



College Options for Students with I/DD

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Why Go To College?

A College experience broadens a person's life!

Some of the most enriching opportunities include:

- Developing a love of learning
- Developing critical life and soft skills for community living and employment
- Developing organizational and time management skills
- An opportunity to navigate a new environment
- An opportunity to meet new people and develop new relationships
- An opportunity to take risks in a safe environment
- An opportunity to practice self advocacy and self determination skills
- An opportunity to make choices
- An opportunity to be autonomous: To be the driver not the passenger!



College vs. High School



High School

- ▶ HS is mandatory and usually free.
- ▶ Your time is structured by others.
- ▶ Each day you proceed from one class directly to another. (30 hrs in class)
- ▶ Trained in teaching methods
- ▶ IEP

College

- ▶ College is voluntary and expensive.
- ▶ You manage your own time.
- ▶ You often have hours between classes throughout the day and evening. (12-18 hrs in class)
- ▶ Professors have be trained as experts in their field
- ▶ No IEP

Other Differences:

- ▶ Even though high school and college have a primary goal of providing education, there are many differences!
- ▶ The expectations and opportunities for students are different
- ▶ The opportunities for independence are different
- ▶ The systems of testing and grading are different
- ▶ High School is a **TEACHING ENVIRONMENT** in which you acquire facts and skills. College is a **LEARNING ENVIRONMENT** in which you take responsibility for thinking through and applying what you have learned.



Transition Checklist:



High School

- ▶ **Special Education Model**
 - School personnel will “find you” and decide eligibility
- ▶ **Where you receive services**
 - Resource room, related services room, special education classroom
- ▶ **Documentation**
 - Coordinated by the Child Study Team
 - School develops IEP
 - Tests are paid for by school
- ▶ **Special Education Law**
 - IDEA provides the mandate and funding to schools for in-school special education services as well as transportation/buses to school etc...

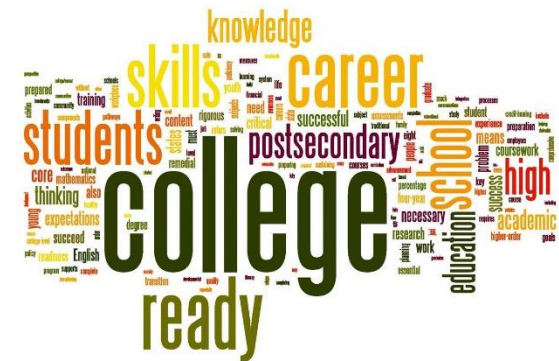
College

- ▶ **Accommodations Model**
 - You must request help; no one will come to FIND YOU
- ▶ **Where you receive services**
 - Differs at each college (office of disability support services), special services
- ▶ **Documentation**
 - You must prove proof of your disability
 - Colleges can set their own guidelines for documentation
 - High Schools aren't required to do comprehensive evaluation before graduation
 - After high school you're responsible for paying for new evaluations, if needed.
- ▶ **Civil Rights Law**
 - American with Disabilities Act (ADA) and section 504 of the Rehabilitation

How Can Students And Families Prepare For College?



- Plan EARLY...(That starts with Transition Services)
- Have high expectations
- Help your child and school personnel see college as an option
- Visit colleges and look at college catalogs with your child
- Understand the impact of their intellectual and developmental disability and the supports needed.
- Create and foster opportunities for your child to develop self advocacy and self determination skills.
- As a parent, prepare to change your role from primary advocate to sharing support and guidance when needed.



MUST be included -No later than when the student turns 16

Transition Services must begin no later than the first IEP to be in effect when your child turns 16... or younger if determined appropriate by the IEP team. These services should be updated annually

- ▶ The **statement of needed transition services** within the IEP must include at a minimum the following areas around which long range post school planning is done:
 - ▶ *Instruction*
 - ▶ *Employment*
 - ▶ *Community Experiences*
 - ▶ *Post-School/Education*
 - ▶ *Related Services*
 - ▶ *Daily Living Skills*
 - ▶ *Functional Vocational Evaluation*



Self Advocacy

- ▶ In College, the student will be responsible for identifying and requesting support services.
- ▶ To be an effective self-advocate, you must understand your special needs, know how it impacts your learning, and become comfortable with describing your disability and academic related needs to others.
- ▶ How can you a student become an effective self-advocate:

Review his or her IEP or 504 plan

- ▶ Ask these questions:
- ▶ What is my special need?
- ▶ How does it affect how I learn?
- ▶ What are my academic strengths?
- ▶ How do I learn best?



Preparing For an IEP Meeting

- ▶ Students can take an active part in the discussion at their IEP meetings by understanding their learning strengths and weaknesses. This can influence the IEP plan and the services a student might request in college.



Before the Meeting



- ▶ Before each IEP/504 meeting:
- ▶ Understand the purpose of the meeting.
- ▶ Know who will be there and what their role is at the meeting.
- ▶ Review the report from your last meeting.
- ▶ Understand the goals listed on the report.
- ▶ Practice saying how you've accomplished the goals.
- ▶ Establish new goals and be prepared to state them.



At the IEP Meeting



- ▶ At the IEP/504 meeting:
- ▶ Summarize your post goals and accomplishments.
- ▶ Ask for ideas and feedback.
- ▶ Know what support you will need to accomplish your goals AND ask for it!
- ▶ Give examples of different types of support that were instrumental in your progress.
- ▶ Ask questions if you don't understand.

Goal Setting

When developing this **statement of needed transition services** that includes each of the required major planning areas listed on the previous slide you must think about and describe **THE BIG PICTURE!**

These post -school activities should be looked upon as a set of STRATEGIES.

The strategies should:

- Reflect and lead toward achieving the desired post-school outcomes of your child
- Take into account your child's interests and preferences
- Identify, long range strategies in each of the transition planning areas that will help the student achieve their post-school goals
- Identify for each strategy in each of the transition areas, all agencies and individuals responsible for carrying out each strategy Ex: **Agencies: school, service providers, vocational rehabilitation services providers, etc...** **Individuals: parents, student, educator, agency personnel, etc...**
- identify who will provide and pay for each strategy
- Demonstrate how all required areas are coordinated between all responsible parties



Measureable Post-Secondary Goals

*The example was found in the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (2009) <http://www.nsttac.org>

Here is an example of a measurable postsecondary goal for education.

- ***Upon Completion of high school, John will enroll in courses at Ocean County College.***

This goal meets NSTTAC's standard because of specific reason:

- Participation in post secondary education is the focus of this goal.
- Enrollment at a community college can be observed, as in John enrolls in courses or he does not
- Enrollment at a community college occurs after graduation, and it is stated that this goal will occur after graduation.



Non-Measurable Post-Secondary Goals

*This non-example was found in the National Secondary Transition Technical Assistance Center (2009) <http://www/nsttac.org>

Here is an example of a non-measurable postsecondary goal for education.

Upon graduation, John will continue to learn about life skills and reading.

This goal does not meet NSTTAC's standard because of specific reason:

- Participation in learning is the focus of this goal, but no specific place or program is specified.
- The expectation for learning, or behavior, is not explicitly stated.



Understanding Options

- ▶ **Length of the program:** length ranges from one year to four years, and programs can be at 2-year colleges or 4-year colleges.
- ▶ **Level of inclusion:** some programs are fully inclusive; in others- students spend some or most of the time with other students with I/DD.
- ▶ **Residential options:** some programs offer this option. Others do not. Sometimes the housing is on campus; sometimes it's off campus.



Knowing your Options Programs vs. Support Services



Programs

- ▶ These are specifically designed for students with disabilities and provide more in -depth services and accommodations
- ▶ These programs often provide one-on-one tutoring and sessions with a peer mentor or a learning disability specialist.

Support Services

- ▶ These are resources available at no cost for students with disabilities. Support services include reasonable accommodations, such as extended time for assignments and testing, note takers, the use of a calculator, and preferential seating in classrooms



Understanding Options



- ▶ **Focus or priority of the program:** some programs focus more on employment, while others might focus on academics, or independent living skills.
- ▶ **Size:** some programs have only a few students attending, while others may have dozens or even hundreds of students with I/DD in attendance.
- ▶ **Student age:** some programs are dual-enrollment, meaning that they serve students who are still in high school, others serve those who have left high school, and some serve both groups.

Here in New Jersey

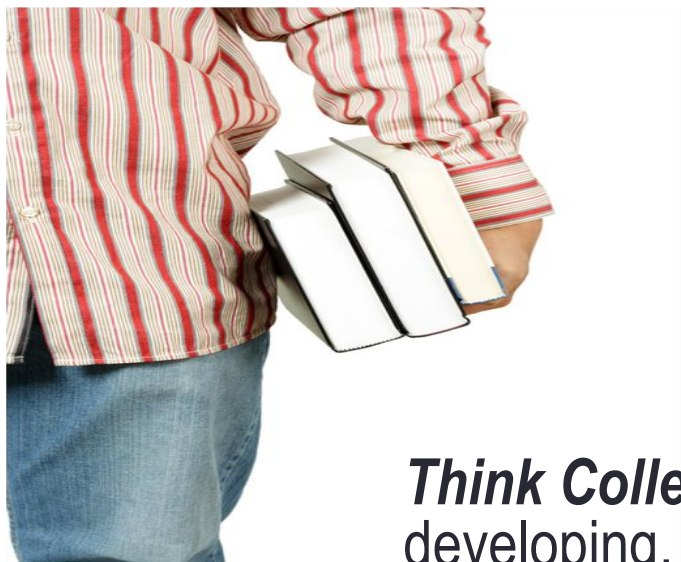


► Programs available for individuals with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities. They are:

- Mercer County Community College: DREAM Program
- Brookdale Community College: Kach Program
- Camden County College: Garden State Pathways Program
- Bergen Community College: Turning Point Program
- College of New Jersey: Career and Community Studies
- *Fairleigh Dickinson: COMPASS Programs
- Rowan/Gloucester County College: Adult Center for Transition
- Raritan Valley Community College: The Achievement Center
- County College of Morris and Kean- College Steps
- *College Support Program- Rutgers
- Transition and Career Studies- Georgian Court University

[https://thinkcollege.net/college-search?f\[0\]=tc_state_province%3ANew%20Jersey](https://thinkcollege.net/college-search?f[0]=tc_state_province%3ANew%20Jersey)

Knowing Your Options



Think College is a national organization dedicated to developing, expanding, and improving inclusive higher education options for people with intellectual disability. With a commitment to equity and excellence, ***Think College*** supports evidence-based and student centered research and practice by **generating and sharing knowledge, guiding institutional change, informing public policy, and engaging with students, professionals and families.**

Support Services

Most Colleges have an office that provides services to students with disabilities. Once your student narrows down his/her college choices, meet with the disability services coordinator at each college to determine services and accommodations that may be available. This may help determine which college will best meet the needs of the student.



Questions to ask when registering with the Office of Disability Services

- What documentation must I bring to identify myself as a student with a disability entitled to reasonable accommodations? How current must they be?
- How is confidential information handled?
- Who decides if I qualify for accommodations and are the accommodations I need available?
- How do I access textbooks in a format that accommodates my needs?
- Is tutoring provided? Is there a cost?
- Are waivers or substitutions granted to students who, because of their needs, cannot pass certain courses?
- Are courses in basic skills or study skills offered? Can they be counted as hours toward full-time status?
- Is there a support group on campus for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities?
- Is there an adaptive technology lab on campus?
- Will I have an advisor?



Examples of some questions the student may be asked



- How comfortable are you in discussing your disability with teachers?
- What are your academic strengths?
- In what areas do you have difficulty or problems?
- What accommodations will you need?
- What kind of support services have you used in high school?
- What was most helpful?
- Are you willing to work harder than other students to be successful in college?
- How do you manage your time?



Potential Accommodations

- Note takers, tutoring, proofreaders, and editing services
- Textbooks and other educational materials in alternative form such as Braille, large print and audiobooks
- Access to educational materials in advance, such as class syllabus and study guides
- Sign language, oral interpreting and real-time captioning services
- Test-taking alternatives, such as extended time, taped tests, oral tests, alternate test site, elimination of computer scored answer sheets, and use of a computer or spell-checking device for quizzes and exams.



Potential Accommodations...

- Access to adaptive equipment such as closed caption devices, amplified telephone receivers, low vision reading aids, tape recorders, Braille devices and computer enhancements
- Equal access to classes, activities and services
- Opportunity to make up quizzes, exams or assignments if the absence was disability related
- Preferential seating in classroom
- Extension of timelines for completing of specific courses
- Extension of timelines to complete certification or degree requirements
- Foreign language course substitutions, for example, option to take foreign culture class instead of foreign language
- Early registration



Paying for College

- ▶ Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services(DVRS)
- ▶ Federal Financial Aid
- ▶ Medicaid Waiver
- ▶ Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004
- ▶ Social Security Administration Work Incentives (SSA)
- ▶ Scholarships
- ▶ Developmental Disability State Agencies
- ▶ Foundations
- ▶ Tuition Waiver
- ▶ State Initiatives



Division of Vocational and Rehabilitation Services (DVRS)



Program Description:

DVRS provides a wide range of individualized services to assist persons with disabilities to prepare for, obtain and/or maintain employment.

Services include Vocational assistance, ***education and vocational training***, and other services as required to assist the individual to achieve employment.

*Transportation assistance is available for eligible consumers who are receiving Vocational Rehabilitation services.

Fees: Most services are free for eligible consumers - sliding scale for some services

www.thearcfamilyinstitute.org



DVRS Can Provide The Following



- Skills Training - Vocational school, technology or trade school, business school, etc.
- ***College Training - 2 or 4 year programs leading to a degree***
- Driver Training - Assessment of driving ability and equipment needed to drive safely; assistance in purchasing driver training lessons if needed to reach a specific work goal.

Contact your local office or call the Central Office at 609-292-5987 for further information.

Federal Financial Aid



The Post Secondary Education Program must be an approved Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP) through Federal Student Aid.

Students are eligible for:

- Pell Grants
- Supplemental Education Opportunity Grants
- Federal Work Study

Students are **NOT** eligible for student loans

The Following link provides a listing of currently approved CTP:

<http://studentaid.ed.gov/eligibility/intellectual-disabilities>



Medicaid Waiver

Medicaid funds can not be used for tuition and fees but can be used to pay for student support services such as:

Education Coaches, Mentors, Physical or Occupational Therapy, Transportation, and Supported Employment.

****It is important to note that every state waiver has defined what services and supports can be funded and it varies from state to state.***

Visit <http://nj.gov/humanservices/dds/ohcs/waiver/> to learn more about Medicaid Waivers



Scholarships

- ▶ There are a small number of scholarship programs specifically for students with Down syndrome. Link to list of scholarships for students with DS:
 - ▶ www.thinkcollege.net/resources-database/item/t-110/1630
- ▶ You can also look at generic scholarships to determine if they might be eligible for your child to pay for college.
 - ▶ www.elearners.com/online-education-resources/finances/college-grants-and-scholarships-by-state/



IDEA

- ▶ The law allows IDEA funds to pay tuition and other costs for students to attend college.
- ▶ School districts across the country are participating in funding “Dual Enrollment” programs.
- ▶ High Schools partner with local colleges or universities and fund students ages 18-21 to complete their educational program in a college setting.



SSA Work Incentives

- ▶ The Plan for Achieving Self-Support (PASS) program allows Social Security beneficiaries to exclude income that is being used to assist the person in returning to work.
- ▶ Under a PASS, income is set aside for current or future expenses. This could include:
 - ▶ training
 - ▶ equipment
 - ▶ services and supports
 - ▶ * including college- as long as it's related to a specific employment goal.
- ▶ To learn more visit:
<http://www.socialsecurity.gov/disabilityresearch/wi/pass.htm>

Tuition Waiver

- ▶ Tuition Waivers may be available through VR agencies, however, there is no universal implementation of waiver options nationally. A waiver that is provided by a VR agency would typically apply to any state-run college or university.
- ▶ *Some community colleges also offer tuition waivers to individuals
- ▶ who receive SSI.
- ▶ Often, information about waivers is listed in the college catalog as a benefit for Senior Citizens. However, these waivers apply to students of any age receiving SSI.

Paying for College: DDS

- ▶ Local, regional, and state agencies may not be able to support the program directly with funding but are able to realign their existing services to support their agency clients who are students attending college.
- ▶ Ex: community services such as transportation can be adjusted to support transportation to college.



Paying for College Foundations



There are many foundations that may provide funding to develop or maintain a postsecondary education program. These funds have covered a wide range of costs including program development and tuition and fees.

- Most states have an organization that offers free information on local foundations but it will require research.

for example: <http://fconline.foundationcenter.org/>



Financing Options

- ▶ There are many financing options and benefits available to students with intellectual and developmental disabilities: There are scholarships for individuals who have a:
- ▶ General Disability
- ▶ Chronic Health Conditions
- ▶ Hearing Impairments
- ▶ Visual Impairments
- ▶ Intellectual Disabilities
- ▶ Learning Disabilities
- ▶ Mental Health
- ▶ Developmental Disabilities

For more information visit:

<http://www.bestcolleges.com/financial-aid/disabled-students/#learning>

You've Been Accepted

- ▶ Register with the college's disability services office or program.
- ▶ Contact the campus office- they will not find you
- ▶ Provide the necessary documentation regarding your disability. It needs to be current and meet college guidelines
- ▶ Request the accommodations you will need (note-takers, assistive listening devices, testing modifications, textbooks on tape, etc..)
- ▶ Request these accommodations before scheduled placement tests (if applicable) or you will not receive accommodations for those tests
- ▶ 2. Arrange other supports not provided by school
- ▶ Do you need things like counseling, medication management, or other supports? Who will provide them for you & how will they affect your schedule?
- ▶ Develop back up plans for these supports



Campus Environment

Become familiar with the campus environment

- **Register for campus orientation**
- **Determine where to go and who to contact in case of an emergency-** Be sure to share this information with school personnel
- **Obtain a copy of your class schedule-** and visit all buildings where your classes will be held to become familiar with locations and layout
- **If you are commuting and will drive yourself-** become familiar with parking facilities and procedures
- **Consider signing a release of information-** so the school has permission to share information with parents/guardians



While Still in High School

- ▶ Find out about your disability
- ▶ Talk to your parents, high school teachers or guidance counselor
- ▶ Actively Participate in all transition related meetings
- ▶ Know your rights!
- ▶ Develop a personal information file with all appropriate information
- ▶ Important Documentation
- ▶ Select and Plan College Choices
- ▶ Select the colleges you'd like to attend
- ▶ Apply
- ▶ Good Luck!



Legal Rights and Responsibilities



- ▶ Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act
- ▶ This civil rights statute is designed to prevent discrimination against persons with disabilities.
- ▶ This law requires that postsecondary schools be prepared to make appropriate accommodations and reasonable accommodations to their college's procedures and practices, so that an individual can fully participate in the same programs and activities that are available to students without disabilities.
- ▶ The Americans With Disabilities Act
- ▶ A civil rights law. It helps to implement and enforce Section 504, and also outlines additional protections. This law states that with or without federal funds, public institutions cannot discriminate on the basis of disability.
- ▶ For more information visit:
- ▶ <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/dcl-504faq-201109.html>

Resources

- www.thinkcollege.net
- www.mccc.edu/student_services_needs_dream.shtml
- <https://ccs.tcnj.edu>
- www.rcgc.edu/ACT/pages/default.ASPX
- www.Thearcfamilyinstitute.org
- www.Planningforadulthoodlife.org
- www.ahead.org
- www.inclusioninstitutes.org
- www.transitioncoalition.org
- www.heath.gwu.edu
- <http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/services/autism-spectrum-college-support-program/>
- <https://gsapp.rutgers.edu/centers-clinical-services/college-support-program/faqs>
- <https://www.fdu.edu/academics/colleges-schools/psychology/compass-program/>
- <https://bit.ly/3bhLCxQ>- Dream Program
- https://www.camdencc.edu/student_life/student-services/garden-state-pathways/
- <https://bergen.edu/current-students/student-services-departments/disability-services-office-of-specialized-services/turning-point-program/>
- <https://www.thearcofsomerset.org/the-achievement-center-at-rvcc/engagment.html>
- <https://www.collegesteps.org/>
- https://www.glassdoor.com/job-listing/transition-career-studies-tcs-staff-assistant-georgian-court-university-JV_IC1126832_KO0,45_KE46,71.htm?jl=3777804266
- <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/financial-aid.asp>

