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CDC: AUTISM RATES RISING ACROSS USA, NEW JERSEY FAR HIGHER THAN OTHER STATES!

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) has released its first study of the number of 8-year-old children diagnosed with autism in selected areas of 14 states across the country, and the numbers are disturbingly higher than expected.

The report includes statistics gathered in 2000 and 2002 covering nearly 600,000 8-year-old children, or nearly 15% of all 8-year-olds in the country. The report shows overall autism prevalence averaging 6.6 per 1000 children (1 in 150), although the statistics varied widely from area to area. For example, in Alabama it was 3.3 per 1000, in Georgia and Utah around 7.5 per 1000, and in New Jersey, the worst state, it was 9.9 out of 1000 8-year-olds with some form of autism.

Autism strikes roughly three times as many boys as girls, and seems to have no preference for white, black or Hispanic children. New cases diagnosed nationally have been estimated at 67 every day, with an estimated cost to society of about \$35 billion a year.

An earlier survey in the 1980s by UCLA and the University of Utah found about one child in every 2500 in Utah with autism, much lower than the new statistics of 7.5 per 1000.

Kim Moody, former director of the Autism Society of Utah, told the *Salt Lake City Standard-Examiner* that the number of children diagnosed in the state with autism has “steadily increased” since the 1980s.

Psychiatrists and psychologists in the field generally claim that the increased prevalence is due to better diagnosis. But even taking that into account, Moody told the newspaper, there is still “a huge increase” in the overall number of kids diagnosed with autism. “If this were some other type of disease, they would call this an epidemic,” Moody said.

The Children’s Health Act of 2000 authorized CDC to create the Autism and Developmental Disabilities Monitoring (ADDM) Network. Since the network’s inception, CDC has funded programs in 16 sites covering 17 states—Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, California, Colorado, Delaware, Florida, Georgia, Illinois, Maryland, Missouri, New Jersey, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Utah, West Virginia, and Wisconsin.

Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) are considered by the medical profession to be life-long developmental disabilities. However, some alternative approaches, including nutritional and other therapies, have had success with reversing the symptoms of autism.