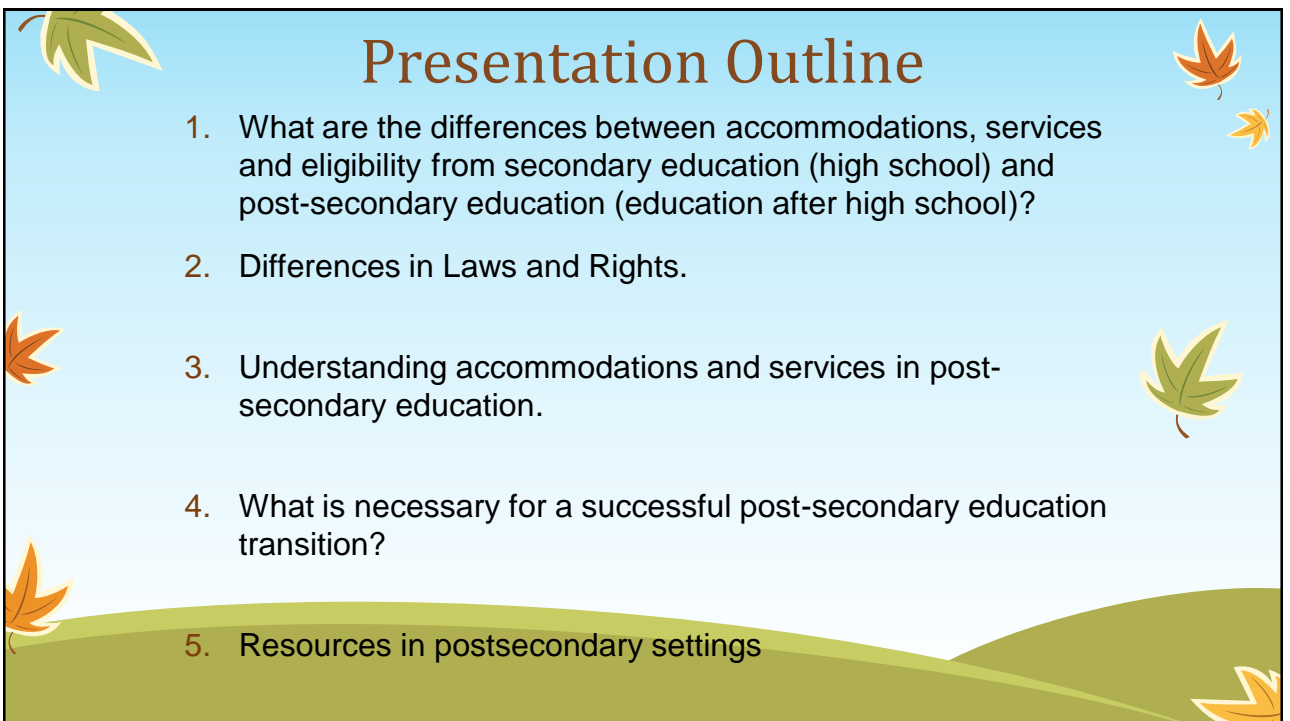


# Postsecondary Education Transition Considerations for Students with Autism

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## Presentation Outline

1. What are the differences between accommodations, services and eligibility from secondary education (high school) and post-secondary education (education after high school)?
2. Differences in Laws and Rights.
3. Understanding accommodations and services in post-secondary education.
4. What is necessary for a successful post-secondary education transition?
5. Resources in postsecondary settings

## Overview of Differences

- Laws and eligibility are different from high school to postsecondary.
- To be eligible, postsecondary students must self-identify, otherwise colleges do not know.
- Child study teams and IEP's do not exist, instead disability services offices and instructors provide academic accommodations and services.
- Self-advocacy and self-disclosure are essential to receiving services and accommodations.

## Differences

- Don't make the assumption that recommendations in an IEP or 504 Plan will automatically provide the same accommodations and services in postsecondary education.
- Reasonable Accommodations are used, not adaptations or modifications.
- Personal services such as aides, attendants, tutoring may be the young adults responsibility, not the postsecondary institution's.
- Documentation requirements may be different.
- Parent's rights change, young adults are in charge!

## Differences in Laws

### Post-Secondary

- **Americans with Disabilities Act Amendments Act (ADAAA), 2008** and 504 of the Rehabilitation Act. Civil Rights laws
- **Definition:** a physical or emotional impairment that substantially limits a major life activity.
- EQUAL ACCESS.. Level the playing field!

### Secondary (K-12)

- **Individuals with Disabilities Education Act, 2004.** Education law.
- **Definition:** Covers all school-aged children (preschool to graduation ages 3 to 21), who fall within one or more specific categories of qualifying conditions and who need special education and related services.

## Differences in Eligibility

### Post-Secondary

- Documentation is submitted by the student. Costs for documentation are the responsibility of the student, not the postsecondary institution.
- About the significant functional impairment that supports the accommodation request.
- This is not merely a diagnosis.
- The information presented must support the specific requested accommodation.
- Each post-secondary school can determine reasonable documentation guidelines and these guidelines may differ slightly from school to school.

### Secondary (K-12)

- The school is responsible for identifying students having difficulties.
- The school conducts an assessment or evaluation. Costs handled by school.
- Regulations allow the evaluation team to determine which assessments are performed for the evaluation.
- After the evaluation is completed, the school schedules a meeting with the IEP team including the student and/or parent to determine what services will be provided.
- The regulations stipulate that the school is fiscally responsible for the evaluation.

## Differences in Rights

- Generally, postsecondary institutions are not permitted to make a preadmission inquiry about an applicant's disability status.
- Self disclosure is key to obtaining services.
- Parent's rights change once a student enters post-secondary education.
- Privacy laws may not allow post-secondary staff to discuss a student's disability or services with parents unless provided written permission from the student.
- The student, not the parent is now in the driver's seat and makes requests for services and accommodations.
- The student is responsible for keeping track of their progress in their courses.
- Parents are typically not provided with academic progress or even grades

## Disability Terminology in Postsecondary Settings:

- **Reasonable accommodations** ensure that qualified individuals with disabilities have rights in college equal to those of individuals without disabilities.
- The basic premise is to level the playing field. Not required to change the content of a course or make modifications that would **fundamentally alter** the nature of a course, but provide reasonable accommodations.
- Institutions must make reasonable accommodations available to students in a **timely manner**.

## Reasonable Accommodations

- **Academic adjustments:** are course adjustments to ensure equal access.
  - Most commonly requested and granted academic adjustments include: extended time for tests; testing in a distraction reduced environment and note-taking assistance.
- **Auxiliary Aids:** adaptive equipment, assistive technology, FM systems for the hearing impaired, computers for testing, books and course materials in alternate formats etc.
- **Services:** readers, note takers, test proctors, sign language interpreters, real-time captionists etc.

## Typical Eligibility and Accommodation Process

### Step 1: Self- Disclose

- Fill out form online
- Contact disability office for appt.

### Step 2: Intake or input

- Schedule an intake
- Skype interview
- Phone call

### Step 3 Provide appropriate documentation

- Send documentation
- Upload documentation to secure site.

## Typical Eligibility and Accommodation Process

### Step 4: Accommodation Determination

- Student notified of accommodations and services approved
- Interactive process

### Step 5: Program/ Course/Technical Requirements

- Accommodations and services provided course by course
- How will accommodations work with program or course requirements?

### Step 6: Student Presents Accommodation Letter

- Accommodation letter provided course by course basis
- Student meets with professors to discuss
- Student may need to fill out requests for exams, note-taking, accessible textbooks.

## Be Proactive in K-12:

1. **Student Led IEP's**
2. **Utilize Appropriate Accommodations for next setting.**
3. **Ensure documentation will meet college's guidelines.**
4. **Does the documentation support the requested accommodations or services?**
5. **What Assistive Technology is available in college? What are the costs?**
6. **When was my last AT evaluation? Am I using the latest technology? How will this apply in college?**
7. **What supports and aides are in the classroom? Are these realistic for a postsecondary setting?**
8. **What self-advocacy skills are needed?**

## Key Issues to Successful Transition:

1. Find the right fit!
2. Acknowledge strengths and areas of need.
3. Identify appropriate accommodations and services for the classroom.
4. Identify appropriate support systems outside of the classroom including counseling, social, and housing.
5. Are there ASD support groups available.
6. Find out how many students with ASD are enrolled and have they been successful.

## How Can We Help?

- Ensure students schedule informational session with disability services during college visits.
- Assist in web research on college services and documentation guidelines.
- Prompt student to gather documentation and submit to disability services at time of acceptance to college.
- Encourage student to apply for services prior to placement exams.
- Support proactivity, not reactivity!

## Resources

- Autism Spectrum College Support Program: Rutgers University  
<http://rhscaps.rutgers.edu/services/autism-spectrum-college-support-program/>
- Douglass Developmental Disabilities Center: Rutgers University  
<http://dddc.rutgers.edu/>
- 10 Most Impressive Special College Programs for Students with Autism:  
<http://www.bestcollegesonline.com/blog/2011/05/25/10-impressive-special-college-programs-for-students-with-autism/>
- CollegeAutismSpectrum.com:  
<http://www.collegeautismspectrum.com/collegeprograms.html>

## Technology Resources:

- Apps for everyone with autism: <http://www.appyautism.com/en/>
- Assistive Technology Supports for Individuals with ASD:  
<http://www.wati.org/content/supports/free/pdf/ASDManual-1.pdf>
- Autism Transition Handbook:  
[http://www.autismhandbook.org/index.php/Assistive\\_Technology](http://www.autismhandbook.org/index.php/Assistive_Technology)
- Autism Speaks Apps: <http://www.autismspeaks.org/autism-apps>
- AT for autism: <http://www.autism-community.com/education/assistive-technology/>



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