Therapy services at the Lurie Center for Autism

Our goals and strengths

The Lurie Center offers short-term, evidence-based treatment for a number of different challenges and growth areas and for a wide variety of ages. Although many individuals on the autism spectrum require mental health care and supports across the lifespan, we do not believe that people should be in weekly psychotherapy forever. We strive to set specific goals with patients and families at the outset of treatment in order to design a tailored therapeutic treatment plan to help patients move towards their goals. We also know that people on the autism spectrum are all different! Here at Lurie, we have a lot of experience tailoring our approach to the way each unique patient learns, thinks, and communicates.

What does therapy look like?

Though every therapist at the Lurie Center is different, we all want to help those we work with reach their goals and thrive. Depending on what difficulties you want help with and your current skills and preferences, therapy might look like: building coping skills and practicing them, talking through difficulties and gaining a new perspective, learning about the brain and how our minds work, setting goals and breaking them down into smaller steps, learning cognitive skills to change stuck thought processes, practicing doing something that is hard for you with someone to coach you through it, or even playing a game to relax after working hard at something new!

Because 1 hour per week (which is the frequency many people choose) is only a small percentage of a person’s life, treatment often includes involving parents, caregivers, and other support networks in care so they can help the patient carry over new skills to daily life. For the same reasons, successful therapy also requires the individual or family to practice newly learned skills during the week, so that we can create change where it matters most.

Why short-term?

Most of our therapy patients work “short-term” with their therapists. This means that the therapist will help you set goals that will move you in the right direction for long term success and well-being, and work with you for a few months on these goals until you’re ready to carry on with the skills and changes in your everyday life. Some patients may wish to come back later for booster sessions to check in, work on new goals, or process life changes. While we always tailor our treatments to the individual’s needs, working short-term allows our therapists to see more individuals and families who need support and reduces the wait time for new patients to start getting help.

What therapy types are available?

At the Lurie Center, our therapeutic intervention are focused on evidence-based treatments such as:

- Cognitive-Behavioral Therapy
  - May include skills from ACT, DBT, mindfulness, etc.
- Exposure & Response Prevention
- Habit Reversal Training
- Parent Coaching, Support, and Training
- RUBI Parent Training
- Medical Desensitization Groups & Individual Consultation

We also offer supportive psychotherapy groups for the parents and caregivers of individuals with autism, as well as a number of educational workshops. We are always working to refine and expand our services, so you may also hear about a new group or opportunity from our team. See our website for the most current list of services and workshops.