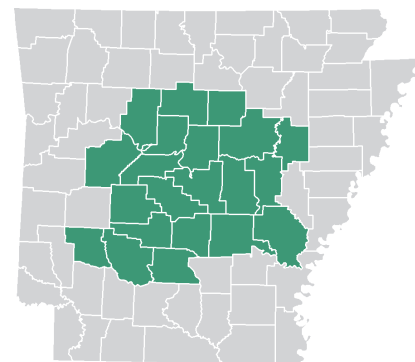


# A Snapshot of Autism Spectrum Disorder in Arkansas

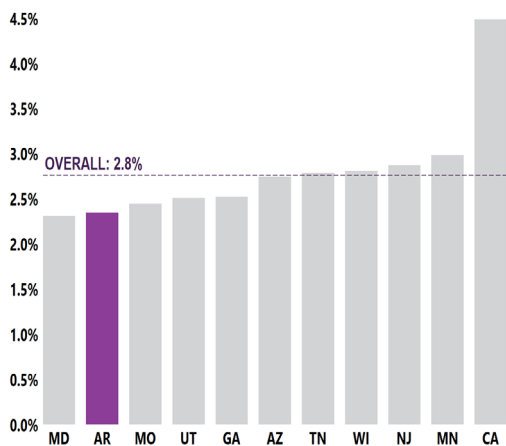
Findings from the Arkansas Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (AR-ADDM) Program help us to understand more about the number of children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD), the characteristics of those children, and the age at which they are first evaluated and diagnosed.



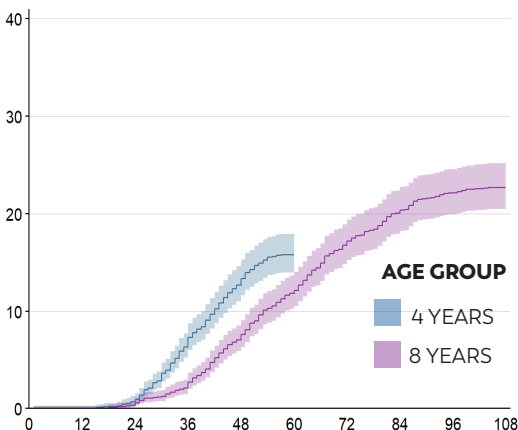
**SITE TRACKING AREA**

## 1 in 43

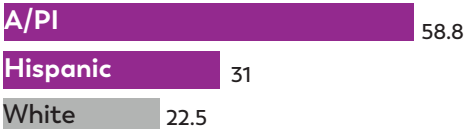
Or **2.4%** of 8-year-old children identified with ASD by AR-ADDM in 2020.



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



Among 8-year-olds, Asian/Pacific Islander (A/PI) and Hispanic children were 2.6 times as likely and children were 1.4 times as likely to be identified with ASD as White children.

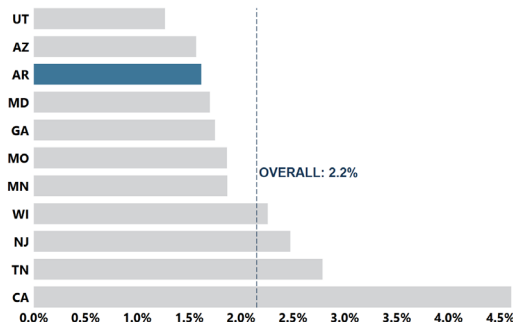


Values indicate prevalence per 1,000 children. No significant differences in ASD prevalence were found between White and Black 8-year-olds.

Among 4-year-olds, Black children were 1.6 times as likely to be identified with ASD as White children.



About 1 in 62 or 1.6% of 4-year-old children were identified with ASD by AR-ADDM in 2020.



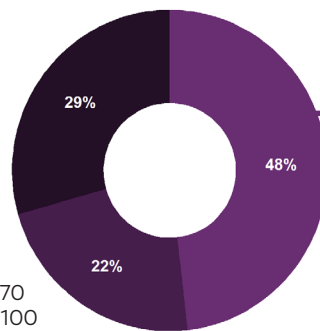
This percentage is lower than the overall percentage identified with ASD (2.2%) in all communities where CDC tracked ASD among 4-year-olds in 2020.

**IQ data available for 91%** of 8-year-old children identified with ASD by AR-ADDM

### IQ SCORE\*

- ≤ 70
- 71 - 85
- > 85

IQ = Intelligence Quotient  
Intellectual disability = IQ ≤ 70  
\*Percentages may not total 100 due to rounding



**48%** had Intellectual Disability

### By 48 months

Children who were age 4 years were 1.8 times as likely to be identified with ASD by 48 months of age as children who were age 8 years.

About 88% of 4-year-old children identified with ASD received a comprehensive developmental evaluation by 3 years of age.



## What are the key take-away messages from Arkansas data?

- More children were identified with ASD in 2020 than in previous AR-ADDM and ADDM Network data.
- Children who were age 4 years in 2020 were more likely to be identified with ASD by 48 months of age than children who were age 8 years, indicating improvements in early identification of ASD.

## How can this information be useful?

AR-ADDM's latest findings can be used to

- Promote early identification of ASD.
- Plan for ASD services and training.
- Guide future ASD research
- Inform policies promoting improved outcomes in health care and education for individuals with ASD.

Partners in Arkansas might consider different ways to continue to lower the age of first evaluation and diagnosis by community providers.

## How and where was this information collected?

AR-ADDM 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 one of 21 counties in central Arkansas in 2020.

### 8-year-old children in tracking area: 15,432 4-year-old children in tracking area: 15,387

- |                                |                                |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| • 61% White                    | • 60% White                    |
| • 24% Black                    | • 24% Black                    |
| • 9% Hispanic                  | • 10% Hispanic                 |
| • 1% Asian or Pacific Islander | • 1% Asian or Pacific Islander |
| • 4% Multiracial               | • 5% Multiracial               |

## What else does AR-ADDM do besides provide estimates of ASD?

AR-ADDM collaborates with the Arkansas Department of Health and investigators from the University of Arkansas for Medical Services (UAMS) to continue tracking the number and characteristics of 8-year-olds and 4-year-olds with ASD, as well as identifying characteristics of 16-year-olds with ASD.

In addition, AR-ADDM partners with UAMS Department of Pediatrics and Arkansas Children's Hospital to provide training to physicians and staff using AR-ADDM's individualized presentations on the number and characteristics of children with ASD. AR-ADDM also collaborates with the Arkansas Department of Education to conduct analyses and present findings to Special Education staff across the state. AR-ADDM strives to work together with community partners to improve early identification and reduce disparities among children with ASD and other developmental disabilities.

*"I've taught language difficulties and disorders to undergraduate and graduate students who are interested in speech language pathology. Autism Spectrum Disorder is one of the major areas I cover in class. I start my class with the ADDM report that provides reliable and valuable information on ASD and other developmental disabilities. As a clinician, professor, and researcher, I appreciate what ADDM has been doing for our community."*

**SUNJUNG KIM THAO, Ph.D., CCC-SLP,**  
University of Central Arkansas Department of Communication Sciences and Disorders

## Resources

### GET RESOURCES AND CONNECT FAMILIES TO SERVICES AND SUPPORT IN ARKANSAS

#### FIRST CONNECTIONS

Services for children under the age of 3 years with developmental delays or disabilities

1-800-643-8258

<https://dhs.arkansas.gov/dds/firstconnectionsweb/#fc-home>

#### DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION'S SPECIAL EDUCATION UNIT

Special education services for school-aged children with disabilities

1-800-482-8437

<https://dese.ade.arkansas.gov/Offices/special-education>

#### ARKANSAS AUTISM RESOURCE AND OUTREACH CENTER

Support, education, and advocacy for families of individuals with ASD

1-800-342-2923 | [aaroc.org](http://aaroc.org)

#### UAMS DENNIS DEVELOPMENTAL CENTER

Diagnostic and other services for children with developmental delays and other disabilities

501-364-1830

<https://medicine.uams.edu/pediatrics/specialties/programs/dennis-developmental-center>

#### ARKANSAS AUTISM PARTNERSHIP MEDICAID WAIVER PROGRAM

Provides intensive, evidence-based intervention for 20-30 hours/week in the homes of young children with autism who meet eligibility criteria

<https://support.org/programs/arkansas-autism-partnership/>

#### HEALTHY CHILD CARE ARKANSAS

Training for child care providers in topics related to the overall well-being of children

<https://www.healthychildcarear.org/>

#### COMMUNITY-BASED AUTISM LIAISON AND TREATMENT (COBALT) PROJECT

Comprehensive diagnostic assessments, early intervention services, and family support

<https://www.cobaltar.org/about>

#### CDC'S LEARN THE SIGNS. ACT EARLY.

**Amanda Fender**, Arkansas' Act Early Ambassador

<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/ambassadors-list.html>

#### CONNECT WITH AR-ADDM

Allison Edwards Hudson

Research Program Manager

University of Arkansas for Medical Sciences,  
Developmental Pediatrics- Little Rock, AR

[aeHUDSON@uams.edu](mailto:aeHUDSON@uams.edu)

<https://pediatrics.uams.edu/ar-addm>