

Choosing with Confidence.

Selecting a school for a child with autism is a tremendous responsibility. It is a decision that will have a profound and long-lasting impact on that child's life.

How can you make the best possible choice with confidence? What should you look for as you evaluate and compare programs?

We invite you to learn more about our organization and its services. You will discover what truly sets May Institute apart as a national leader in the field and a renowned provider of exceptional educational programs for children and adolescents with autism.





Rating the Indicators of Excellence

To assist you as you make this decision, we have identified some important indicators of excellence that will help you choose the highest quality organization and school program. You can use this checklist to help gather information and compare other programs to May Institute programs.

It is our hope that this information will give you confidence that you are choosing the best possible educational environment for a child with autism.

Indicators of Excellence	May Centers for Child Development	Other Programs
Experience	✓	
Leadership and vision	✓	
Clinical expertise	✓	
Commitment to evidence-based practice	✓	
National honors	✓	
External accreditation	✓	
Emphasis on training	✓	
Quality assurance/family satisfaction	✓	
Affiliations and partnerships	✓	
Commitment to research and dissemination	✓	
Professional advisory board	✓	
System of peer review	✓	



Indicators of Excellence — Choosing a Quality School Program

What to look for –	What May Institute offers –
<p>Experience. . . Look for a well-established, research-based program with a proven history of success.</p>	<p>May Institute founded one of the first autism schools in the country. We have more than 55 years of experience providing the highest quality services for children, adolescents, and adults with autism and developmental disabilities, brain injury, mental illness, and behavioral healthcare needs.</p>
<p>Leadership and Vision. . . The highest quality programs are led by nationally recognized leaders whose vision for the future and focus on exceptional care ensure the organization’s continued growth and success.</p>	<p>President and CEO Walter P. Christian, Ph.D., ABPP, ABPP, has led May Institute for more than 32 years. During that time, the Institute has earned an international reputation for providing outstanding services to individuals with special needs. Dr. Christian is a licensed psychologist and is board certified in behavior therapy and behavioral psychology. He received the 2008 lifetime achievement award as a Champion in Healthcare from the <i>Boston Business Journal</i>. Dr. Christian’s vision is shared by a senior management team with extremely strong clinical and professional credentials and backgrounds. Dr. Christian is one of only 63 distinguished behavior analysis Fellows worldwide.</p>
<p><i>“Our employees work tirelessly to provide clinical expertise alongside exceptionally caring and compassionate support to each and every individual in their care.”</i></p> <p>—Walter P. Christian, Ph.D., ABPP, President and CEO</p>	
<p>Clinical Expertise. . . In addition to providing doctoral-level senior leadership, exceptional programs employ Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs) to oversee the development of each child’s individual education and treatment plans.</p>	<p>Our staff includes more than 40 licensed and credentialed doctoral-level professionals, and more than 70 behavior analysts with BCBA and BCaBA certification. With our master’s-level staff, this represents one of the country’s largest concentrations of on-site clinicians with expertise in autism and other developmental disabilities, special education, and applied behavior analysis (ABA).</p>



What to look for –

Commitment to Evidence-Based Practice. . . . Look for a program that uses treatment procedures and methods with a documented history of effectiveness—those that have been very well researched and shown to work.

What May Institute offers –

Part of what sets us apart from other organizations is our uncompromising commitment to professionalism and excellence. Our work is grounded in evidence-based practice, and we continually review and measure our results. Our programs are based on applied behavior analysis (ABA), which has been identified by hundreds of scientific studies as the most effective method to teach children and adolescents with autism.

“May Institute’s services are state-of-the-art. Their policies support the continuous education of personnel and adherence to choosing treatment methods on the basis of scientific evidence. Slowly the rest of the field is moving in the same direction.”

—Beth Sulzer-Azaroff, Ph.D., BCBA
 President, Browns Group
 Member, May Institute Advisory Board



National Awards. . . . National honors recognize an organization’s depth of expertise and outstanding contributions to the field. Distinguished awards are an external confirmation of internal excellence, and attest to national leadership and stature.

May Institute is the only nonprofit human services organization in the country to be honored by the two most prestigious national awards in the field. We received the 2007 Award for Enduring Programmatic Contributions in Behavior Analysis from the Society for the Advancement of Behavior Analysis. In 2005, we received the Outstanding Training Program Award from the Association for Behavioral and Cognitive Therapies.

External Accreditation. . . . External accreditation is an objective, independent measure of quality. Accreditation from the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF) confirms that an organization has a proven record of quality, measurability, accountability, and positive results.

We continuously seek and receive the highest level of program accreditation. All May Centers for Child Development have earned a three-year accreditation from CARF, the highest level awarded. All of May Institute’s programs that have been through the CARF accreditation process have earned three-year accreditation. This constitutes one of the largest and most comprehensive accreditations CARF has ever awarded to a network of behavioral programs.



What to look for –	What May Institute offers –
<p>Emphasis on Training. . . . Professional development and training programs support and strengthen a service-driven organization.</p>	<p>Our highly skilled staff participate in an ongoing system of comprehensive training and professional development. As an organization accredited by the American Psychological Association, we provide placements for the best pre- and post-doctoral interns in the country. Our intensive training programs extend to all our staff, ensuring a continuity of consistent, highly effective care.</p>
<p>Quality Assurance/Family Satisfaction. . . . An integrated feedback mechanism is one indication that an organization is hearing and responding to the needs of the students served, and their families.</p>	<p>As part of our dedication to the highest possible standards, our Quality Improvement division works with all programs to measure performance and track progress. Results consistently reveal outstanding satisfaction (95% or higher) on the part of individuals served, families and guardians, and affiliated agencies.</p>
	<p><i>“The staff members who provide direct services to children are dedicated, compassionate, skilled, and passionate about their jobs. They often provide services that go above and beyond their official job responsibilities.”</i></p> <p>—Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities</p>
<p>Affiliations and Partnerships. . . . Affiliations with national and international institutions in education, medical, and human services fields increase an organization’s impact and strengthen its clinical foundation.</p>	<p>As an active center of research and training, we maintain affiliations and partnerships with more than 55 universities, hospitals, and human service agencies worldwide.</p>



What to look for –

Commitment to Research and Dissemination. . . Organizations that emphasize research and share their clinical expertise demonstrate a sincere commitment to advancing the field of knowledge and promoting evidence-based practices.

Professional Advisory Board . . .

The best programs benefit from the expertise and guidance of a board of national and international experts from a wide range of disciplines.

A System of Peer Review . . .

Exceptional organizations rely on a system of peer review to ensure that all programs, practices, research, and publications are carefully reviewed and evaluated by colleagues who are experts in the field.

What May Institute offers –

We conduct more applied research than any other human services organization of our kind, and are active in the dissemination of best practices. Our publications since 1978 include more than 340 peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and books. In that time, our professional staff have conducted over 1,700 presentations to international, national, and regional audiences.

Our Professional Advisory Board includes leading authorities in the fields of autism, applied behavior analysis (ABA), special education, developmental disabilities, and behavioral health. These experts review May Institute programs and provide guidance on new developments and best practices.

Our clinical experts are constantly evaluating the quality of services we offer; they also mentor and provide guidance and supervision to staff, thereby creating the next generation of highly qualified and dedicated professionals.

“If we lose or minimize the importance of peer-reviewed outcome data, we abandon the defining feature of behavioral approaches to social problems.”

–Dr. O. Ivar Lovaas





About our May Centers for Child Development

Randolph, Mass. — West Springfield, Mass. — Woburn, Mass. — Santa Cruz, Calif.

May Center for Child Development schools are nationally recognized as leaders in “best practice” education for children with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities. Our full-day, year-round programs provide individualized education and/or vocational training support to children and adolescents ages 2.9 through 22 (depending upon location).

Our schools are guided by doctoral-level clinical directors who oversee all programs and services. These programs are based on applied behavior analysis (ABA), which has been endorsed by the Surgeon General, the National Institutes of Health (NIH), and the Association for Science in Autism Research. Our Massachusetts schools are Chapter 766-approved and are accredited by the Commission on Accreditation of Rehabilitation Facilities (CARF).

Our clinical directors are joined by Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs) and Assistant Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs), master’s-level special education teachers, classroom supervisors, behavior specialists, and highly trained teachers.

Other school features include:

- High staff-student ratio
- Health services and on-site nursing staff
- Allied Health services, including occupational, physical, and speech therapists
- Family support services and training, including family therapists, counselors, and social workers
- Vocational services and a focus on transitional skills for older students
- Integrated preschool (Randolph)
- Adaptive physical education programs
- Art and music programs

In addition, the Randolph program combines day school services with residential living in one of our community-based homes. Residential services focus on helping students develop greater independence in all activities of daily living. Our highly trained staff provide 24-hour support and supervision to ensure that each child’s unique needs are met.

As you make this critical decision, we hope you will consider one of our May Centers for Child Development as a placement for your child.



“The May Center has assembled an impressive array of experts in the field of autism. They train their staff to deliver services with genuine care and concern for the kids.”

—Steven Frey, Parent





About May Institute

May Institute is an award-winning nonprofit organization that provides educational, rehabilitative, and behavioral healthcare services to individuals with autism spectrum disorders (ASD) and other developmental disabilities, brain injury, mental illness, and behavioral health needs. The Institute also provides training and consultation services to professionals, organizations, and public school systems.

Since its founding more than 55 years ago, May Institute has evolved into a national network that serves over 25,000 individuals and their families annually. With corporate headquarters in Randolph, Mass., the Institute operates more than 200 service locations across the country. The Institute is an active center of research and training, maintaining affiliations with dozens of universities, hospitals, and human service agencies worldwide.

The Institute operates four May Center schools that serve children and adolescents with ASD and other developmental disabilities. They are located in: Randolph, West Springfield, and Woburn, Mass.; and Santa Cruz, Calif. Another school serves children and adolescents with brain injury.

In response to the tremendous increase in the prevalence of ASD, May Institute founded the National Autism Center in 2005. This May Institute “Center for the Promotion of Evidence-based Practice” is dedicated to serving children and adolescents with ASD by promoting best practices and offering comprehensive and reliable information to families, practitioners, and communities. In 2009, the Center’s unprecedented multi-year project—the National Standards Project—established a set of standards for effective, research-validated educational and behavioral interventions for children with ASD.

Together, May Institute and the National Autism Center are committed to identifying and applying universal standards for the treatment of autism and to providing care and hope to families throughout the country.

For more information or to schedule a tour, please contact us at **800.778.7601**.

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