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on
Autism & Related Disorders



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Autism Statistics & Quick Facts

Quick Overview of Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD)

- This is a brain-based problem characterized by problems in : language/communication; unusual movements/behaviors; poor/absent social interactions.
- There is no known cause for autism, but it is generally accepted that it is caused by abnormalities in the brain with a link to genetics.
- Autism is the fastest growing developmental disorder in the country with a 10 to 17 percent annual growth.
- In 2005, children with autism made up 3 percent of the more than 6 million children in the United States who received services through special education programs.
- An average family will spend about \$40,000 to \$70,000 a year in resources and services for a child with autism.
- The divorce rate among couples with children with autism is estimated to be as high as 80 percent.
- Forty to 60 percent of people with autism do not exhibit some form of mental retardation.
- Boys are 4 times more likely than girls to have autism
- There is no medical detection, treatment, or cure for autism

National Statistics:

- Autism is now the **fastest growing** disability in the State and in the nation.
- There are now **over 1.8 million** cases of autism in the U.S.
- There is one new case of autism diagnosed **every 20 minutes**.
- There are **over 24,000 new cases** diagnosed in the U.S. per year
- Over 4 million Americans will develop autism in the next decade
- It costs about **\$3.2 million** for the lifetime care of an autistic person.
- Autism care costs **\$35 billion** per year to the U.S.



- The total national economic impact of autism has been estimated as more than **\$90 billion** annually and expected to more than double in the next decade.
- Autism receives **less than 5% of the research** funding of many less prevalent childhood diseases

California Statistics:

- California's autism caseload has increased by **634%** from 1987 to the end of 2002 while there has been only a slight increases in incidence of the other disabilities (mental retardation, cerebral palsy, and epilepsy.)
- The number of individuals with autism served by the Dept. of Developmental Services (DDS) more than **doubled** in only 4 years (1998-2002) and over **3,000 new cases** continue to be added annually.
- Over **two-thirds of all new cases** entering DDS are autistic individuals.
- Approximately 77% of all autistic individuals are under the age of 18.

K-12 Education Statistics:

- There has been over a **one thousand percent increase** in the number of students with autism enrolled in K-12 education during the past 12 years. During this time the incidences of other developmental disabilities have remained relatively constant.
- Nearly every part of California has seen a **doubling** of the incidence of students with autism in K-12 over the past 4 years alone.
- Autism is now the most common cause of fair hearings and litigation:
 - In 2003-04 the Las Virgenes USD spent almost **\$900,000 in legal fees**.
 - In Long Beach USD, **19 out of 45** special education due process cases involved students with autism costing the district \$186,130 in legal fees.
 - The Ojai Unified School District in Ventura County, a small district with 40 students with autism in a total student population of 3,800 students, spent **\$400,000** in 2004-05 on autism-related legal costs that did not factor in administrative time.

Statistics for Adults with ASD

- 61% of adults with autism rely on their families for financial support
- 40% live at home with their parents.
- 82% say that with more support they would be less isolated.
- 67% have experienced anxiety and 55% depression because of a lack of support.
- 60% of parents say a lack of timely support has resulted in their son or daughter having higher support needs in the long term.