So Your Child/Student with Intellectual Disability is Thinking about College

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Agenda

- Progress since 2002 – current postsecondary opportunities

  - HEA being reauthorized
  - Financial aid for students with intellectual disabilities (ID)
  - TPSID model programs

- Accreditation Workgroup Report on model standards

- Preparing for college

- Finding the right fit

- Resources
Inclusive Postsecondary Education Progress

- Inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) for students with intellectual disability (ID) is a growing movement with 266 programs!

- See [www.thinkcollege.net](http://www.thinkcollege.net)

- Passage of the Higher Education Opportunity of 2008 (HEOA) was key to expansion.

- The HEOA reauthorized the Higher Education Act (HEA), which is now due to be reauthorized again.

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Higher education programs for students with intellectual disability in the U.S. 2004 to 2019

266

See [https://thinkcollege.net/college-search](https://thinkcollege.net/college-search)
College Programs for Students with ID

- Have alternative admissions process & requirements – regular HS diploma not needed
- Accept students who are non-degree seeking
- Vary in length – most are 2-year, some 4-year
- Vary in levels of academic inclusion
- Established course of study that leads to certificate
- May offer federal student aid (not loans)
Opening Doors
To college, work, friendships, and living in the community

Creates the Comprehensive Transition Program
Provides access to Federal Financial Aid
Provides funding for model demonstration projects and a coordinating center
Requires development of model accreditation standards
Requires collection of program level and student level data

Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008
Financial Aid
(Grants & Work Study, not Loans)

- Student must meet definition of “intellectual disability” (ID)
- Student must be enrolled in approved Comprehensive Transition Program (CTP)
  - IHEs must apply to US ED for CTP approval in order for students with ID to receive financial aid
- Family must fill out FAFSA and meet financial need requirements

Definition of a Student with an Intellectual Disability

A student—
‘ (A) with a cognitive impairment, characterized by significant limitations in—
  ‘ (i) intellectual and cognitive functioning; and
  ‘ (ii) adaptive behavior as expressed in conceptual, social, and practical adaptive skills; and
 ‘(B) who is currently, or was formerly, eligible for a free appropriate public education under the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act.

If a student is not identified as having an ID during K-12, the regulations state how to demonstrate a student with another disability also has an intellectual disability
Sample of Courses Attended by TPSID Students

- Arts: Painting II, Ceramics I, Ballroom Dance, Latin Dance, Vocal Performance Workshop, Introduction to Watercolor, Write Your Life Story, Drawing I
- Wellness: Personal Fitness, Introduction to Wellness, Swimming, Yoga I & II, Handling Medical Emergencies
Of the 36 TPSID programs that were located at residential schools, 22 (46%) offered housing to students in the TPSID program.
**Employment**

- 47% Employed while in college
- 31% Received services from Vocational Rehabilitation
- 56% Never held a paid job prior to enrollment

TPSID: DATA 2017-2018

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**Employment**

- 65% (N=100) of those who completed a TPSID program had a paid job one year after exit.
- 17% of adults with developmental disabilities in the general population had a paid job in the community in 2014–2015.
- 32% (N=49) were not working. These students reported they were doing other things such as:
  - Looking for work (N=28)
  - Attending postsecondary education at a non-TPSID program (N=19)
  - Doing unpaid career development activities (N=25)

Source: National Center Indicators, 2017

Report on Model Accreditation Standards for Higher Education Programs for Students with Intellectual Disability

Available:

Keep the ID Provisions in the Higher Education Act!


- Goal is to ensure ID provisions, with improvements, stay in HEA in the reauthorization.

- If TPSID model demos and National Coordinating Center are not included in reauthorization, the programs will end.

Appropriations: requesting a $500,000 FY 2020 appropriations increase from $11.8 mil to $12.3 million
Preparing for College: Plan Ahead!

- College is a possibility for students with intellectual disabilities
- Start planning for college early and be prepared
  - Inclusive education and access to curriculum
  - Literacy skills (reading, writing, math)
  - Self-advocacy and independent living skills
  - Communications and social skills
  - Paid jobs while in school
  - Research and visit colleges
  - IEPs and transition plans should reflect goals in these areas and post secondary outcomes of college, work and independent living

Think College National Coordinating Center

Federally funded since 2010 to provide coordination, training & technical assistance to any college or university who wants to establish or improve postsecondary education opportunities for students with intellectual disability on their campus

www.thinkcollege.net
Finding the Right Fit

- Start with the basics: size; geographic location; urban, rural, suburban, etc., housing
- Use the thinkcollege.net database
- How to evaluate college programs for students with ID?
  - Has the program been approved for financial aid?
  - Model Accreditation Standards Report
  - Think College Standards, Quality Indicators and Benchmarks

Finding the Right Fit: What questions should we ask?

- Visit www.thinkcollege.net to read: Conducting a College Search: Questions to Ask College Programs for great questions to ask colleges.
- Set up a phone call to ask questions.
- Schedule a college visit to see the campus and meet the staff, faculty, and students.
- Visit the disability services to see how involved that office is with the program.
- Connect with alumni and their families to learn about their experiences at college and what they’re doing now.
Think College Resources for Families

- Resources for families on website: https://thinkcollege.net/family-resources
- Think College Learn module for families: https://thinkcollege.net/think-college-learn/families-0

The Think College Families Facebook page is a closed group that serves as a platform for families of kids in college or planning for college to talk to each other and share experiences.
Resources


- Universal Design for Learning (UDL) www.udlcenter.org


Additional Resources

- “LIFE Learning Is For Everyone: The True Story of How South Carolina Came to be a Leader in Providing Opportunities for Postsecondary Education to Young Adults with Intellectual Disabilities” : Amazon

- National ABLE Resource Center http://www.ablenrc.org


- Ruby’s Rainbow: Scholarships for Youth and Adults w Down Syndrome https://rubysrainbow.org

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- Sign up for information and action alerts on education policy by joining the NDSC email list at https://www.ndsccenter.org/stay-up-to-date-with-ndsc-news/

- “Like” the National Down Syndrome Congress Governmental Affairs FB page at https://www.facebook.com/dsadvocates/

- Follow NDSC on Facebook at https://www.facebook.com/thendsc/ and Twitter @policyupdates
Questions