 978-637-1871
www.azed.gov/special-education/az-find/

AZA UNITED
 602-773-5773
www.azaunited.org/

CDC'S LEARN THE SIGNS. ACT EARLY.
Megan Wills
 Arizona's Act Early Ambassador
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/ambassadors-list.html>

RAISING SPECIAL KIDS
 602-242-4366
www.raisingpecialkids.org/

SOUTHWEST AUTISM RESEARCH AND RESOURCE CENTER (SARRC)
 602-340-8717
www.autismcenter.org/

AUTISM SOCIETY OF SOUTHERN ARIZONA
 520-770-1541
www.as-az.org

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