



TRIAD

THE AUTISM INSTITUTE AT THE VANDERBILT KENNEDY CENTER

WHAT IS TRIAD?

TRIAD is an institute whose goal is to improve assessment and treatment services for children with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and their families, while advancing knowledge and training.

TRIAD programs address community needs for cutting-edge information, high-quality support, training, and innovative treatments for children with ASD. Learn more at triad.vumc.org.

TRIAD is a program of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development and is affiliated with its University Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities. TRIAD also partners with the Division of Developmental Medicine in Vanderbilt University Medical Center's (VUMC) Department of Pediatrics, and the Vanderbilt Consortium LEND (Leadership Education in Neurodevelopmental Disabilities).

WHAT IS AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDER?

ASD is a complex brain-based condition that affects many areas of development, including social interaction, verbal and nonverbal communication, play, behavior, and interests. Symptoms show up early in life, usually before 3 years of age.

SERVICES AND RESOURCES FOR FAMILIES

DIAGNOSTIC AND EVALUATION SERVICES

Diagnostic evaluations for children whose parents or doctors may think their child has ASD are conducted in the Division of Development Medicine (DDM). Families can ask their pediatrician for a referral. A referral form (on DDM website) must be completed before scheduling an appointment.

FAMILIES FIRST WORKSHOPS

TRIAD offers many workshops during the year for parents of young children with ASD. Topics change monthly but tend to focus on these areas:

- Learning how to boost social and communication skills
- Developing ways to reduce challenging behavior
- Increasing child's ability to take part in family activities

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT SERVICES

TRIAD offers many kinds of training opportunities for school personnel, parents, and community providers, such as nurses, pediatricians, and psychologists.

Professional development opportunities cover topics related to evidence-based behavioral and educational interventions for children and youth with ASD. These opportunities range from brief online modules to multiday interactive workshops presented throughout the academic year. Many are presented at no cost to participants through sponsorship by the Tennessee Department of Education. TRIAD's team also can develop fee-based events and/or resources at the request of school systems or community agencies to meet the training needs of specific audiences.

BEHAVIORAL AND EDUCATIONAL CONSULTATION

TRIAD offers child and program-specific educational consultations at the request of schools and school districts. Collaborative child-focused consultations are available to school personnel who have questions or concerns





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about the academic and behavioral performance of individual students. Program consultations are available to help teachers and other school personnel create and implement individualized plans for students with ASD, such as a social skills curriculum or a coordinated plan for using positive behavior supports.

TRIAD RESEARCH

Research programs and partnerships through TRIAD as well as other parts of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center, Vanderbilt University, and VUMC investigate the causes and treatment of ASD. Studies cover a broad range of topics, including:

- Diagnosis
- Early intervention
- Identification of genetic and core behavioral features
- Course and treatment of common medical issues, including sleep disorders
- Developing technological treatment tools
- Transition from high school and vocational preparation
- Development of siblings of children with ASD
- Promoting the health and well-being of parents who have children with ASD.

Research studies may include services for families. Although specific services and availability change over time, examples include diagnostic testing or re-evaluation, treatment opportunities, or monitoring the development of younger siblings.

For information on studies visit the StudyFinder website (vkc.vumc.org/studyfinder/), and select "autism spectrum disorder."

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

TRIAD partners with community cultural and civic organizations to work together to promote welcoming community spaces where individuals with autism and their families can take part. Network activities include staff trainings to increase awareness, the development of research-based supports to increase accessibility for families, and modified performances and activities.

OTHER VANDERBILT AUTISM RESOURCES

VANDERBILT ACNet

VUMC is a field site within the Autism Care Network (ACNet) supported by Autism Speaks. The ACNet is a consortium of medical centers in North America focused on quality improvement, along with generation of a research registry used to identify evidence-based standards of medical care for children and adolescents with ASD.

ASD INFORMATION AND REFERRAL

Tennessee Disability Pathfinder provides free information, referral sources, and help with navigating services via phone, email, and website. Assistance is available to individuals of all ages, all types of disabilities, and all languages spoken. Local (615) 322-8529, (800) 640-4636; website TNPathfinder.org; email tnpathfinder@vumc.org.

CONTACT

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