There are 4 key components to the project, organized into work packages (WP):

Below is a description of the work packages and an introduction to all of the people involved.

**MEET THE TEAM**

**Emily Simonoff**—Lead Investigator
Professor Simonoff is a clinical psychiatrist, and Head of the Department of Child & Adolescent Psychiatry at the Institute of Psychiatry (IoP) at King’s College London (KCL). A leader in ASD research, she manages all aspects of the project.

**Professor Tony Charman** is a clinical psychologist at KCL and is an expert on early interventions for ASD with a particular focus on early childhood.

**Jackie Briskman** has worked at the IoP for over 15 years on a variety of studies and is currently the Senior Research Coordinator on the Special Needs and Autism Project (SNAP)

**Dr Rachel Kent** is a post-doctoral researcher at KCL/IOPPN. Her research interests are on the diagnosis of ASD and how ASD symptoms and associated behaviours change with age.

**Steve Lukito** is completing a PhD linked to the project. He is interested in understanding the neurocognitive and neural basis of attention-deficit and hyperactivity symptoms in Autism Spectrum Disorders.

**THE PROGRAMME**

**SNAP (Special Needs in Autism)**

**Why do People with Autism Spectrum Disorders Fare so Differently in Adult Life?**

There is widespread concern about the adult development and outcomes for people with ASD. We are studying the Special Needs and Autism Project (SNAP) cohort, a well-characterized, longitudinal and population-representative sample of young adults with ASD to answer the following questions: (1) What is the range of outcomes for young adults? (2) What are the factors, especially from childhood and adolescence, that predict good vs. poor outcome? (3) What are the drivers of the high economic costs of ASD in adulthood, and how far can they be predicted from childhood? and (4) Can we reliably use cognitive markers for associated psychiatric problems that may help in earlier diagnosis and treatment of these additional problems? Our ultimate aim is to find novel ways to improve outcome by treating additional impairing problems. SNAP was identified from the general population, rather than from clinics, and represents the entire spectrum with respect to autism severity, IQ and family characteristics. Therefore findings from this study should represent all young adults with ASD, not just those accessing services. The cohort was previously assessed at 11/12 and 15/16 years. We are now re-assessing them at age 22/23 years because this is at the end of educational provision and a crucial time to enter employment and develop increasing independence.

Please contact us on snap@kcl.ac.uk if you have any queries about the project.