

Things to Consider When Looking Into College for Your Child with a Learning Disability

As a parent of an adolescent with a learning disability you will need to work closely with your child to prepare him/her for college. It is important that you investigate several college programs to find a good fit for your child.

However, before your child considers college he/she should ask him/herself the following:

- Why do I want college?
- How do my parents feel about me going to college?
- What would I like to major in?
- What is my learning disability?
- What are my weaknesses?
- What things are easy for me to learn?
- What things are difficult for me to learn?
- What helped me learn in the past?
- What help do I need from this college's support program to make it in college?

Once the decision is clear and the child has a direction he/she will need to consider several issues. Parents, counselors, teachers and students with learning disabilities may use the following as a reminder of helpful skills and necessary steps to take as a high school student with a learning disability and begin to make the transition to college. Many students with disabilities will look towards vocational and second year colleges close to home. You, your child and your school pupil personnel staff may wish to use the following helpful hints as you begin the transition to college. The following issues will need to be addressed about the college he/she is choosing:

- Insure that the latest triennial evaluation has taken place. Many colleges with special programs for students with learning disabilities will require up-to-date testing information along with the application.
- What are admission requirements?
- What is the grade point average? ACT? SAT?
- Are there special accommodations for your child to take entrance exams?
- Do they have special incentive programs?
- Is there a disabled student service office on campus?
- Does it have a full-time person there or is it part-time?
- What kind of documentation is required to verify disabilities?
- Is there a disabled student organization on campus? How to contact them..
- How are the faculty informed of the necessary accommodations if needed?

- Is tutoring available? Is it individualized or group? Is there a cost involved?
- Are note takers and readers available? Is there a cost involved? How are they trained?
- Is it possible to arrange for tape recorder classes, computers, untimed testing, test readers?
- Is it possible to relocate classes to more accessible sites?
- What is the college's policy regarding course substitutes or waiver of curriculum requirements?
- Are there developmental courses available? In what areas?

When your child is accepted into a post-secondary school, responsibilities that he/she needs to take in order to become successful is to learn skills to communicate their needs to their friends, to their instructors, to the clerical and clinical staff in their school.

Some basic clues to relationships with instructors are:

- They are a key part of your education.
- They are paid to teach you.
- Like you, they will expect to be treated with respect.
- Instructors expect you to be an adult.
- Ask for help when you need it.
- Accept responsibility for mistakes you make.