



Prevalence of Autism Now 1 in 150, According to New CDC Report

WASHINGTON, DC (February 8, 2007) -- This morning, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) released, through its Morbidity and Mortality Weekly Report (MMWR), the latest revised prevalence figures for autism. The report indicates that the prevalence of autism is now 1 in 150, up from the 1 in 166 figure reported by the CDC in January, 2004.

Today's report states, "Findings from this first U.S. multi-site collaborative study to monitor ASD prevalence demonstrated consistency across the majority of sites, with prevalence statistically significantly ($p < 0.001$) higher in New Jersey. Average ASD prevalence across all six sites was 6.7 per 1,000 children aged 8 years. These results indicate that ASDs are more common than was believed previously."

Speaking at a Capitol Hill briefing about the new data, Dr. Gary Goldstein, Autism Speaks' Scientific Advisory Committee Chair and President of the Kennedy Krieger Institute, said, "These new numbers provide a much more accurate picture of a disorder that has undoubtedly become a major national health crisis. Our dedication to finding critical answers about autism -- potential causes, better treatments and, hopefully, a cure -- must become that much more urgent today."

These new prevalence estimates are the first to come from multiple sites utilizing the same methodology for the same points in time. (Previous prevalence estimates have been from single sites and have relied on differing methodologies). According to the CDC, these data represent the most comprehensive effort to obtain accurate prevalence figures for Autism Spectrum Disorders to date, and offer important information about the prevalence of these conditions in multiple parts of the U.S.

As part of this study, six ADDM sites evaluated the prevalence of ASDs for children who were eight years old in 2000 (born in 1992): Arizona, Georgia, Maryland, New Jersey, South Carolina and West Virginia.

An additional eight sites determined ASD prevalence for children who were eight in 2002 (born in 1994): Alabama, Arkansas, Colorado, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Utah and Wisconsin.