

May Center School

for autism and developmental disabilities



RANDOLPH, MASSACHUSETTS



MAY CENTER SCHOOL IS:

Belonging

Learning

Pride

Opportunity

WELCOME TO THE MAY CENTER SCHOOL!



The May Center School for Autism and Developmental Disabilities in Randolph is located in northeastern Massachusetts, 20 minutes from Boston and 30 minutes from Providence, Rhode Island. Situated on 10 acres overlooking the beautiful Blue Hills Reservation, our welcoming, state-of-the-art campus offers an ideal environment for children and adolescents with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) and other special needs to learn and grow. It is a school where students establish a strong foundation on which to build a meaningful life.

We provide full-day, year-round educational and vocational services for children and adolescents from preschool to age 22, using proven methods of treatment and teaching based on the latest clinical and applied research. School services can be combined with a community-based residential program at one of several homes in nearby neighborhoods. The May Center School is a Massachusetts Chapter 766-approved school.



The journey through childhood and adolescence is a unique and intensely personal one. For all children, it is filled with joys, challenges, accomplishments, growth, and countless opportunities for learning.

For children with ASD and other developmental disabilities, and their families, the journey includes unexpected turns and unfamiliar territory. It is a journey that requires the structure, patience, love, guidance, and knowledge necessary to meet the challenges that will inevitably arise.

For 60 years, May Institute has been guided by its mission of helping families navigate the obstacles—and celebrate the successes—of their children’s extraordinary journeys through the complex world of autism and related disabilities.

We recognize that it is a lifelong journey, and we work closely with families to prepare for the transition to adulthood, ensuring a continuation of critical services whenever necessary.

At the May Center School, we focus on building communication, social, behavioral, vocational, and academic skills. Working together with you and your family, and calling on the considerable resources available to us, our caring professionals can enable your child to reach his or her highest potential.



“We look at the individual. Every student is unique. They have individual strengths and challenges, and those are the areas we target.”

– Jennifer Iverson, M.Ed., Director of Education

MAY CENTER SCHOOL IS: *Belonging*

May Center School Snapshot:

Age range served: 2.9 – 22 years

Clinical method: Applied behavior analysis (ABA)

Educational method: Small group and 1:1 instruction

Staff-student ratio: 1:2 (1:1 available if needed)

Length of program: Full-day, 12-month



Six Decades of Expertise in Autism

May Institute has its roots in one family's desire to create a better life for their twin boys with autism. Providing the highest quality, research-based services for children and adolescents with autism has been a major focus of May Institute since Dr. Jacques and Marie-Anne May founded the first May school in the 1950s.

Today, we are among the largest, most respected, and innovative nonprofit behavioral healthcare organizations in the country, providing services to thousands of individuals and their families each year.

The May Center School welcomes children and adolescents whose needs require a highly specialized program delivered by skilled, caring professionals. The primary diagnosis of our

students is autism, and we provide educational instruction and behavioral intervention to children at all levels of the autism spectrum with varying abilities and needs.

We share our 100,000-square-foot campus with May Institute's corporate offices and the National Autism Center, creating a true national center of excellence for autism services.

Together, our staff—more than 100 doctoral- and master's-level professionals and behavior analysts—represent one of the country's largest concentrations of on-site clinicians with expertise in autism, other developmental disabilities, and applied behavior analysis (ABA). The direct beneficiaries are the children and families we serve.



**CHERYL WHITE, M.S.M., CAGS
EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR**

Exceptional Staff

Children at the May Center School are surrounded by caring, highly trained professionals seeking to improve the quality of life of the students in their care. The school's staff are uniquely qualified to provide the level of specialized care that enables each child to make significant and ongoing improvements in behavior, communication, and social skills. These improvements result from the tireless work of the staff combined with our uncompromising commitment to the highest standards. May Center School staff include:

- Doctoral-level clinical directors
- Consulting physician and psychiatrist and on-site registered nurses
- Master's-level certified special education teachers
- Master's-level behavior specialists, Board Certified Behavior Analysts (BCBAs), and Board Certified Associate Behavior Analysts (BCaBAs)
- Family Services staff specializing in family supports, training, and autism
- Adapted physical education, art, and music teachers
- Vocational coordinators and job coaches
- Allied health therapists (occupational, physical, and speech)
- Pre- and post-doctoral interns

Applied Behavior Analysis: Effective and Individualized

What most attracts parents to a program of applied behavior analysis (ABA) is the focus on positive reinforcement, its strong emphasis on teaching new skills, the utilization of data to inform practice, its foundation in research, and the implementation of an individualized plan for each and every child.

ABA is a methodology, or framework, that applies scientific interventions to address behavioral needs. ABA facilitates the development of language, social interactions, and independent living by applying basic behavioral practices—positive reinforcement, teaching in small steps, prompting, and repeated practice. ABA can also help reduce both everyday social problems and serious behavior disorders.

Hundreds of scientific studies have shown that ABA is the most effective method to teach children and adolescents with autism and other developmental disabilities. ABA has been endorsed by the National Institutes of Health and the Association for Science in Autism Treatment. It is one of the Established Interventions identified by the National Autism Center's National Standards Report (2009, 2015), and has been identified by the Surgeon General of the United States as the most effective way to treat autism.

MAY CENTER SCHOOL IS: *Learning*

The Learning Experience—From Preschool to Adulthood

From the first day a child enters one of our classrooms, we begin to carefully create a personal learning experience, assessing needs and developing specific goals and objectives. We regularly measure progress, re-evaluating and adjusting each individual program, as necessary, in order to constantly challenge, motivate, and encourage.

Our teachers work with students in small groups or one-on-one, employing an evidence-based ABA approach. Each student has a program book that includes detailed plans for implementing his or her Individualized Education Program (IEP). Teachers record data daily, noting the child's challenges and progress with developmental, behavioral, and educational goals.

Improving communication skills is an integral component of most students' IEPs. We address their unique needs in a variety of ways including sound imitation, sign language, and a picture exchange communication system (PECS). While some of our students are not verbal, many have functional verbal language, or learn to communicate with pictures or electronic communication devices.

Technology plays a critical role in enhancing our students' educational experiences. Students use iPads for both learning and leisure throughout their school day and at their residences. In addition, our Media Center offers a portable, interactive whiteboard that augments the school's educational programming, and computers that are used to teach typing and computer skills.

Academics and Learning Cores

The educational experience is centered around five core programs. Different levels and programs allow for age- and skill-appropriate instruction and encourage successful transitions from one level to the next as students grow and learn. All cores combine the best practices from the fields of ABA and special education.

Early Learning Core

We are committed to meeting the educational needs of our youngest students—elementary through early middle school children—who require a structured learning environment and small classrooms. The majority of these students live with their families, and some live in school residences.





In our cooperative classrooms, we integrate two distinct classrooms and intervention approaches. One class has a highly structured space designed to minimize distractions and provide 1:1 or 1:2 instruction and focuses on initial skill acquisition. The second classroom utilizes small group instruction and teaching stations that focus on generalization of skills, socialization, and “readiness to learn” in a more traditional classroom setting using a Verbal Behavior model of instruction and Naturalistic Teaching strategies.

Secondary Core

In this core, we serve day and residential students, ages 12–22. We work with students in small groups or 1:1, emphasizing all areas of a student’s development, including communication, social, self-care, play, and

vocational skills. We work on transition skills with some of our older students, and focus on teaching independent living skills. Our school and residential teams work closely together to develop appropriate goals and ensure that skills are being carried across settings.

Intensive Behavior Core

This core meets the needs of day and residential students ages 8–22 with significantly challenging behaviors. We focus on assessing and treating students who engage in behavior that interferes with educational instruction. This core typically has a 1:1 staff to student ratio, spacious classrooms, and intensive clinical and educational oversight. Teachers use the evidence-based principles of ABA to decrease challenging behaviors and help students replace them with appropriate behaviors.

An Inside Look: Campus Highlights

- Twenty-five extremely large, bright and airy classrooms
- A wide array of outdoor activity spaces, with an extraordinary playground for children of all abilities
- A gross motor skills and sensory acquisition room
- Art and music classrooms with a variety of art supplies and musical instruments
- A Media Center/library with hundreds of books, tapes, and other resource materials
- A full adaptive gymnasium and an indoor playground
- A spacious cafeteria serving hot meals and snacks
- Assessment/evaluation rooms with two-way observational capacity
- Vocational training classrooms and on-campus work opportunities
- A comprehensive medical suite and allied health consultation services (OT, PT, speech)
- A distance learning lab, a training center, and numerous conference rooms
- Family Services suite



MAY CENTER SCHOOL IS: *Pride*



“At the May Center School, they have helped Kyle to blossom into the very active, funny, loving young person he is today.”

—Maggie, Kyle’s sister

We are often able to fade 1:1 instruction, contingent on our students’ behavioral progress. We foster independent and functional communication skills, provide structure, and help students develop daily living skills that will prepare them for less restrictive settings and more enriching experiences.

Pre-vocational Core

This is home to many of our higher functioning students who may be able to work in the community. This core is housed in a separate school building with classrooms specifically designed to begin training students in the foundational, pre-vocational skills they will need to secure employment. Two vocational training rooms are fully equipped with a variety of items and activities designed to teach job skills. Our smaller classrooms encourage increased opportunities for peer interaction.

Vocational Core

Students (ages 14–22) who are ready for a more intensive vocational training experience attend the Todd Fournier Center for Employment Training and Community Inclusion. This “school within a school” addresses the two most critical aspects of adult independence—the ability to engage in meaningful employment and the ability to function as successfully as possible in day-to-day life in the community.

In three specialized training suites, students work on vocational skills in a larger group setting (in groups of 2–3 students with a teacher). At the retail



Recreation and Leisure

Like their typically developing peers, our students enjoy participating in a variety of extracurricular activities including art exhibitions, musical performances, and sports, including Special Olympics. There are many opportunities for recreation—taking walks to local sites and parks, attending barbeques, doing arts and crafts, going bowling, and much more. Leisure skills are also an important part of our students' daily activities. They can open doors that allow for independence, flexibility, and socialization to grow.



suite, students participate in tasks such as stocking the shelves, taking inventory, and operating the cash register. At our Hotel Suite, students learn a variety of domestic and hospitality skills. At “Todd’s Café,” students assist in food preparation and serving, as well as cooking and janitorial tasks.

Students work under the direction of a vocational specialist/job coach at community businesses, social service agencies, as well as at our school. Within the school, the students assist our classrooms and corporate center with clerical work, delivering mail, recycling, delivering supplies, and a variety of other jobs. These work and volunteer experiences give students opportunities to develop and strengthen skills that will help them live more independently and give them a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction.

Within the classrooms at the Fournier Center, our teachers put an emphasis on teaching functional academic and communication skills. These are the skills that become important when creating an independent adult life. We also use a good deal of group instruction, which provides students with the opportunity to experience academics while working in a less restrictive environment.

The students also access the community on a regular basis, both on job sites with our vocational specialists and with their teachers to work on community access and independent living skills.



MAY CENTER SCHOOL IS: *Opportunity*

Residential Life Snapshot:

- Single-gender homes for ages 5–22, serving 6–8 children/adolescents in each home
- Individualized programs geared toward developing self-care and other independent living skills
- Close coordination between residential staff and classroom teachers
- 1:2 daytime staff-student ratio; 1:4 at night
- Strong emphasis on family visits, events, and communication
- On-call nurse and administrator at all times
- Carefully monitored transition periods for new residential students



Residential Life

For families who need more intensive support for their children, the May Center School can combine day school services with residential living in one of our community-based homes.

We recognize that the decision to move a child to a residential program can be a difficult one for families. Our staff work diligently to address the needs and concerns of families before, during, and after a move. They create a home-away-from-home that is safe and nurturing, where caring for and about each child is the first priority.

Each day is designed to reflect a typical day for any child. It begins with breakfast and getting ready for school, and involves the hustle and bustle of a houseful of children in the morning.

Children come home from school to snacks and playtime, chores and shared meals. They enjoy typical week-end outings to local stores, libraries, restaurants, and movies, where they strengthen and generalize independent living skills, and simply have fun.

Through every aspect of a child's residential experience, we emphasize home-family interaction and communication, relying on a strong partnership to nurture and support each child.



Building Family Partnerships

Our Family Services team works closely with parents on a variety of issues, individualizing services to meet each family's needs. These staff members are personal advocates for students and parents both inside and outside the school. They are helpful in resolving day-to-day issues, committed to protecting students' rights and privacy, and available to provide emotional and practical support when parents must make important decisions, such as moving their child to a residential program or transitioning to adult services.

The Family Services team offers a comprehensive set of services, including: coordination of family/school communication; home consultations as needed to ensure consistency between home and school; workshops on practical issues such as self-care skills, behavior management, and improved communication; and connections to community support and resources. Our Parent Advisory Board serves as a liaison between families and the school's administration.

The Journey Into Adulthood

As students move from the classroom into the community, we focus on making their transitions as smooth as possible. Individual and group career counseling, supported school and community employment, and life skills training all contribute to our students' increasing independence and future success.

We work closely with families and social service agencies to help students successfully navigate through their Individual Transition Plan (ITP) and move into adult programs. We provide information, guidance, and support to parents as they evaluate options for their children.

Most families who require ongoing support choose to continue their relationship with May Institute beyond graduation. These young adults transition directly into our state-of-the-art day programs, and/or our nearly 100 group homes across Massachusetts, ensuring a seamless continuum of care.



The journey continues for these young people, as do the challenges. But our students learn firsthand that challenges can be met. Progress is possible. With the skills they have learned and the self-confidence they have earned, and with their families' love and support, their futures are full of hope.



To learn more about the May Center School, or to arrange a tour, please contact us at **781.437.1300**.

41 Pacella Park Drive, Randolph, Massachusetts 02368 | randolphschool.mayinstitute.org | info@mayinstitute.org



About May Institute

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



Since its founding 60 years ago, May Institute has evolved into an award-winning national network that serves thousands of individuals and their families annually at more than 140 service locations across the country. The Institute is an active center of research and training, maintaining affiliations with more than 50 universities, hospitals, and human service agencies worldwide.



In addition to our Randolph campus, the Institute operates three other May Center Schools for Autism and Developmental Disabilities. They are located in West Springfield and Woburn, Mass., and Santa Cruz, Calif. Another May Center School in Brockton, Mass., serves children and adolescents with brain injury and other neurobehavioral disorders.