



Commonwealth Autism Service has been *leading the way* for Virginians living with autism since 1995. Autism is the fastest growing developmental disability on record. In the past 25 years, the prevalence rate of autism has increased from 1 in 2,000 to 1 in 110. There are more than 9,500 children identified with an autism spectrum disorder in the Virginia Public School System. This number continues to grow at an annual rate of 10-17%.

### Information and Referral

- ◆ Our information and referral staff provides services to anyone with a question about autism.
- ◆ Family members and professionals are welcome to contact our office with inquiries about services, entitlements, trainings, workshops, and support groups.
- ◆ Our website ([www.autismva.org](http://www.autismva.org)) is updated often and contains helpful resources on many topics.

[www.autismva.org](http://www.autismva.org)

[www.facebook.com/  
commonwealthautismservice](https://www.facebook.com/commonwealthautismservice)

### Commonwealth Autism Service's mission is

*to provide leadership  
in the implementation  
of a statewide system of services  
to maximize the potential  
and quality of life  
of each Virginian with autism  
across the lifespan.*



The following are the property of Commonwealth Autism Service and may not be used in whole or in part without express written permission by Commonwealth Autism Service.

- **Partnership for Capacity Development in Schools and the embedding staffing model**®
- **The Learning Institute**®
- **Autism Action Groups**®



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COMMONWEALTH autism SERVICE

*leading the way*



**Putting the Pieces  
Together  
Since 1995**



# We provide the following services to families, schools, consumers, organizations and professionals.

## Transdisciplinary Autism Assessment Clinic



Based in Richmond, the Clinic provides an intensive transdisciplinary (medical, psychological, speech, occupational therapy, and educational) assessment of children suspected of an autism spectrum disorder.

The Clinic utilizes the latest assessment tools and technology and also serves to train interning clinicians who may encounter children with autism in their future practices.

## The Learning Institute®

Launched in the fall of 2009, The Learning Institute® is designed to provide:

- Professional development opportunities (coursework, workshops, conferences, etc.) for the BCBA® community in Virginia and neighboring states.
- Professional development opportunities for all professionals working in the area of autism.
- CEUs for satisfaction of professional development requirements for various professions.
- Research centered on our partnerships with public schools on the efficacy of our interventions.
- BACB® Approved Continuing Education (ACE) provider.

## Partnerships with Public Schools®

Commonwealth Autism Service has developed a unique service delivery model in partnership with public schools in Virginia. Our **Partnership for Capacity Development®** is unlike traditional consultative and didactic training models in that our staff members are deployed and embedded directly into the service provider's environment. We work through a strategic planning process with members of the division to:

- Assess areas of strength and need.
- Develop an action plan.
- Provide ongoing staff development pertaining to evidence-based practices.
- Offer support for students in need of intensive behavioral intervention.



Additionally, through collaboration with local colleges and universities, educators and other professionals have opportunities to pursue academic coursework pertaining to autism and behavior analysis, while receiving supervision hours from Commonwealth Autism Service that are necessary to sit for the Applied Behavior Analysis certification exam.

## Transition

In 2006 we dedicated a full-time staff member to the role of Transition and Adult Services Specialist. In 2007 we published an autism specific Transition Helpbook, and in 2008 we began the work on an adult services handbook. In 2008 we also received a grant from Autism Speaks to expand the reach of these efforts to families across the Commonwealth.

## Autism Action Groups®

Commonwealth Autism Service offers a unique approach to grassroots service development in communities across the Commonwealth through our Autism Action Groups®. In 2009, CAS reached out to forty-four counties and over fifteen cities through our nine Autism Action Groups®.

Autism Action Groups® (AAGs) are initiated, developed, facilitated, and supported by our Autism Action Group Coordinator. The AAG model brings together local stakeholders who can identify community needs and who will work together to pool local resources and develop ways to meet and overcome those needs, and create positive systems and policy change. Autism Action Groups® participants include self-advocates, parents, educators, private and public service providers, and other concerned individuals.



Autism Action Groups® activities include autism awareness and safety, creation of local Transition Councils to focus on local post-secondary needs, and initiating local autism support groups.

Through partnerships with local public schools and colleges, Autism Action Groups® are able to bring training to parents, educators, students, FAPT and CPMT members, self-advocates, and other community entities at the local level, allowing local resources to be used more efficiently and effectively.

## Coordination with Government Agencies—Executive and Legislative Branches

We collaborate with regional, governmental, and private service entities to coordinate and increase awareness of existing services for individuals with autism.



Commonwealth Autism Service has been actively involved in several autism related initiatives: the state shift to a Development Disability service system, to include the “home for autism”; autism mandated insurance coverage; and the Joint Legislative Audit and Review Commission autism study.

We partnered with the Virginia Institute of Autism

## Workshops for Family Members and Professionals

We provide autism specific training for families, educators, and service providers throughout the year and across the state.

We conduct a multi-day Annual Autism Conference each year highlighting the most current topics related to autism.

