Wisconsin is currently one of 13 states funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, as part of the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network, to count the number of 8-year-old children with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other selected developmental disabilities. In 2003, the Wisconsin Surveillance of Autism and other Developmental Disabilities System (WISADDS) was established as an ADDM Network site in collaboration between the Wisconsin Department of Health Services and investigators from the Waisman Center and Department of Population Health Sciences at University of Wisconsin-Madison. WISADDS is currently conducting surveillance for ASD and cerebral palsy.

What part of Wisconsin is included in the study?
10 counties of southeastern Wisconsin: Kenosha, Racine, Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Waukesha, Jefferson, Rock, Dane, Green and Walworth

2006 Study Year
Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5810a1.htm
Population of 8-Year-Old Children in Study Area, 2006
34,058 (49% of all 8-year-olds in WI)
65.7% White, Non-Hispanic
18.1% Black, Non-Hispanic
12.2% Hispanic
0.5% American Indian/Alaska Native
3.5% Asian/Pacific Islander
15.0% of children in special education

Results
Number of 8-year-old children identified with an ASD: 257
Total prevalence of ASD: 7.6 per 1,000 or 1 per 132 children
Sex
Boys: 12.7 per 1,000
Girls: 2.3 per 1,000
Race/Ethnicity
White, non-Hispanic: 8.5 per 1,000
Black, non-Hispanic: 3.6 per 1,000
Hispanic: 1.7 per 1,000
Asian/Pacific Islander: 5.8 per 1,000
Initial Diagnosis
Median Age of ASD diagnosis 4 years, 5 months

2002 Study Year
Available at: http://www.cdc.gov/mmwr/preview/mmwrhtml/ss5601a2.htm
Results
Number of 8-year-old children identified with an ASD: 181
Total prevalence of ASD: 5.2 per 1,000 or 1 per 191 children

The estimated prevalence of ASD identified among children aged 8 years increased 46% from 2002 to 2006 in Wisconsin, with the increase occurring among males. The reason for this increase, whether due to better detection and awareness or increase in the risk of autism, is unclear. There was little change in the age of initial ASD diagnosis between 2002 and 2006. Because of the benefits of early intervention, identification of an ASD at earlier ages is essential to ensure that children receive optimal early intervention services.

Questions? Please contact WISADDS Project Director, Dr. Maureen Durkin at (608) 263-2128, or WISADDS Project Coordinator, Carrie Arneson, at (608) 263-8222 or clarneso@wisc.edu.