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# Preparing for the Transition to College for Students with ASD

CHOICES

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# What is the difference between high school and college?

## High School

The school district is responsible for “finding” you and determining what supports you need.

## College

You must seek help and know what accommodations you need. No one will find you.



# Where you receive services

## High School

In a resource room, a general education classroom, a self contained classroom, etc.

## College

In the disability services office or the classroom (depending upon the actual accommodation)

# Documentation



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## High School

- The school district is responsible for providing testing (paid for by the school).
- IEP's and 504 plans are developed based on testing results.

## College

- You must provide “proof” of your disability
- Colleges can set their own guidelines for documentation.
- High schools are not required to do a comprehensive evaluation before graduation.
- After HS, you are responsible for paying for new evaluations.



## High School

### **Special Education Law**

- The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) provides the mandate and funding to schools for in-school special education services as well as transportation/ buses to school, physical, occupational, speech therapy, and tutoring

## College

### **Civil Rights Law**

- American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation
  - Colleges are required only to offer accommodations & support services; not services of a personal nature.
  - Tutoring is not required under ADA. Some colleges offer tutoring through disability services and some colleges have tutoring centers for all students.
  - Foreign Language waivers & other course substitutions are not automatic



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# What you need to do while you are still in high school



# Find out about your diagnosis

- Talk to your parents, teachers and/or guidance counselor to learn about your specific strengths and needs.
- Understand the academic impact of your diagnosis.
- Know how your diagnosis might impact your future career.
- Make sure you have current documentation before you leave high school.
- Read and understand your documentation.



# Actively participate in all IEP and/or 504 meetings

- These meetings are about YOU! You should be present and direct the meetings if you are so inclined.
- Participate in self-advocacy training
- Learn to express your needs, strengths, concerns, interests and goals.
- Know what your rights and your responsibilities are.



# Create a personal file

Your file should include the following:

- Disability documentation
- Current high school records (transcripts, results of standardized testing, etc.)
- Medical records (if they are relevant to your education)
- Copies of current IEP or 504 plans
- Results of college entrance exams (ACT or SAT)
- Copies of all psycho-educational testing (most recent on top)



# Self Advocacy

- Self-advocacy means speaking or acting for yourself
- It means deciding what is best for you and making sure you receive what you need
- It means knowing your rights and responsibilities and teaching others about your rights and responsibilities.



# When will I use it?

- When you need additional accommodations.
- When you don't have access to some activity on campus and you need to have that barrier removed.
- When you are having disability-related difficulty in a class and need some extra assistance.



# How can I practice self-advocacy?

- Understand what your disability is and how it affects you
- Understand your rights and responsibilities under the Section 504 of the Rehab Act and the ADA
- Use this information to achieve your goals and advocate for yourself



# 7 Steps to Self-Advocacy

1. Know yourself
2. Know your rights
3. Improve your communication skills
4. Advocate for your needs while in high school
5. Know how to advocate for your needs after high school
6. Develop your resources
7. Assess your progress



# Learn how to advocate for your needs after high school

- Identify steps to obtain accommodations in postsecondary schools
- Identify postsecondary schools of interest
- Contact Disability Service offices at postsecondary schools
- Demonstrate appropriate communications skills while contacting postsecondary schools



# Develop your resources

- Parents
- Teachers
- Coaches
- Therapists (OT, SLP, PT, etc.)
- Friends
- Neighbors
- Employers
- Support staff
- And the list goes on...



# Choosing a college, knowing your options.

- All colleges are required by law to provide reasonable accommodations to students with documented disabilities.
- Some colleges offer specialized programs that are highly structured and include a wide range of academic and behavioral supports.
- Other colleges offer support services that are less intensive and that require students to ‘take the lead’ in monitoring their progress and managing their special needs on campus.



# Reasonable Accommodations

**Reasonable Accommodations** are the resources available at no cost for students with disabilities.

Reasonable accommodations are intended to “level the playing field” for students with disabilities and to provide equal access to your education.

Reasonable accommodations may include extended time for testing, note-takers, the use of a calculator, and preferential seating in classrooms.



# Special Program for Students with ASD

- More colleges and universities are now offering special supportive programs for students with ASD
- Be sure you know what you need to be successful and make sure the college offers that support
- Plan a visit, overnight if possible to see if you can “picture” yourself there.
- Attend a class if possible as well.



# What to look for in a supportive program

- Summer Transition Program
- Early Move In
- Option for a single room
- Sensory room/s
- Academic classes associated with the program
- Priority Registration
- One on one advising with an ASD professional
- Counseling support
- Social activities
- Social communication instruction
- Education to work emphasis



- The most successful students demonstrate well-disciplined study techniques.
- They develop strict study schedules, routines, and networks.
- These students prepare, perform, and ask questions when necessary.
- They have found a comfortable place to study with sufficient light and few interruptions.
- They know when to say "no."
- With each success, these students build self-confidence.



# Two Week Trial!

- Create a two week window of independence that occurs during the school year
  - You are enrolled in your regularly scheduled courses.
  - You completely and independently manage the demands of this coursework with no help or guidance from your parents.
  - You manage organizational and time management routines with no assistance from parents.
  - You manage self-care routines (e.g., waking and going to school, laundry, hygiene) with no assistance from parents.
- Modifying according to disability-related needs, but preserve the availability of support that mirrors what is available in College.
- At the end of the two-week period, work together with parents to analyze the successes and failures during that two-week period and utilize this feedback in developing your success plan for college.



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# Finally...

Success is possible with appropriate supports, you just need to know what they are!



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# Contact Information

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