

CDC study says children with autism could be diagnosed earlier

Written by

Monday, 30 December 2013 16:53



Washington, DC – The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) recently released [new project findings](#) on the prevalence rate of 1 in 32 Somali children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) in Minneapolis. While the report says that Somali children with ASD are more likely to have cognitive disabilities and more significant disabilities than all other racial groups, the data say that the rate of autism in the Somali population is about the same as in the white population (1 in 32 vs. 1 in 36). The report also states that children who have autism aren't identified as early as they could be.

"This new data from the CDC indicate potentially higher rates of autism spectrum disorders in distinct populations than the national numbers, clearly show that more research is needed to better understand autism, and again makes the case that additional funds must be made available for services and supports for children with autism and their families.

"The CDC continues to do important work in this area, shining a bright light on what families associated with The Arc and our chapters experience everyday – autism spectrum disorders touch so many people, of all cultures and backgrounds, and we must do more to support them to achieve their goals and to foster an inclusive society. The Arc is committed to families of all backgrounds in our efforts to serve and support people with disabilities, through our network of 700 chapters across the country," said Peter Berns, CEO of The Arc.

"About a third of individuals and families using advocacy services from The Arc Greater Twin Cities are from multicultural families," said Kim Keprios, The Arc Greater Twin Cities' chief executive officer. "We have been working hard to make connections in the Somali community because we know Somali children who have autism are not being diagnosed as early as they could be and therefore not getting critical services. Anyone who might benefit from The Arc's assistance in getting a diagnosis, receiving help with special education issues and more, is encouraged to call us at 952-920-0855 or visit www.arcgreatertwincities.org."

"These data provide further evidence of the need for organizations like The Arc to continue advocating for policies and funding to ensure the needs of children with ASD and their families are being met," said Steve Larson, senior policy director for The Arc Minnesota, the state office of The Arc in Minnesota. "We were pleased that state elected officials approved new funding in 2013 to help children with ASD improve their communication skills and increase their inclusion in their communities, and we strongly supported passage of legislation this year requiring health insurance plans to cover needed behavior therapies for these children. We will continue to work

CDC study says children with autism could be diagnosed earlier

Written by

Monday, 30 December 2013 16:53

to make further progress in serving all Minnesotans diagnosed with ASD."

Amy Hewitt, director of the University of Minnesota Research and Training Center on Community Living and primary investigator on the project, is also a member of the board of directors of both The Arc Minnesota and The Arc Greater Twin Cities.

The Arc advocates for and serves people with I/DD, including Down syndrome, autism, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders, cerebral palsy and other diagnoses. The Arc has a network of 700 chapters across the country promoting and protecting the human rights of people with I/DD and actively supporting their full inclusion and participation in the community throughout their lifetimes and without regard to diagnosis.