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# TRIAD

Treatment and Research Institute  
for Autism Spectrum Disorders



## WHAT IS AUTISM?

Autism is a neurodevelopmental disorder that typically appears during the first 3 years of life. Autism is considered a spectrum disorder because the characteristics can be present in different combinations and at different levels of severity from person to person. Autism affects approximately 1 out of every 150 individuals.

Children with autism demonstrate characteristics in three areas:

- Difficulty forming social relationships
- Impaired understanding and use of language
- Restricted patterns of activities and interests

## CONTACT:

For questions about diagnostic, medical, early intervention, educational, and behavioral resources at Vanderbilt and in the community:

Vanderbilt Autism Clinic  
Local: 615-322-7565  
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Email: autismclinic@vanderbilt.edu

For questions about parent or professional training and consultation:

TRIAD Outreach Office  
Phone: 615-936-1705  
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VANDERBILT  
KENNEDY CENTER

## WHAT IS TRIAD?

TRIAD provides specialized services for children with autism spectrum disorders and their families.

TRIAD has a threefold mission to:

1. Offer a broad range of services to children and families in our community.
2. Provide exemplary training to parents, service providers, and future professionals.
3. Conduct state-of-the-art research to increase our understanding of the development and treatment of autism and related disorders.

TRIAD is a program of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Research on Human Development and the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt. TRIAD is a partner of the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center for Excellence in Developmental Disabilities.



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## SERVICES FOR FAMILIES

### Diagnostic and Evaluation Services

TRIAD provides specialized diagnostic consultation, assessment and follow-up consultation services for children who have or are suspected of having an autism spectrum disorder. TRIAD clinics are staffed by licensed psychologists, autism consultants, and trainees from various health disciplines at Vanderbilt. Developmental screening for infant siblings of children with autism is also available.

### The Ann and Monroe Carell Jr. Families First Program

The **Families First Program** is a free workshop series for parents of children ages 2-5 diagnosed with an autism spectrum disorder. The program features talks by leading clinicians, researchers, and advocates from Vanderbilt and the surrounding community. Workshop topics are designed to empower parents by providing easy-to-implement strategies for improving their children's interactions, communication, and behavior during everyday routines.

### Individualized Family Consultation Program

The **Individualized Family Consultation Program (IFC)** is designed to assist families in developing individualized goals for their child while learning a variety of teaching strategies to achieve these goals. TRIAD's behavioral consultants teach parents how to use evidence-based strategies to increase their child's social and communication skills, improve their child's ability to participate in everyday family routines, and anticipate and prevent challenging behaviors.

### TRIAD Social Skills Summer Camp

TRIAD camp is designed to foster the development of social interaction skills for children, adolescents, and young adults with autism spectrum disorders. Campers with autism and their typically developing peers participate side-by-side in specially designed activities that provide a fun and enriching summer experience. Campers range in age from 7 to 21 years and must have language and reading skills.

## PROFESSIONAL TRAINING AND CONSULTATION

### School Consultation Services

**Collaborative Child-Focused Consultations** are available to school personnel who have questions or concerns about the academic and behavioral performance of individual students with autism. **Program Consultations** are available to assist teachers and other school personnel in developing and implementing specialized programs for students with autism, such as implementing a social skills curriculum or developing a coordinated plan for positive behavior supports throughout the day.

### TRIAD Teacher Training (TTT)

TRIAD offers a variety of training opportunities for school personnel, including: basic and advanced level academies for principals and assistant principals; regional trainings for school personnel, parents and the community; basic and advanced level hands-on workshops for teachers and related service providers; and an autism team partnership program that includes year-long mentoring from a TRIAD consultant. Several trainings include a follow-up site visit at the team or participant's school.



### TRIAD Workshops

A variety of workshops for pediatricians, psychologists, educators, and other community professionals are offered throughout the year. These workshops focus on specific topics related to state-of-the-art behavioral and educational interventions for children with autism spectrum disorders. Topics include: Autism 101, Creating and Using Visual Supports, Integrating Different Methodologies, Peer Training, Behavior Management, and Toilet Training.

### STAT Workshops

The Screening Tool for Autism in Toddlers (STAT) is an interactive, play-based screening tool that consists of 12 activities in the areas of play, imitation, and communication. In addition to providing information about autism risk, children's performance on the STAT can be used to develop intervention goals in core developmental areas. STAT training workshops are available to service providers working in community settings with young children.



## COMMUNITY RESOURCES

The **Vanderbilt Autism Clinic (VAC)** represents a collaboration between the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center and Vanderbilt Medical Center that provides information about a broad range of clinical and research programs at Vanderbilt and in the community. Families, caregivers, clinicians, educators, and others can find answers to their questions about diagnostic, medical, early intervention, educational, and behavioral resources.

The **Autism Treatment Network (ATN)** is a consortium of medical centers providing clinical services and generating a research registry that will be used to identify evidence-based standards of medical care for children with autism. Clinical disciplines include specialists in pediatrics, gastroenterology, genetics/metabolics, psychiatry, neurology, and sleep.

### Research

TRIAD-directed research programs and partnerships examine the causes and treatment of autism spectrum disorders. **Specific research projects** address the early screening, diagnosis, and treatment of autism, including: the social and communicative development of infant siblings of children with ASD; the identification of genetic and neurobehavioral markers of ASD; sleep disturbance in children with ASD; sensory and perceptual processes in ASD; neural correlates of restricted behaviors and interests; and the health and well-being of parents with children with ASD. In addition, TRIAD researchers participate in several national and international **research networks**: the **Simons Simplex Collection**, the **Baby Siblings Research Consortium**, and the **Toddler Treatment Network**.

To find more information about TRIAD research opportunities, visit <http://triad.vanderbilt.edu> or <http://kc.vanderbilt.edu/studyfinder>