



College Supports Program for Students with ASD

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The Issue

- 1 in 68 children in multiple communities have been identified as having autism (2014)
- Levels of intellectual ability vary greatly among children with autism but many individuals have average intelligence.
- There is an increasing number of high school students with ASD who will be entering college.
- Students may struggle in college not because of their potential or academic prowess but because they are unable to navigate the university environment!

College Success is Possible With Supports!



Eastern Michigan University

- Eastern Michigan University is a comprehensive, co-educational public university located in Ypsilanti, Michigan. Ypsilanti is 35 miles west of Detroit and eight miles east of Ann Arbor.
- The University currently serves 23,000 students who are pursuing undergraduate, graduate, specialist, doctoral and certificate degrees in the arts, sciences and professions.
- In all, there are more than 200 majors, minors and concentrations are delivered through the University's Colleges of Arts and Sciences; Business; Education; Health and Human Services; Technology.

College Supports Program (CSP)

- CSP is an individualized and person-centered approach that is designed to support students with ASD as they transition to college and progress through graduation.



Key Components of the CSP

- Creating an ASD friendly university environment
- Honoring the culture of the disability
- Supporting deficits that may act as a barrier to successful completion of coursework
- Supporting relationship development
- The university community is defined by the student
- Career planning that focuses on the strengths of the student

Creating an ASD Friendly Campus: Administration

- Conversations, discussions, and ongoing training with the Board of Regents, University President, Provost, Student Health Center, Housing, Campus Life, Admissions and Enrollment Counselors and the Disability Resource Office.



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PRESIDENT

Creating an ASD Friendly Campus

- Community/Campus wide knowledge of ASD through ASD information sessions
- Frequent articles on ASD in university periodicals
- Mentors hired to support CSP students are graduate students from all departments and colleges.



Creating an ASD Friendly Campus: Training, Training, Training

- CSP staff have developed ongoing relationships through training and availability to provide 24/7 assistance to Housing Staff, Resident Advisors, Tutoring Supports, Food Service, University Police.



Creating an ASD Friendly Campus: Beyond 504 Accommodations

- Understanding that CSP offers services that are “Beyond Reasonable Accommodations of Sec. 504”



CSP Support Services

Fees are based on the individualized plan of service and are designed to lead toward increasing independence:

- Academic
- Organizational
- Visual Supports
- Daily Living Skills
- Social Living
- Campus employment
- Residential Life



CSP Support Services

- Relationships with faculty
- Support Groups
- Mentoring
- Recreation Groups
- Liaison with family
- Career planning
- Internship Opportunities
- Coordination with students' medical providers when appropriate.



Mentors are Critical For Success in College



Academic Supports

- A Personal introduction letter is written by the student; this letter will accompany the accommodations letter and will be sent to instructors prior to a meeting with each instructor.
- Before, or at the beginning of each semester, staff meet with each of the student's instructors to review accommodations and to discuss the syllabus and course expectations in detail. Whenever possible the student participates in this meeting, and if not, the student schedules an appointment to meet the professor during office hours.

Academic Supports

- Students are encouraged to appropriately utilize instructors office hours.
- At mid-term (or more often) meetings are held with faculty and students to address any concerns about about progress in the course.
- Any assignments or tests that may be problematic are discussed in advance with problem solving by all parties. Accommodations are made, modification of content is NOT

Academic Supports

- A check-in/check-out plan for each day is established and monitored by staff and mentors assigned to specific students.
- Technology is utilized as much as possible to support students
- All students sign off on FERPA rights to allow staff to speak with professors and other university staff, as well as communicate with the family as needed.

Residential Supports

- Facilitate the establishment of routines for self care and getting up and to class on time.
- Orientation to laundry procedures and social rules related to this.
- Collaborate with the housing staff, especially the student's RA, to create a physically and psychologically safe living experience.
- Morning and weekend "dorm checks" for a safety and a "healthy" environment.

Evidence Based Practices Used in CSP

- Visual Supports
- Social Mapping
- Google Calendar/Planner
- Video Modeling
- Scripts for social interactions
- Social Skill groups
- Recreation groups



Evidence Based Practices Used in CSP

- Speech/Language Therapy interventions
- Occupational Therapy interventions
- Sensory Informed Plans for emotional self management
- Daily organizational supports in the academic and residential settings on campus
- Fitness programs

Program Costs

- Prices range from \$2,000 to \$40,000 and upwards a year nationally
- EMU/CSP is \$5,000-\$8,000 a semester depending on the level of intensity of supports. Fees are determined individually rather than charging a flat fee.
- Students who live in the dorms generally pay the highest fees.

Funding/Scholarships

- Scholarships:
<http://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/resource-library/post-secondary-education-resources>
- Vocational Rehabilitation Services in some states and regions
- Planned College Saving Programs
- Medicaid -Specific community living supports in some states. This depends on how your Medicaid state plan is written

Resources

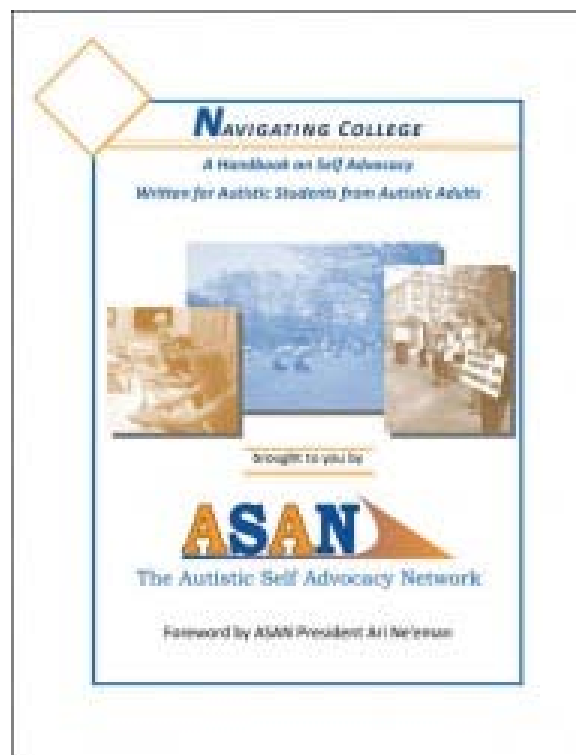
“Many autistic teens out there have the brains to make higher education a breeze, but are lacking in some of the social, time management and organizational skills they’ll need to make the grades they deserve.

Here are 10 of the growing number of colleges that can be a good choice for students with autism, as they can provide support groups, assistance with courses, special classes and all the information students need to get a degree.”

www.Collegeguide.com 2012, **10 Impressive Special College Programs for Students With Autism**

Resources

- “Navigating College” A Handbook on Self Advocacy. Written for Autistic Students from Autistic Adults



Know the Difference!

- Summer Programs are designed to identify interests for secondary students with ASD.
- Two Year Prep Programs are designed to acclimate students to what college may entail
- Four year degree programs within a university
- College Internship Programs that secure internships for students on the spectrum
- See the following for universities and programs nationally:
<http://www.collegeautismspectrum.com/collegeprograms.html>