

Helping Twice Exceptional Neurodiverse Students Transition to College

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Help Group Summitt
11/24

About Me

- Professor, Special Education program
- Director - Collaborative on Postsecondary Education and Disability
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- Former Director of UPLD at UConn
- Former Director of LRC at Mitchell College

Session Objectives

- To discuss postsecondary education as a viable option for 2e neurodiverse students
- To discuss key differences between secondary and postsecondary services for students with disabilities
- To present suggestions related to planning for postsecondary education for students with disabilities
- To focus on long range planning and high expectations for students with disabilities

The Main Session Objective

- To help your students go from High School to.....

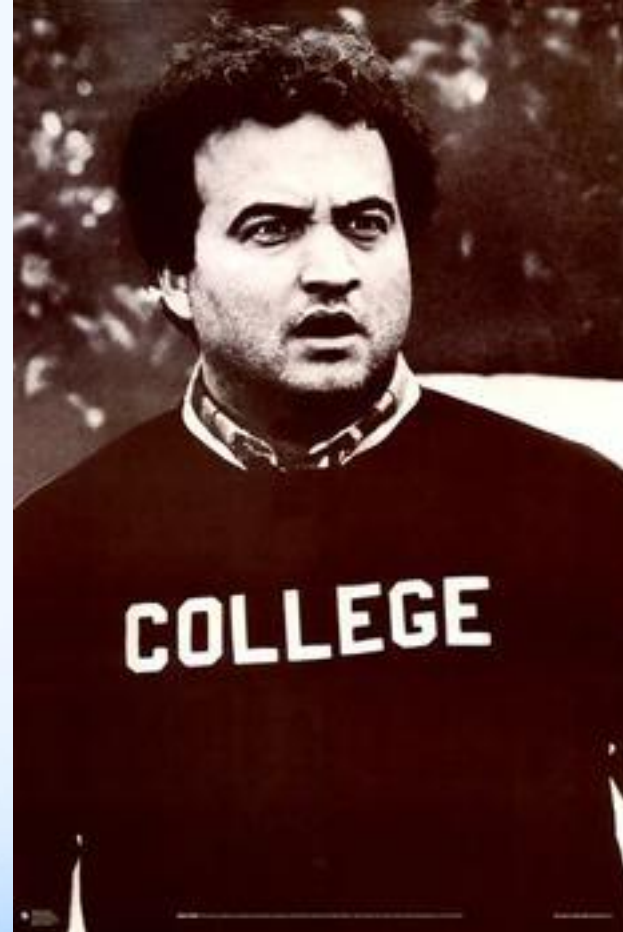


Image from
Sodahead.com

The Main Session Objective

- To help your students go from High School to.....

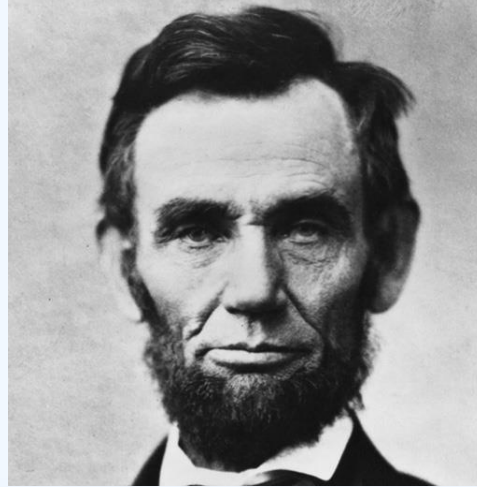


Image from prlog.org

Quiz Time!!!!

- The first American President to sign a bill authorizing a college program for students with disabilities was.....?

Quiz Time!!!!



- In 1864, the National Deaf-Mute College was established in Washington, DC
- Now known as Gallaudet University (after the first director, Edward Miner Gallaudet)

- Picture from <http://www.visitingdc.com/president/abraham-lincoln-picture.htm>

He walked three miles to the woman's house and returned the money.

Imagine that you lived at the same time as Abraham Lincoln. What would you say to him or ask him?

I'd tell him not to
go to a play ever.

Increased Access: Good News!

- College students with disabilities in college:
 - 2.6% in 1978
 - 9% in 2004 (CIRP Freshman Study)
 - 11% in 2011-12 (NCES, 2016)
 - Roughly 20% in 2015-2016 (NCES, 2017)
- Increasing numbers of students with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) are applying to and attending college (Ashbaugh et al., 2017), but completion rates are lower:
 - 39% v. 59%
- 2e students with ASD (2eASD) may not be receiving the necessary educational support to succeed in high school and to be prepared for college (Cain et al., 2019) because:
 - ✓ Talents overshadow disabilities
 - ✓ Disabilities mask talents

Why Go to College?



<http://perpetualpreparedness.blogspot.com/2010/08/avoid-college.html>

Why Go to College?



Why Go to College?



<http://www.credit.com>

Why Go to College?

- Over a lifetime, a 4-year college graduate earns 84% more than those with a with a HS degree only, and over \$1.2 million over their lifetime

- <https://www.aplu.org/our-work/4-policy-and-advocacy/publicvalues/employment-earnings/#:~:text=Typical%20earnings%20for%20bachelor's%20degree,million%20more%20over%20their%20lifetime.New jobs increasingly require a college degree>

- BLS Unemployment Data (February & September 2023):

- No Disability: 3.5%
- Persons with Disabilities: 7.2%
- All People
 - ✓ Less than HS Diploma: 5.6%
 - ✓ HS Diploma: 3.9%
 - ✓ Some College: 3.3%
 - ✓ Associates: 2.7%
 - ✓ BA or higher: 2.2%

<https://www.bls.gov/emp/chart-unemployment-earnings-education.htm>

- College is likely just the start – employers spent over over \$1k per employee annually on on the job training in 2023

- <https://hrdailyadvisor.blr.com/2024/08/21/how-much-are-companies-spending-on-employee-training-in-the-us/#:~:text=Average%20Investment%20in%20Employee%20Training,increase%20from%20%241%2C071%20in%202021.>

Legal Mandates

- Education of All Handicapped Children Act of 1975 (P.L. 94-142)
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (1990, 1997, 2004; P.L. 108-446)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Americans with Disabilities Act (1990; 2008)
- Higher Education Opportunity Act (2008)
- There are *significant* differences in mandates from secondary to postsecondary education!

IDEA

- Federal special education legislation
- Requires:
 - Free appropriate public education
 - Least restrictive environment
 - Team of professionals
 - Child find and evaluations
 - Development of an IEP, modifications
 - Progress towards goals
 - Transition planning by age 16
 - Summary of Performance statement
- Some degree of consistency from state to state
- Ends at graduation or HS exit

Section 504

- Component of Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973
- Civil rights law
- In K-12 education this is a General Ed law, *NOT* special ed law
 - But often falls to special education

Section 504

“No *otherwise qualified* person with a disability in the United States...shall, *solely by reason of her or his disability*, be *excluded* from participation in, be *denied the benefits* of, or be *subjected to discrimination* under any program or activity receiving *federal financial assistance* or under any program or activity conducted by any Executive agency or by the United States Postal Service. (29 U.S.C. 794)”

Vocational Rehabilitation Act of 1973

Title VI – Civil Rights Act

No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Civil Rights Act of 1964

Title IX

No person in the United States shall, on the basis of sex, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any education program or activity receiving Federal financial assistance.

Title IX of the Educational Amendments of 1972

If a Person

Has a physical or mental impairment which *substantially limits* one or more major life functions;

OR

Has a history of such impairment;

OR

Is regarded as having such an impairment;

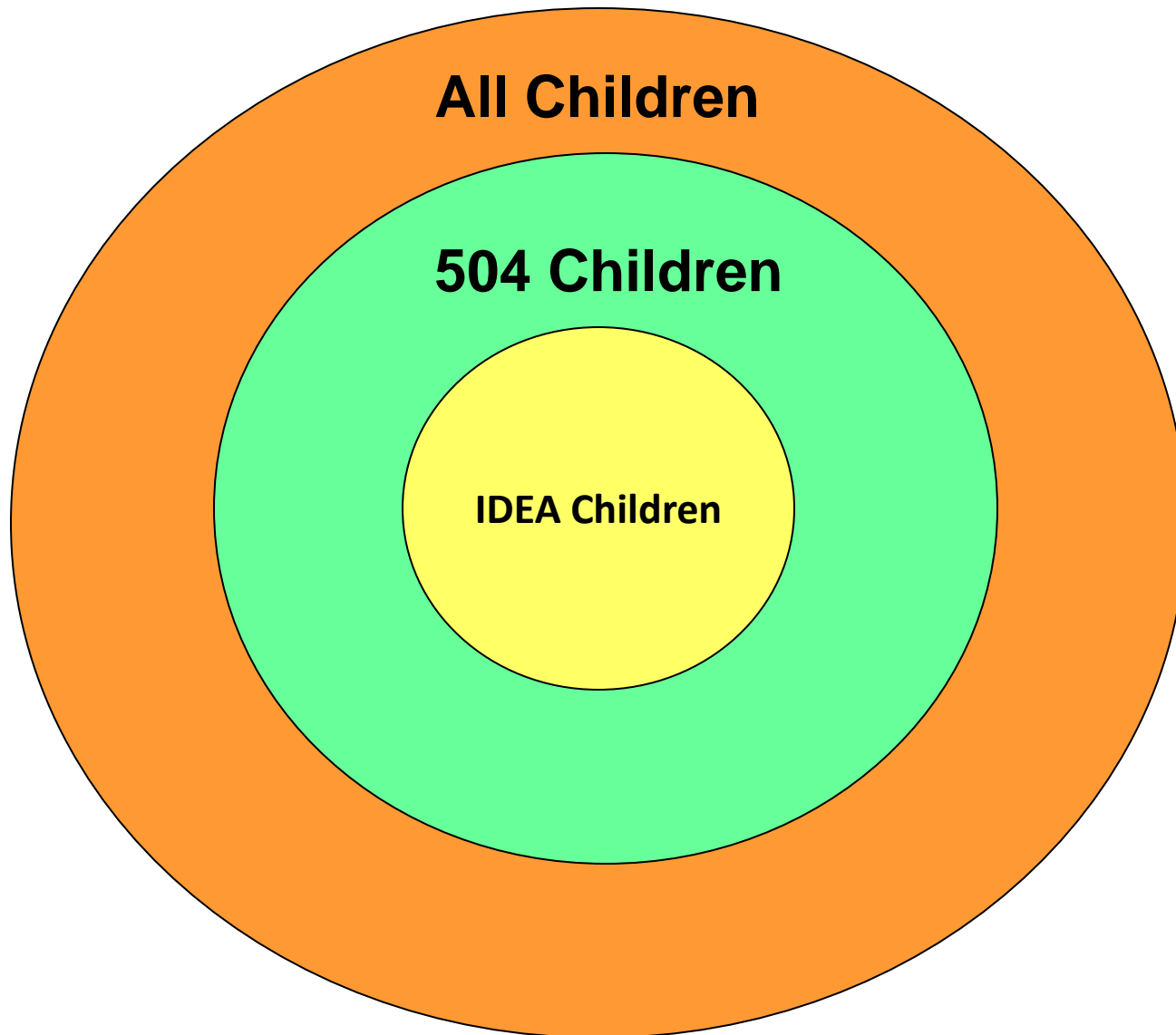
AND

The person meets the *essential eligibility requirements* of a program or activity;

THEN

Must be *ensured equal opportunity* for participation.

Relationship of 504 and IDEA



Section 504 Subparts

- Subpart A: General Provisions
- Subpart B: Employment Practices
- Subpart C: Program Accessibility
- Subpart D: Preschool, Elementary, and Secondary Education
- Subpart E: Postsecondary Education
- Subpart F: Health, Welfare, and Social Services
- Subpart G: Procedures

The Five Titles of the ADA

- Title I: Employment
 - 15 or more employees
- Title II: Public Services and Transportation
 - state and local government entities and programs
- Title III: Public Accommodations
 - all private institutions, unless exempted as above
 - testing agencies and licensing boards
- Title IV: Telecommunications Relay Systems
- Title V: Miscellaneous Provisions

IDEA versus Section 504/ADA

Issue	Responsibility: Secondary Level	Responsibility: College Level
Identification	School	Student
Assessment	School	Student
Programming	School/Parents	Student/Institution
Advocacy	School/Parent	Student
Decision Making	Placement Team	Student
Transition Planning	Placement Team	Student

From: Brinckerhoff, Shaw, & McGuire
(1992)

What Is Required at the College Level?

- If the student is “Otherwise Qualified”:
 - Access to all programs and activities
 - An institutional contact person
 - Reasonable academic accommodations
 - Necessary Auxiliary Aids (e.g., notetakers)
 - Reasonable physical accommodations
 - Reasonable housing accommodations

What Is *Not* Required at the College Level?

- Disability specialists
- Special education instruction
- Identifying, evaluation of students with disabilities
- Personal services (e.g., tutoring)
- Altering technical standards
- Following testing recommendations
- Following IEP's, Secondary 504 plans
- Guaranteeing success or progress

What *Might* be Available?

- An established disability service office
- Disability specialists
- Individual support and/or monitoring
- Individual assessments
- Personal services (e.g., tutoring)
- An additional fee!

Decentralized Services	Loosely Coordinated Services	Centrally Coordinated Services	Data-Based Services
Designated disability contact person may have multiple responsibilities	Disability contact person	Full-time disability coordinator Services located in Office for Students with Disabilities or other on-campus sites (e.g., learning or academic skills center)	Full-time program director; Assistant director and/or additional staff Services located in Office for Students with Disabilities
Basic services as mandated under Section 504	Generic 504 support services and accommodations	Full range of accommodations	Full range of accommodations
Few formal policies	Procedures in place for accessing services Peer tutors available for all students Students referred to other on-campus services (e.g., counseling and/or career services, residential life)	Policies and procedures in place Emphasis on student self-advocacy Assistive technology may be available Specially trained disability specialists may be available	Comprehensive policies and procedures Emphasis on student self-advocacy Assistive technology available Individualized support plan available

Institutions May *Not*

- Make pre-admissions inquiries
- Limit number of students with disabilities
- Base decisions for financial aid on disability
- Bar participation in a program, activity, or major
- Counsel students towards restrictive majors

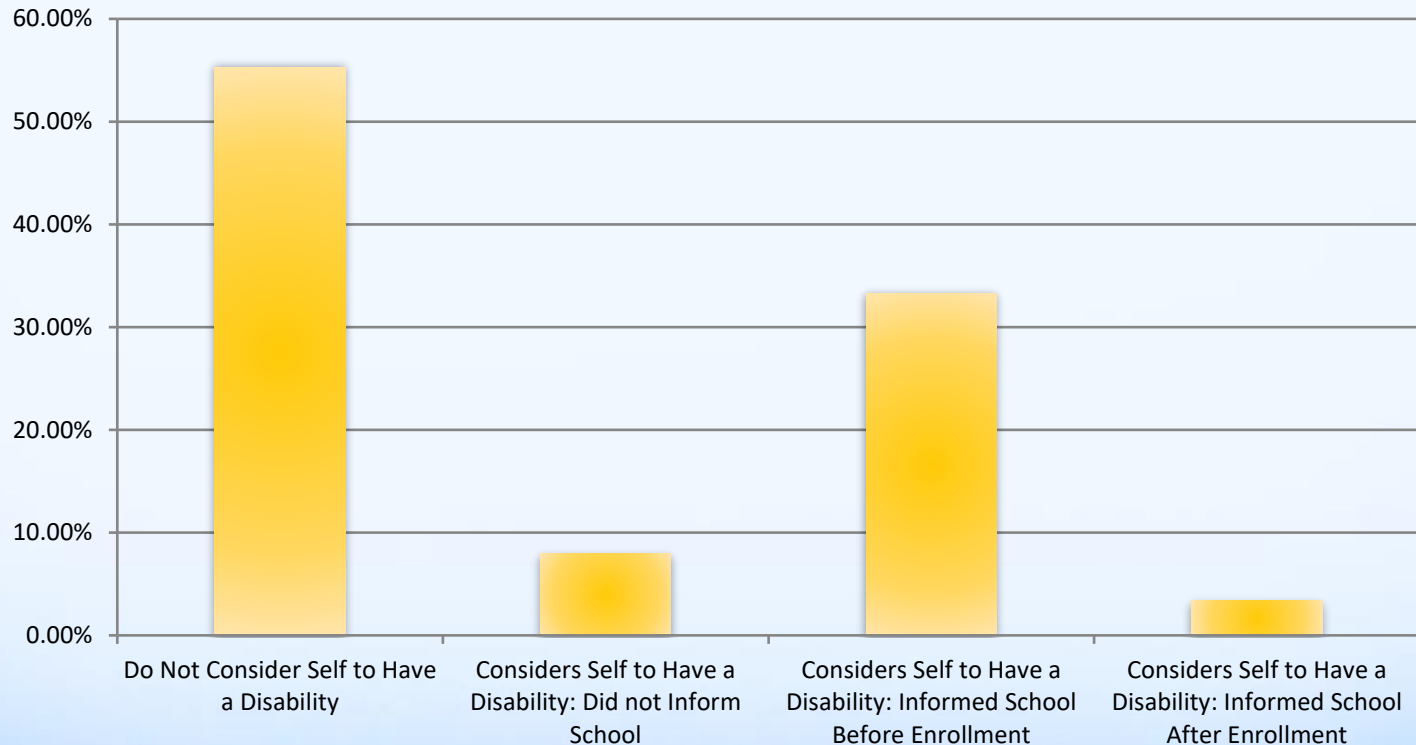
Student Responsibilities

- Significantly increase in college:
 - Prove eligibility for admission
 - Self-identify
 - Submit appropriate documentation
 - Initiate requests for accommodations
 - *Maintain* eligibility for protection
 - Monitor the effectiveness of accommodations
 - Make decisions (e.g., courses, plan of study)
 - Assume costs and fees for education

Accommodations

- “Reasonable” versus “desired” or “optimal”
- Intersection of:
 - Documentation
 - Essential course, program, professional requirements
- Consider the following accommodations:
 - No penalty for spelling errors
 - Use of a calculator
 - Second language/Math substitutions
 - Paraphrasing or explaining test questions
 - A scribe
 - Changing test format
 - Missing class or arriving late
- Are they reasonable at the college level?
- What about reduced course loads?

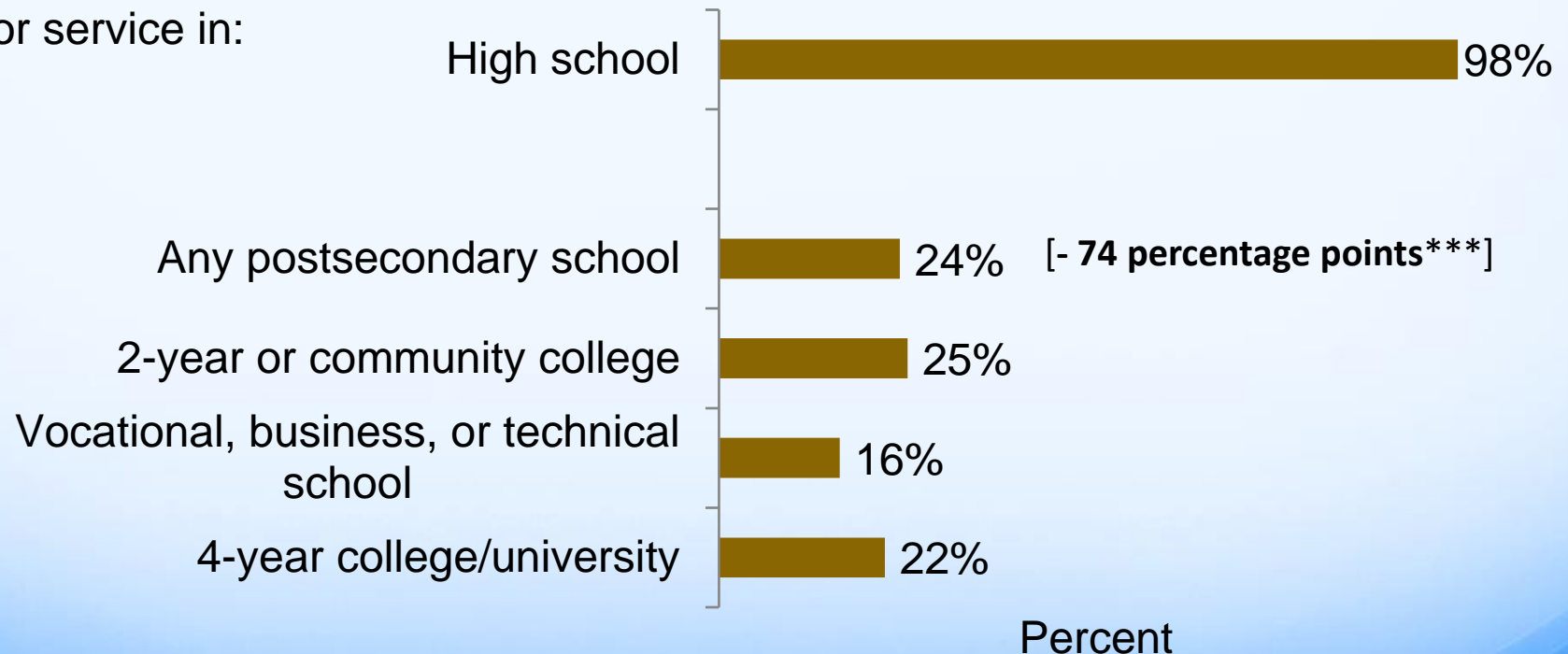
Self-Disclosure



From: Newman, Wagner, Cameto, & Knokey (2009). The post high school outcomes of youth with disabilities up to 4 years after high school. A report of findings from the NLTS2. Menlo Park, CA.

Receipt of disability-related accommodations, modifications, or services from high school and/or postsecondary school

Received at least one accommodation, modification, or service in:

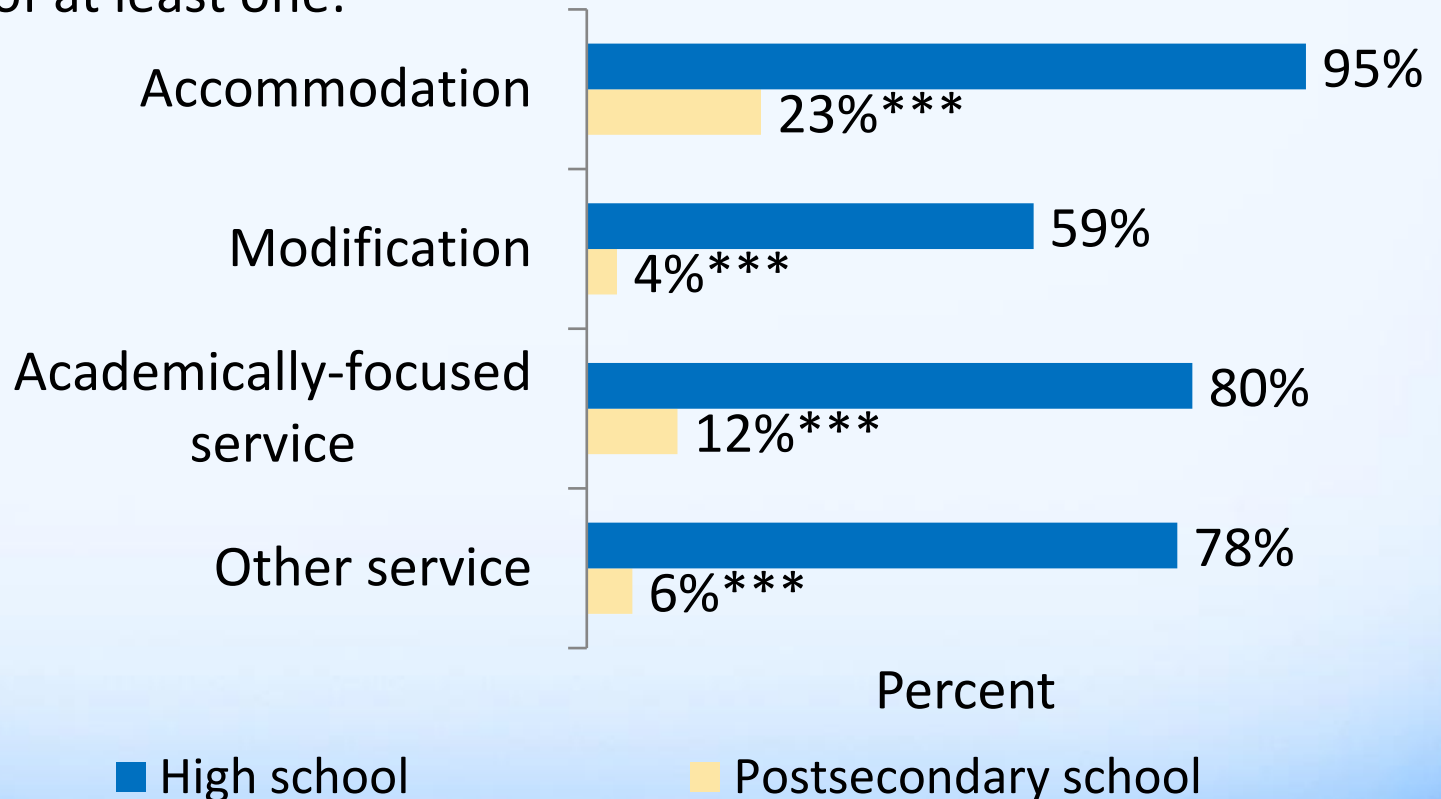


*** $p < .001$.

Newman and Madaus, 2013; from NLTS2 Data

Difference in receipt of disability-related accommodations and supports between high school and postsecondary school

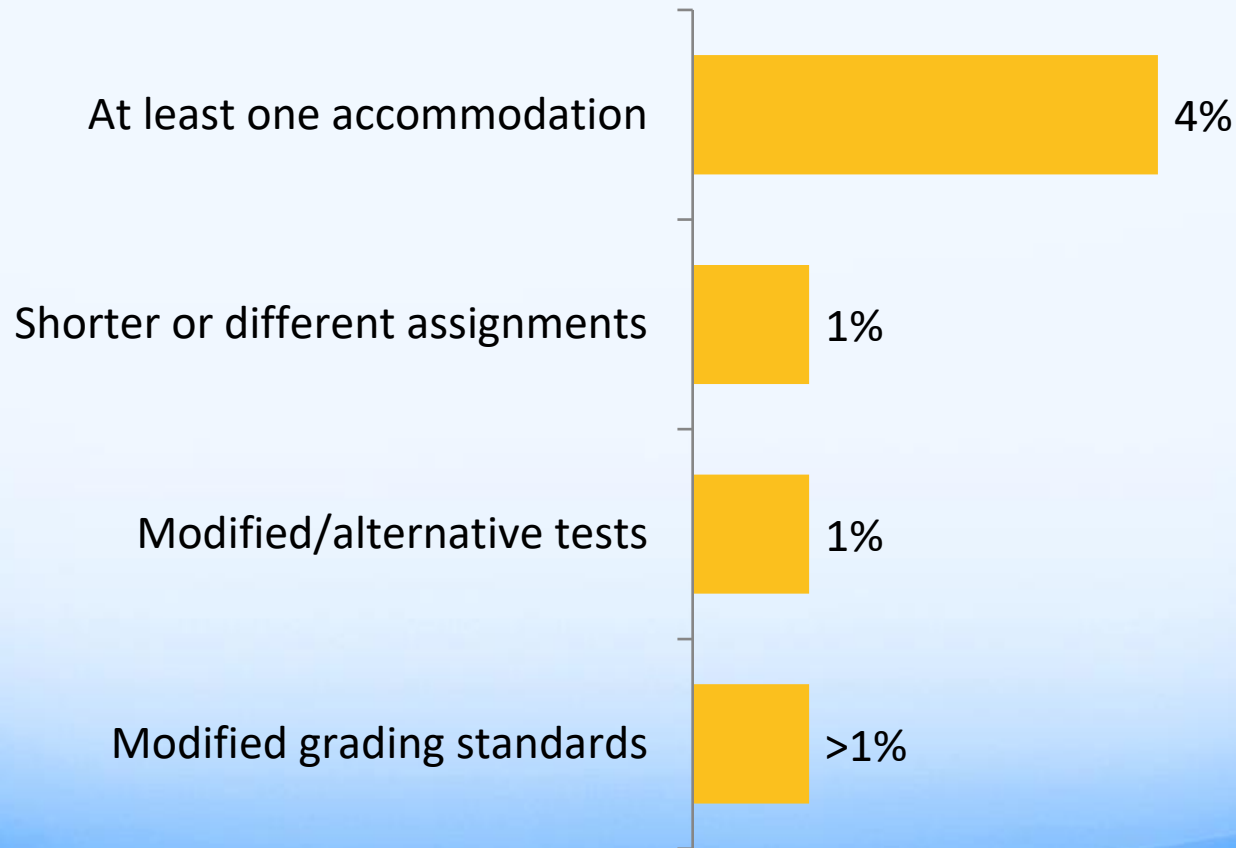
Receipt of at least one:



*** $p < .001$.

Newman and Madaus, 2013; from NLTS2 Data

Modifications received by postsecondary students with disabilities



Newman and Madaus, 2013; from NLT2 Data

Key Points

- In post school settings:
 - Self-disclosure is optional
 - Accommodation use is optional
 - Accommodation use declines
- What does this mean for your students?

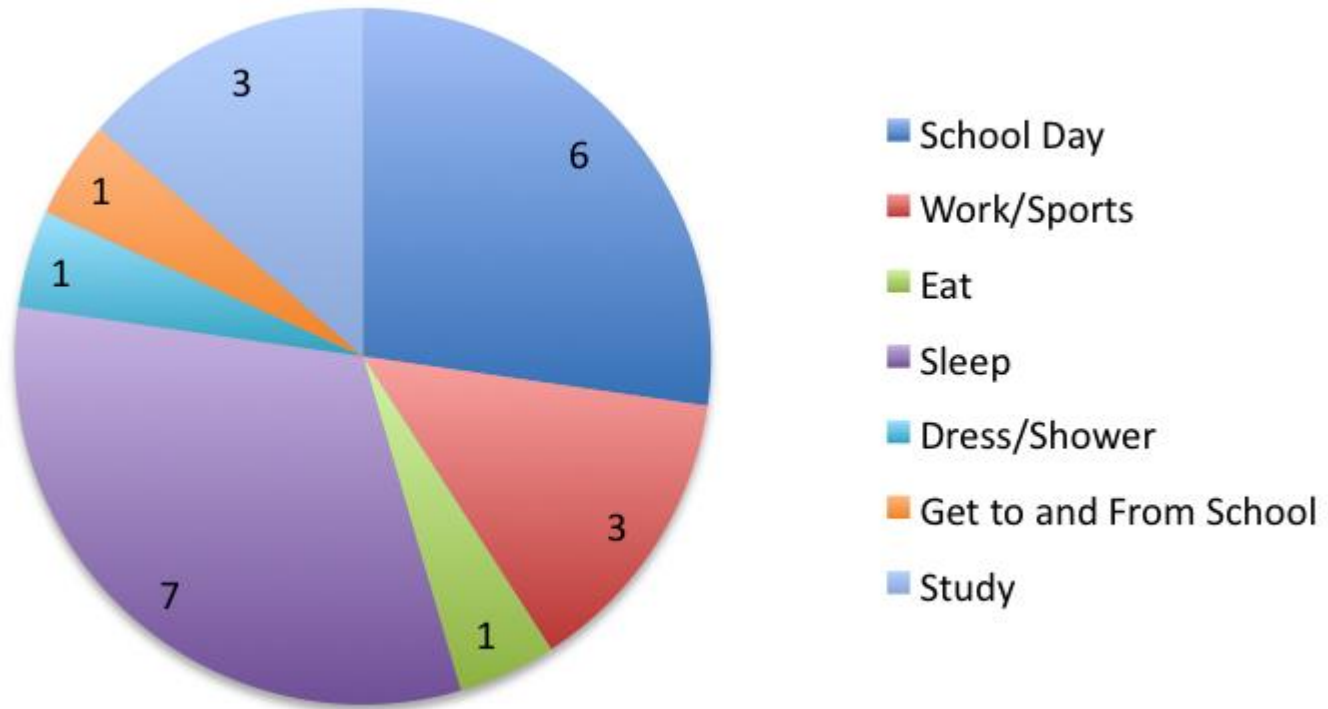
The Need for Self-Determination



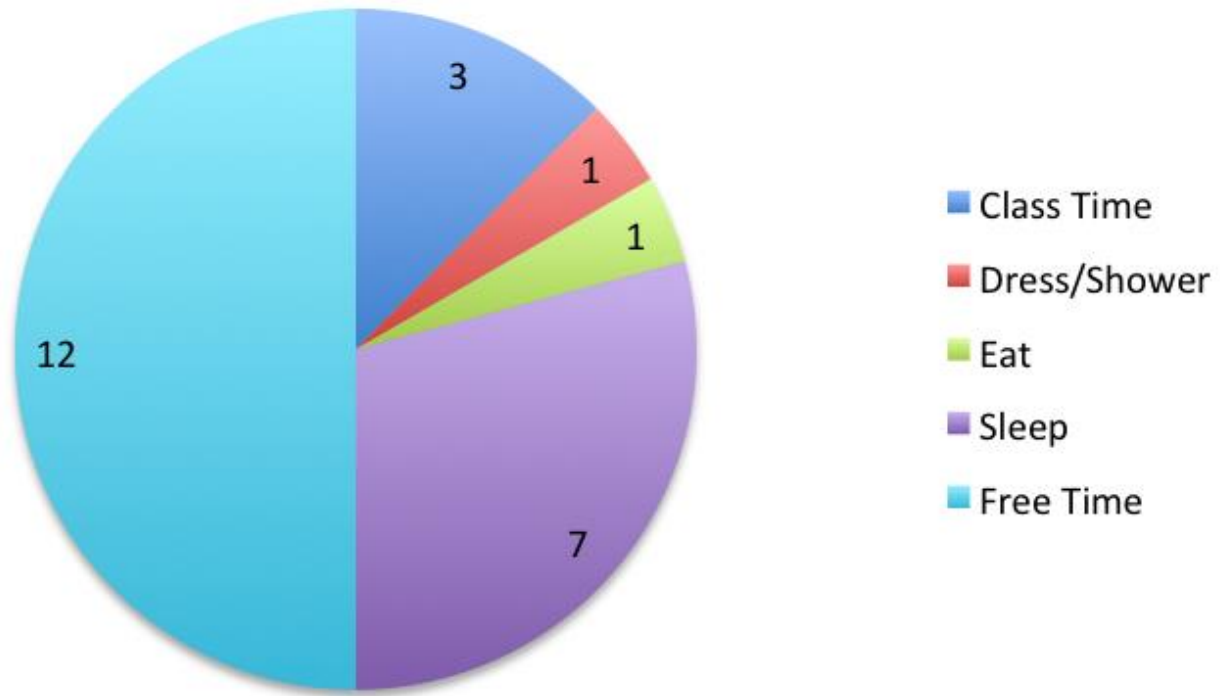
Need for Self Determination



The High School Day



The College Day



Successful Students

- Take advantage of available supports
- Are self-advocates
- Are self-determined
- Set clear goals
- Understand the need to improve skills
- Understand need to work steadily
- Work hard, but also work efficiently
- Get involved and stay busy
- Develop social networks and supports

Findings from Project 2eASD

- Interviews with 40 2eASD college students
 - Participants indicated that having self-awareness, self-advocacy, and time management/organization skills were essential to their success in college
 - When faced with challenges, difficulties, or adverse conditions, rather than give up, these participants found a reasonable path for success, figured out how to compensate for their disabilities, and/or took a new direction to achieve success
 - Seventeen participants (43%) indicated that they attended a community college, smaller regional campus, or another college (usually closer to home and smaller) before transferring to their current/final college

From the Students



Transition Tips

- Begin planning early – 16 is too late!
- Have high expectations for ***all*** students
- Promote student involvement, self-advocacy
- Promote study skills and metacognition
- Avoid modifications
- Promote knowledge of change in legal status

Strength Based Prep (2eASD)

- Most participants' academic talents were formally recognized by their teachers and parents.
- Half were identified as being academically talented in elementary or secondary school.
- Most understood that they had academic talents.

Strength Based Prep (2eASD)

- “I had an amazing teacher who gave me opportunities to participate in projects. One of my mentors was a science teacher and she also gave me advanced opportunities. She gave me so many chances for advanced work. She let me apply science to the real world and to me, that was beautiful. She gave me the confidence to know that I could go beyond and to extra work.”
- “There were so many people that believed in me and gave me advanced courses and advanced independent projects. They gave me time to write short stories. They let me explore my strengths and interests. They nurtured me—they gave me a fluid opportunity. Many public schools are like conveyer belts, but my school was like the elevator in Charlie and the Chocolate Factory.”





Strength Based Prep (2eASD)

- “Robotics team—I loved that as I struggled a lot socially growing up but in robotics, I liked having a team. It made me feel good about myself... I was part of the women’s science club. I founded a girls who code club. I was a math tutor. I’m a STEM nerd.”
- “Tennis, documentary film, senator for senior year, mock trial, band, and choir. Every year we make a film for a competition, there’s a topic, we made one about education declining as, there are funding problems in my town. I did it for two years.”

Transition Tips

- Prepare for degree and graduation, not just admissions
- Research “Gen Ed” and degree requirements
 - Marine Biology
 - Athletic Training
 - Sports Management
 - Agriculture

Transition “Traps”

- Slow semester “start ups”
- Poor self-awareness and executive skills
- Belief that high school techniques will suffice
- Emotional issues (anxiety, depression)
- Loss of significant support networks
- Over reliance on significant support networks
- Lack of involvement
- Over involvement
- “Sabotage”
- Lack of preparation in basic skills

How to Help Make it Happen

- Start early and have high expectations!
- Develop appropriate post school goals
- Develop an academically rigorous program
- Avoid modifications if possible
- Promote learning skills and strategies
- Promote self-determination and self-advocacy
- Understand differences in laws and services

From Service Providers (2eASD)

- Importance of:
 - “Touch points” or contacts with an advocate or mentor on campus
 - Being able to navigate the variety of campus services and resources (including what, where, and when)
 - Early contact; Summer orientation programs, generalized and specialized
 - Navigating social interactions and environments (e.g., in residence and dining halls, classes, labs, group projects)
 - Involvement in clubs or other socially based activities
 - Being proactive in communicating with faculty
 - Understanding how to differentiate socially depending on the situation

Great Resources

- **OCR – *Students Transitioning to College: Know your rights***
 - **<http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>**
- **National Technical Assistance Center on Transition**
 - **<https://transitionta.org/>**
- **Project 2eASD**
 - **<https://giftedasd.project.uconn.edu/>**

In Their Own Words

- “ Just be yourself...study a lot, ask questions no matter if you think they are stupid...just do what is best for you to advance in life and in a career.”
- “ Encourage students to pursue careers in areas that they enjoy and have strength in. Do not take a job. Take the job that works well for you. You will make the most money and be the happiest if you stay in a career area you enjoy.”
- “ I really have no suggestions other than reinforcing for students LD does not limit income. The outside world is easier than school. Have a vision and go for it!!”

From Madaus, 2006

In Their Own Words

“Take things a little at a time and you can do it. Work with your professors to know what is expected of you. If you show that you care, they will too.”

Jeremy, A College Student with LD

Adapted from Peterson's Guide of Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities

The Target



Acknowledgements

- Sally Reis
- Nicholas Gelbar
- Susan Baum
- Quinn Austermann
- Julie Delgado