

## Healthy People 2010 Operational Definition

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### **16-14. Reduce the occurrence of developmental disabilities.**

#### **16-14c. Reduce the age at earliest identification of Autism Spectrum Disorder.**

<b>National Data Source</b>	Metropolitan Atlanta Developmental Disabilities Surveillance Program (MADDSP), CDC, NCBDDD.
<b>State Data Source</b>	State surveillance systems.
<b>Healthy People 2000 Objective</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Changes since the 2000 Publication</b>	Revised text (see Comments). Revised baseline (see Comments). Revised target (see Comments).
<b>Measure</b>	Median age in months.
<b>Baseline (Year)</b>	69 (1996) (metropolitan Atlanta, GA)
<b>Target</b>	66
<b>Target-Setting Method</b>	5 percent improvement.  For a discussion of target-setting methods, see Part A, section 4.
<b>Numerator</b>	Median age, in months, at first identification of autism spectrum disorder.
<b>Denominator</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Population Targeted</b>	Resident population selected areas—see Comments).
<b>Questions Used to Obtain the National Baseline Data</b>	Not applicable.
<b>Expected Periodicity</b>	Annual.
<b>Comments</b>	Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) are defined as a constellation of behaviors indicating social, communicative, and behavioral impairment or abnormalities. The essential features of ASD are (a) impaired reciprocal social interactions, (b) delayed

or unusual communication styles, and (c) restricted or repetitive behavior patterns.

A child is included as a confirmed case of ASD if he or she displays behaviors (as described by a qualified professional) consistent with the Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders - Fourth Edition (DSM-IV) diagnostic criteria for Autistic Disorder, Pervasive Developmental Disorder-Not Otherwise Specified (including Atypical Autism), or Asperger's Disorder. A qualified professional is defined as an educational, psychological or medical professional with specialized training in the observation of children with developmental disabilities (e.g., special education teacher, clinical / developmental / school psychologist, speech/language pathologist, learning specialist, social worker, developmental pediatrician, child psychiatrist, pediatric neurologist). Behavioral descriptions are reviewed by autism experts using a coding scheme based on DSM-IV criteria to determine autism case status.

Metropolitan Atlanta, Georgia, consists of a five-county area including Clayton, Cobb, DeKalb, Fulton, and Gwinnett counties.

A definition of autism spectrum disorder and a description of MADDSP has been published by CDC.<sup>1</sup>

This subobjective moved from developmental to measurable in May 2004, when the subobjective wording was revised to measure the age at earliest identification of autism spectrum disorder.

The original text was revised as a result of a change in methodology. Based on new research and science documenting the benefits of early identification and intervention for children with autism, this revision produced an important and more easily measurable objective.

The original baseline of 50 months among children aged 8 years was revised to 69 months as a result of changes in methodology. The target was proportionally adjusted from 48 months among children aged 8 years to 66 months to reflect the revised baseline using the original target-setting

method.

See Appendix A for focus area contact information.

## References

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1. Yeargin-Allsopp M., Rice, C., Karapurkar, T., et al. Prevalence of autism in a US metropolitan area. *Journal of the American Medical Association*, 2003. 289: 49-55.