

Autism Diagnosis Education Project

Inspiring Change for Early Diagnosis of Autism Spectrum Disorder



2018

Ohio's Autism Diagnosis Education Project's (ADEP) primary goals are to decrease the amount of wait-time a family experiences while seeking an evaluation for autism spectrum disorder (ASD), lower the average age of diagnosis of ASD, and equip local early childhood practitioners to better detect and diagnose autism. By creating unique community-based diagnostic partnerships, families can receive an evaluation for their child through local providers, cutting down on the amount of time, money and effort spent traveling to a larger developmental clinic, while still receiving a gold-standard, multi-disciplinary evaluation. In collaboration with the Ohio Early Intervention (EI) system of Part C providers and local medical partners, and under the leadership of the Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities (DODD), ADEP is significantly ahead of national trends for the average age of diagnosis and lag time.

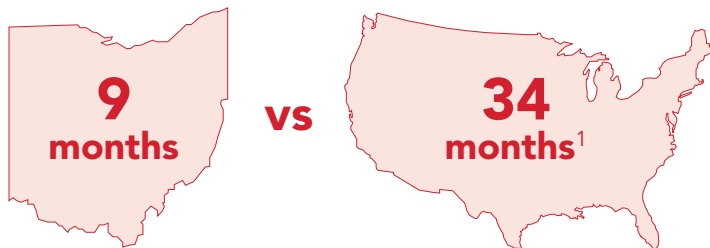
"It is through ADEP that the trajectory of a child and family's life can be forever changed for the better."

– John Martin

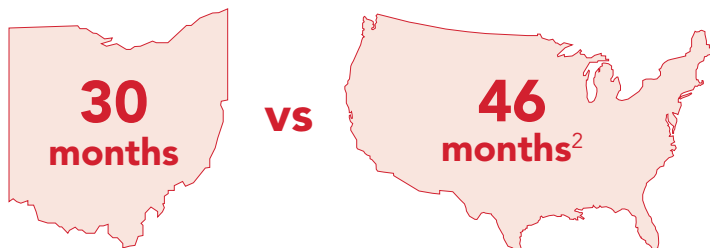
Director, Ohio Department of Developmental Disabilities

ADEP vs. Nation

Wait time from parents' first concern to diagnosis



Average age of diagnosis



By the Numbers

1,078 children evaluated, 2013-2018

234 participating Early Intervention providers*

39 counties represented

30 months, average age of diagnosis

28 participating medical partners*

9 months, lag time from family concern to diagnosis

**current total at time of publication*



Project Outcomes

ADEP focuses on three measurable outcomes, revolving around wait time and age of diagnosis:

1. Decrease the wait time from initial family concern to diagnosis to less than 9 months
2. Decrease the wait time from initial contact with Ohio Early Intervention, to diagnosis to within 90 days
3. Reduce the age at which a child is diagnosed to 30 months

Meeting these goals are a priority for diagnostic partnerships, and they have thus far, achieved two of the three goals.

	Baseline ³	Target Goal	January 2013 – May 2018
Time from initial family concern to diagnosis	22 months	< 9 months	9 months
Time from initial contact with Help Me Grow to diagnosis	n/a	< 3 months	6 months
Age at diagnosis	62 months	≤ 30 months	30 months

Challenges and Opportunities for the Future

Since the advent of ADEP, the project has seen measurable and tangible successes; but those successes have not been without challenges and obstacles to overcome.

The most common challenges to the project are as follows:

- Decreasing the time from initial contact with Ohio Early Intervention to diagnosis
- Recruiting, maintaining and engaging medical partners
- Accounting for turnover of early intervention service providers
- Strategically navigating the complexity of relationships among local agencies and providers
- Drifting from core concepts and principles of the model by individual teams

However, with those challenges come opportunities for growth, including:

- Providing additional technical assistance for teams, emphasizing quality improvement
- Offering ongoing reliability training for diagnostic and assessment tools, such as the ADOS-2
- Coaching and guiding teams in the recruitment and support of additional medical partners
- Addressing and providing guidance on key concepts of fidelity

Project Leadership

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For additional information, please visit www.ocali.org/project/adep or email courtney_yantes@ocali.org.

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Notes

1. Oswald, D. P., PhD. et al. (2017). Parental Report of the Diagnostic Process and Outcome: ASD Compared with Other Developmental Disabilities. Focus on Autism and Other Disabilities, 2(32). doi:10.1177/1088357615587500.
2. <https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/data.html>
3. 2008, baseline data during pilot study, based on parent report