

# Planning and Going to College

Transition Skills, Tips & Tools  
Planning & Going to College



1. **Start planning early** while you are still in high school (beginning your freshman year). Make sure you take the high school classes that will help you get into college.
2. **Set goals** to help you get ready for college.
3. **Get to know your strengths, interests and learning style.** PACER's National Parent Center on Transition and Employment can help you get started at [www.pacer.org/transition/](http://www.pacer.org/transition/).
4. **Think about who your support system will be** when you are away from home.
5. If you are 18 or older, your parents will no longer have access to your grades, course selection and so on after you register for college. It will be up to you to keep track of these things.
6. As a college student, you will need to ask for accommodations and provide documentation. This responsibility shifts to you, and you will need to communicate your needs.
7. **Choosing a college will take time.** Attend college fairs, explore on the internet, talk to friends, family and others to learn more about colleges. Schedule a campus visit with the colleges you're interested in. The Think College website provides information for persons with intellectual disabilities. The information is for transition-aged students as well as adults attending or planning for college. It provides resources and tools for students, families and professionals. Go to [thinkcollege.net](http://thinkcollege.net).
8. To be successful at college, you may want to **access assistance through the campus' Office of Disability Services.** Start by asking the school about services for students with disabilities. You can call on the phone, visit the campus or even review their website to learn about services.
9. **If you use assistive devices,** such as a wheelchair or a hearing aid, you will need to check on repair services available near the campus. This way you will be prepared if something goes wrong while you are away at college.
10. **Planning for nearby medical care is important.** If you have special healthcare needs, you should plan where you will go for health services, medications and supplies. You can ask your current physician to help identify health resources closer to campus. Your insurance provider can help find in-network health services, including equipment providers for maintenance or repairs, pharmacies and medical facilities for lab work and other services. Your DSCC care coordination team can help you plan for medical emergencies and connect you to health resources.

11. Become aware of the laws that protect students with disabilities at colleges, universities and community colleges.
  - The Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities webpage has information about admissions, accommodations, academic adjustments, documentation and discrimination under Section 504 Rehabilitation Act at [www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html](http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html).
12. Talk to your family, friends and guidance counselor at school about your plans.

## Helpful Higher Education Resources

**College Navigator** is an online tool to help students and parents get information on post-secondary institutions throughout the United States - [nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/](http://nces.ed.gov/collegenavigator/)

**PACER Center's "College or Training Programs: How to Decide"** is a tip sheet to help youth decide on a path after high school - [www.pacer.org/transition/resource-library/publications/NPC-26.pdf](http://www.pacer.org/transition/resource-library/publications/NPC-26.pdf)

**The University of Washington's DO-IT (Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking and Technology) Center** promotes the use of computer and networking technologies to increase independence, productivity and participation in education and employment - [www.washington.edu/doit/](http://www.washington.edu/doit/)

**Education Quest** is a website to help with college planning. They have developed a free guide, "College Planning for Student with Disabilities," that you may order or view their shorter version online. Finding a college that meets your needs will require research, campus visits and asking the right questions - [publications.educationquest.org/view/163090404/](http://publications.educationquest.org/view/163090404/)

**Going to College** is a website with information about living college life with a disability. It is designed for high school students and provides video clips, activities and resources that can help you get a head start in planning for college - [going-to-college.org](http://going-to-college.org)

**Mapping Your Future** is a free resource for career, college, financial aid and money management information. Its goal is to help individuals achieve life-long success by empowering students, families and schools with free, web-based information and services - [mappingyourfuture.org/](http://mappingyourfuture.org/)

**The National Technical Assistance Center on Transition** website is a tremendous resource for individuals planning to go to college. There are videos and inventory surveys to help you explore your strengths and interests, accept your disability and advocate for yourself. Information is presented on what campus life is like and planning for going to college - [transitionta.org/](http://transitionta.org/)

## We're here to help.

To learn more about the Division of Specialized Care for Children's programs and services, check out our website at: [dsc.uic.edu](http://dsc.uic.edu)

