



the  
**Carrie  
 Brazer**



*Center for Autism, Inc.*



**Serving individuals on the  
 Autism Spectrum  
 from birth through  
 adulthood**



**Our programs include:**

- ◆ **Early Intervention**
- ◆ **Pre-Kindergarten**
- ◆ **Elementary School**
- ◆ **Middle School**
- ◆ **High School**
- ◆ **Adult Vocational Skills program**



**KENDALL CAMPUS  
 Elementary School  
 8790 SW 94<sup>th</sup> Street  
 Miami, FL 33176  
 (305) 271-8790**



**SOUTH DADE CAMPUS  
 Middle School  
 High School  
 Adult Vocational Program  
 16905 SW 100<sup>th</sup> Avenue  
 Miami, FL 33157  
 (305) 234-0490**



**[www.cbc4autism.org](http://www.cbc4autism.org)**



## ABOUT THE CARRIE BRAZER CENTER FOR AUTISM

The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism program for children with autism and other developmental delays consists of highly structured, consistent, cognitive and community based instruction based solely on the principles of positive reinforcement through the school and camp curriculum. The Center strives to meet each child's educational and behavioral goals. Individual programs are designed to meet the specific educational, developmental and emotional needs of each child and family.



Carrie Brazer  
*Executive Director*

The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism & Alternative Approaches, Inc. was founded in 1999 by Carrie Brazer, a Florida Certified Special Education teacher with a Masters Degree in Varying Exceptionalities. She has made it her life's mission to find alternative treatments to heal the autistic child while heightening community awareness through her fundraising efforts with national and community organizations in support of autism research and awareness.

## WHAT WE ARE




The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism & Alternative Approaches, Inc. is a nonprofit organization which provides one on one cognitive, speech, music and occupational therapy as well as behavioral interventions for children with autism and other development delays. The program consists of a highly structured, consistent, behavior based instruction combined with opportunities to generalize new skills and behaviors through participating in community based outings.

## MISSION

The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism focuses on providing a full "team" support for the child and the family. We are open minded and receptive to alternative treatments and methods that may benefit the child. We will provide an integrative, systemic approach aimed to help children reach their optimal potentials for independent living while supporting the family through education, training and assistance.

## PURPOSE

The purpose of The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism is to design an individual program to meet the specific educational, developmental and emotional needs of each and every child and family. We strive to strengthen, educate and empower families who have children with autism and other developmental delays by providing the following services:

-  Applied Behavior Analysis
-  Full Day Therapy and School
-  Speech and Language Therapy
-  Occupational and Physical Therapy
-  Music Therapy
-  Therapeutic Horseback riding
-  Saturday Instruction
-  Summer, Winter, Spring Camps & School
-  Psychotherapy and Support Groups
-  Guest Speakers and Workshops
-  Holistic Interventions
-  Diet and Nutritional Support
-  Parent Training



## ABOUT OUR SCHOOL

**T**he Carrie Brazer Center for Autism specializes in serving students diagnosed with classical Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) and other social and communicative disabilities, including Asperger's Disorder, high functioning autism, and nonverbal learning disabilities. Our program consists of highly structured, consistent, cognitive and community based instruction based solely on the principles of positive reinforcement through the school and camp curriculum. The Center strives to meet each child's educational and behavioral goals. Individual programs are designed to meet the specific educational, developmental and emotional needs of each child and family. We provide a 1:1 teacher/student ratio for those who need it.

With a multidisciplinary team of professionals including Behavioral, Music, Speech, Occupational and Physical therapists and special education teachers, The Carrie Brazer Center for Autism provides a wide range of learning opportunities that foster growth in all essential areas. This integrated educational and therapeutic program promotes communicative, behavioral, academic, motor, adaptive, independent living skills and social and emotional development.

We are thrilled to offer unique programming by collaborating with several community partners. We provide our children access to many of the wonderful facilities that South Florida has to offer where they are able to participate with typical functioning children. With our incredible team of teachers and therapists, we are able to offer individual assistance and small group instruction for these activities.

The Carrie Brazer Center has always been known for integrating outside experiences into the teaching curriculum. We make community based outings an integral part of our learning program. Children learn to generalize the skills they are taught in the classrooms out in the community. These skills include exchanging money, identifying objects, walking in lines, changing clothes independently, eating new food, listening and paying attention to shows and much more. By providing regular trips to the Zoo, local museums, beautiful South Florida beaches and parks, our special children become familiar with the community in which they live. Providing the children with practice visiting local area attractions enables parents and grandparents the ability to take their children out on their own successfully on the weekends.

Because our class ratios are so small, individual attention is given throughout the day for all children. We welcome our parents to volunteer in the classrooms to assist teachers enabling them to provide individual Discrete Trial Therapy (DTT) and behavior modification techniques using the principles of Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) on a one to one basis.

## CURRICULUM



### EARLY STEPS PROGRAM, BIRTH TO 5 YEARS



Our "Early Steps" program is a unique One to One learning setting and is designed to provide early intervention for children from birth to 5 years old. Our unique, intensive Speech and Language based program centers completely around each child's individual goals — both cognitively and behaviorally. Children experience one to four hours of intensive, hands on, educational training, behavior modification and cognitive sensory based activities. A certified behavior therapist will design a specific program for each child consisting of one to one Cognitive and Behavioral Therapy. Parents have a choice of three options from 2 to four hours a day for the school year.



**Leaps & Bounds**

### LEAPS & BOUNDS AGES 3 TO 6 YEARS



The "Leaps & Bounds" program is designed to provide early intervention for children ages 3 to 6 years old in a classroom setting. Emphasis is placed on Communication, Social skills training through Music therapy, speech and Sensory integration Therapy.

A wonderful collaboration of therapists including: a certified elementary teacher and a behavior therapist along with our staff music, speech and occupational therapists will design a specific program for each child for the school year. Parents have a choice of options which include half day, full day, or half day plus 1-4 hours of intensive Speech and Language based ABA therapy. Classrooms incorporate social skills training, and TEACCH (Treatment and Education of Autism and Related Communication Handicapped Children) methodologies in addition to academic classes structured for children diagnosed with ASDs.





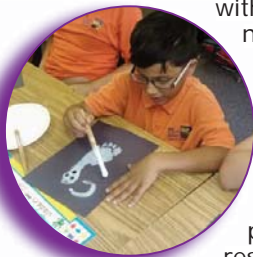
Our program provides intensive language based Communication training. Communication is vital whether it is in the form of oral language, body language or via use of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) or an augmentative Communication device (iPad, the Chat PC, etc.) At the Carrie Brazer Center for Autism our collaborative team of Speech therapists will work closely with teachers to design the right program for your child. Speech therapy, in conjunction with music therapy and cognitive and behavior modification, focuses on increasing receptive and expressive language skills by using a variety of techniques to enable the special child to communicate within his or her environment. It is our mission to assist each child in becoming as independent as possible, not relying on others to communicate his or her wants and needs. Children who acquire auditory processing and use of some type of language such as PECS are able to communicate functionally in daily living situations.



Sensory integration also plays an integral part in each classroom setting. In conjunction with our on staff occupational therapists children will develop skills to appropriately interact with the world around them. Our sensory integration therapy helps decrease social and emotional problems as well as distractibility. Children enjoy awakening all of their senses in our sensory room adjacent to the classroom.

## FULL DAY SCHOOL

We offer a unique, individualized education with an emphasis on social skills in a nurturing, therapeutic environment with a full comprehensive team approach!



The curriculum is highly individualized, hands on, and designed to address the specific needs of each student. The program is based on the current research and best practices in the field.

Teaching strategies and reinforcement methodologies are reviewed on an ongoing basis to maximize each student's success.

Our classrooms have small group ratios and are staffed by Special Education Teachers with vast experience in integrating various therapeutic programs for children with ASD and other developmental delays, and one to two highly trained teacher assistants per classroom. These small class sizes enable us to provide individualized instruction and meet each child's individual



goals. Children, who require a smaller teacher student ratio, may opt for three to seven hours of additional one to one therapy per day.

Our program is based on a traditional ABA method (Applied Behavior Analysis), yet we integrate various practices and have adapted many approaches to teaching including the following: The Pyramid Approach to learning, whereby reinforcement plays a key role in motivating the child to learn; The Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) or an augmentative communication device (AAC), such as the iPad, to increase expressive communication for those who need it; and Dr. Stanley Greenspan's well known "Floor time Approach" to enhance play and interaction. Additionally music therapy plays a key role in our program to promote and enhance expressive language through song, while teaching children to make requests, follow directions, share, and take turns and increase joint attention skills.



The children with limited functional communication skills learn to use iPad applications which are designed to help them initiate communicative exchanges and interactions within a social context. Easy touch screens enable the child with limited fine motors skills to easily access the pictures.

Handwriting Without Tears is a multisensory learning method that employs all the senses in reinforcing the techniques for creating letters. Learning and teaching are made easy and fun. It has proven to be very effective for children with special needs, especially children with autism spectrum disorders because the program uses many visual cues and kinesthetic strategies. The program progresses at the rate of the child's abilities, as determined by the teacher.

**We accept McKay School Vouchers for Matrix scores 253, 254 & 255!**

## LIFE SKILLS AND VOCATIONAL SKILLS TRAINING FOR ADULTS

Life Skills and Vocational Skills Training is designed to help young adults and adults with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASD) express interest in potential careers while learning necessary life skills that will enhance their ability to live and work more independently.



The Carrie Brazer Center For Autism works to model best-practices in the area of vocational and life skills development with community integrated programs, for individuals age 15 and older, that include typical mentoring and staff support. Students undergo a comprehensive vocational assessment to identify skills

and general vocational interests. Individual vocational goals are developed from this assessment, and blended with the student's academic, social, and behavioral goals in an integrated multi-disciplinary approach. Through job sampling in the community and in our training center, each individual has the opportunity to experience a variety of vocational opportunities. Once preferences are identified, intensive training is provided to assist individuals in acquiring the vocational and social skills essential to employment success.



In collaboration with several community organizations such as Marshals department stores, The Carrie Brazer Center for autism will develop and promote best practice job training and social skills.

Long term goals are designed to ensure job development and placement of each enrolled student, with a custom job plan and job coach to meet individual employment needs. Upon placement of a job, each student works one-to-one with an Individual Supported Employment (ISE) job coach, who provides on-the-job training and support.<sup>1</sup> The center assesses each student for appropriateness for employment and works with each student to determine individual strengths and needs, and to identify barriers to success. Employment Services include, but are not limited to skills training in resume building, filling out applications, interviewing, personal hygiene and appropriate dress for work and non-work settings, and conducting oneself in a professional manner. In addition, job coaches provide continuous support for each student. They monitor

each student's progress in an effort to target support and training toward different areas of need throughout the program. A primary component of the vocational program involves taking students on community activities to gain experience and to increase their socialization skills. Marshall's stores and other community partners are participating

with the Carrie Brazer Center in the program by offering the students an opportunity to work with employees and learn simple retail tasks such as checking in new stock, hanging clothes, sorting shoes and unpacking merchandise. Money management skills will be practiced weekly out in the community, at the laundry mat, and on various community-based field trips while utilizing public transportation. Students will also learn to manage a household, become involved in the community, maintain proper hygiene, and prepare simple meals.

"The Attainment curriculum" is just one of the models that will be used as a guide to teach vocational skills to improve job knowledge skills and daily living skills. Task boxes will be created for each student, also



called "Structured Teaching (TEACCH)" which is a methodology of teaching proven best for students with Autism Spectrum Disorders who depend on routine to succeed. Each task is broken down into small steps, so nearly every student can succeed. All basic work activities use recognizable materials to help the student feel comfortable. Each task includes all work material, bins and boxes and instructions in words, pictures or symbols. Daily living skills: self-care, housing, dining out, and cooking, vocational skills and money management play an integral part of our weekly curriculum.

We will be accepting Medicaid Waiver in the near future to help subsidize the cost of the program.

## SUMMER SCHOOL

Our Summer School program begins the week after school is over and continues throughout the summer, ending the week before the fall term begins.

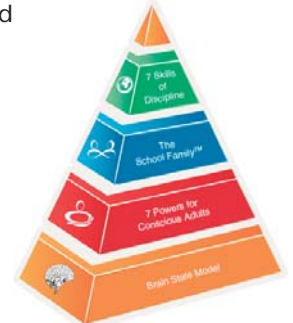


Summer School helps our students develop skills and maintain progress on their social, communication, behavioral, and academic goals. We address the following vital skills: learning to communicate, coping with change, engaging in play, making friends, improving self-awareness, and achieving academic growth. The program also helps older teens to learn independence by focusing on career, daily living, and social skills.

During the school and summer school day, we practice the principles of Conscious Discipline. Conscious Discipline is an evidence based program that yields academic, social and emotional success. Conscious Discipline uses everyday events as the curriculum by encouraging the teachers to respond to daily conflicts and to transform them into opportunities to teach critical life skills to the students.

Conscious Discipline is evidence-based, and was named as a national model for character education by the Florida State Legislature.

The same principles and educational tools used during the school year are implemented in our Summer School program. Although the focus is on academics and behavior, we always implement physical activity, innovative learning and fun in our daily curriculum!



Conscious Discipline encompasses these four components, which are scientifically and practically designed for success.

## BEHAVIOR MODIFICATION, COGNITIVE & EDUCATIONAL THERAPY

**B**ehavior Modification is an integral part of healing the child with autism. Our highly trained teachers and therapists provide intensive instruction using the methods of applied Behavior Analysis. Applied in a comprehensive, intensive and sustained way, we carefully plan learning opportunities for children and reinforce desired behaviors at a high rate. Each behavioral intervention is highly individualized and tailored to each child's current levels of functioning and projected future. Because parental involvement is a crucial component of effective behavioral changes, we provide opportunities for parents to learn and practice ABA interventions during therapy. Early behavioral intervention greatly improves language, social skills, play, self help and problematic behavior such as tantrums, stereotypic and ritualistic responding, withdrawal, self injury and aggression.

## AFTER SCHOOL SUPER SATURDAYS SUPER HOLIDAYS

**A**ll year our program continues to offer unique opportunities for children on the Autism Spectrum. Our Winter, Spring and Summer camps take place in the heart of Key Biscayne in the Biscayne Nature Center, in Hammocks Park in Pinecrest and sailboating with Shake A Leg in Coconut Grove. We provide full camp days for our student. Our campers learn to sail, kayak, canoe and swim. Our Camp Days are a real vacation from the day to day routine of traditional schoolwork, but we never stop teaching! The principals of Applied Behavior Analysis are still incorporated in our day to day instruction and we incorporate an intensive communication and literacy program into all of our camp day activities. Daily living skills: self-care, housing, dining out, and cooking, and pre-vocational skills and money management play an integral part of our weekly curriculum in the middle and highschool classrooms. After school activities includes the continuation of the academic, social, and communication skills taught throughout the day.

One of the most under utilized, yet effective treatment for autistic children is exercise! Several research studies have shown that vigorous or strenuous exercise is often associated with



decreases in stereotypical (self stimulatory) behaviors, hyperactivity, aggression, self injury, and destructiveness. Free play on the playground and organized basketball and field games are also part of the after school program with emphasis on individual teaching, building gross motor skills, increasing time on task, focus and cooperation and following directions in a group.

On Saturday mornings and our Camp Days on holidays and teacher workdays throughout the school year we provide three hours of intensive, hands on, educational training, behavior modification and cognitive sensory based activities from 9am-12pm. The afternoon consists of community based instruction which includes activities designed to increase fine and gross motor skills, as well as language and muscular development.

Our "**Super Saturday**" and our "**Camp Day**" programs consists of wonderfully planned, fun filled field trips from 12pm-4pm such as horseback riding, ice skating, and bowling, swimming in the ocean, and much, much more!!! This much needed program gives children a head start for the school, as they make "**Leaps & Bounds**" on Saturdays building their confidence and self esteem while socializing, interacting, and just plain ole' having fun!!!

## OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY & SENSORY INTEGRATION

**O**ccupational Therapy is devoted to help children function completely independently in their daily lives. When problems arise that limit performance in daily life, we enhance proper development through treatment in a fun, yet therapeutic way. We work on each child's individual deficits. We emphasize teaching eye hand coordination skills and developing fine and gross motor skills. Hand on activities help children practice handwriting skills.

Sensory integration also plays an integral part in each therapy session allowing children to develop skills to appropriately interact with the world around them. In turn, sensory integration helps decrease social and emotional problems as well as distractibility. When children have an over sensitivity to touch, movement, sights or sounds, we help regulate the basic senses through a variety of activities. We teach postural control and motor initiation through jumping on trampolines, moving through obstacle courses, hopping, skipping and alternating movements, as well as bouncing on therapy balls, swinging and much, much more. Children enjoy awakening all of their senses!





## SPEECH THERAPY

**C**ommunication is vital whether it is in the form of oral language, body language or via use of the Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS). At the Carrie Brazier Center for Autism, speech therapy, in conjunction with music therapy and cognitive and behavior modification, focuses on increasing receptive and expressive language skills by using a variety of techniques to enable the special child to communicate within his or her environment. It is our mission to assist each child in becoming as independent as possible, not relying on others to communicate his or her wants and needs. Children who acquire auditory processing and use of some type of language such as PECS and iPads are able to communicate functionally in daily living situations.



## PHYSICAL THERAPY

**C**hildren on the autism spectrum may have low muscle tone, or have a tough time with coordination and sports. These issues can interfere with basic day-to-day functioning – and they're almost certain to interfere with social and physical development.



Physical Therapists at the Carrie Brazier Center for Autism use a variety of techniques such as sensory integration therapy and gross motor coordination skills such as hopping, skipping, running, riding bikes, catching and throwing, swimming and horseback riding.

Physical Therapy goals include helping children function independently in daily life. Generalization skills are taught in the classroom and on community outings. Children will be pulled out of class individually throughout the day.

**Speech, Occupational and Physical therapies are integrated in the school day. Private 1:1 therapies are available by special request.**

## MUSIC THERAPY

**M**any studies have shown that music therapy can be beneficial to children and that music actually increases their intellectual and creative development. Through structured, goal oriented music therapy experiences, children often improve receptive and expressive language skills. They develop social skills, learn self help skills, and refine their sensory and motor skills. Non communicative children are often able to become actively engaged in music experiences and can practice building relationships with others through musical interactions. During music therapy, children are engaged in activities that are designed to promote social and emotional learning. Music therapy groups are especially effective in providing practice of learning skills necessary for effective learning in typical classroom settings including following directions, making requests, turn taking, sharing and joint attention skills. Our program is especially designed to offer the widest possible range of sound and rhythmic experiences for children. Children are encouraged to sing along and play instruments, whistle, clap, stomp, chant and dance to favorite songs!



Private Music Therapy goals are established based on each child's level of functioning. Sessions are available during and after school and on Saturdays. Each session is 30 minutes.

We also offer Music Therapy Groups! Your child can participate in fun and educational group sessions designed to practice building relationships with others during musical interactions. These groups provide practice of learning skills necessary for effective learning in typical classroom settings. These 45 minute sessions are held on Saturdays.

**Please call (305) 271-8790 to schedule your private or group music lessons.**

## HORSEBACK RIDING

**T**herapeutic horseback riding is a hands-on education program that uses the interactions and relationships between horses and humans in an environment of learning and self-discovery. It is designed to promote personal growth and the development of positive social/life skills in a fun and supportive environment. Through a curriculum of activities designed to address individual goals and needs, each equine interaction is framed to help participants learn and grow. The barn/farm environment naturally lends itself as a unique multi-sensory classroom.



Each week the children will explore a new concept through the eyes of their horse. As comfort and confidences levels grow, students will tackle new activities, building their self-confidence and skill levels. As they interact and work with the horse, they observe the behaviors and responses, develop skills, discuss and reflect as they enjoy time at the farm with staff, their volunteers and others. As they engage in the equine experience in an active manner, they are afforded the opportunity to learn each concept, practice their new skills and reflect on how they might apply what they have learned to their own social interactions and life experiences.

Children will participate weekly at the barn learning how to groom, feed, bathe, saddle and tack the horses. Each child will ride once per week for 30 minutes. During the unmounted time they will be learning horsemanship, identifying parts of the horse, taking part in fun outdoor scavenger hunts, playing in the water to cool off and participating in great activities around horses to get comfortable and familiar with all the great attributes of horses. Our older students will perform jobs such as separating grain and hay, shoveling shavings for the stalls, and more.



## AQUA THERAPY



**T**he Carrie Brazer Center for Autism now offers swimming classes as part of our physical education program. Our children are given swimming lessons by the Swim Gym at the Dave and Mary Alper JCC in Kendall. Our staff assists the instructors with our children in the pool.



The children learn to swim and enjoy some free time in the open water awakening all of their senses.

Water safety is especially important for children with emotional, behavioral, and communication disorders. All children need to learn to swim.

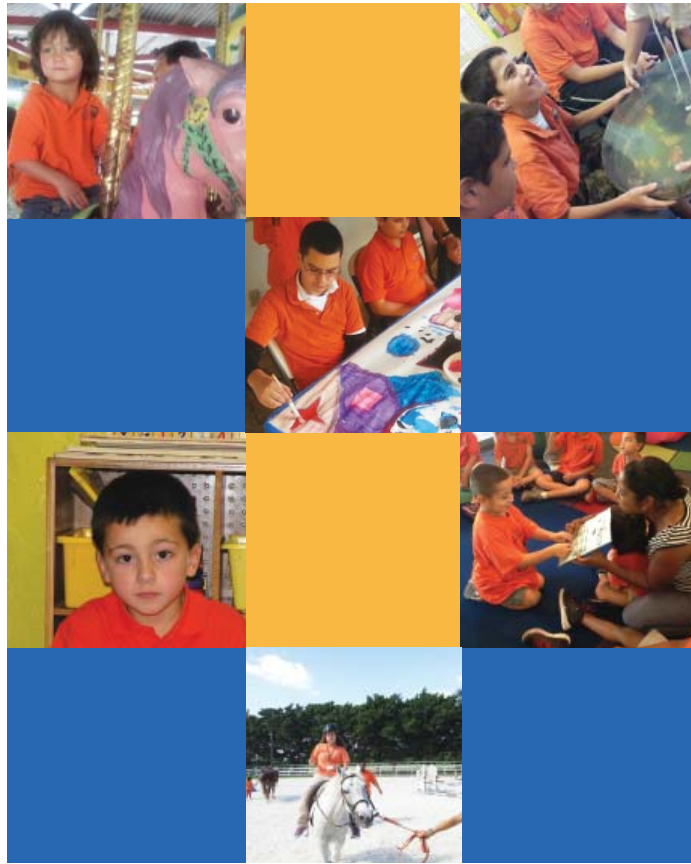
In the situation of a child who is less aware of his surrounding and challenged with communication, it is even more crucial.

Swimming is beneficial to the physical and mental health of children on the autism spectrum.

The program is designed by Robert Strauss, founder of Swim Gym.™ Since 1983 more than 40,000 Water Wise students, of all ages, recreational and competitive, have been motivated to reach their potential in a variety of aquatic programs. The program advocates to teach people to swim for life, not for their lives. To learn more about the Swim Gym program visit their website at [www.swimgym.net](http://www.swimgym.net).







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