The successful transition of students with disabilities to, through and beyond college is a team effort. AHEAD offers the following to students, parents, professionals and employers so that all are aware of the wide range of resources that are available.

## FAQ’s – Students

**1. Should I tell about my disability on my application to college?**

You are not required to disclose your disability at any time and the college is prohibited by Federal law from asking you about a disability on the application form. If you believe your disability has had a negative impact on your grades and test scores and, thus, those scores do not truly reflect your ability to do college level work, then it might benefit you to explain that to the admission officer or committee. However, this is a personal decision that you should also discuss with knowledgeable folks such as your parents, school counselor, vocational rehabilitation counselor, or even someone at the college. Often, once a student has been accepted, the college will give incoming students information regarding the office or offices that provide services for students with disabilities as well as time frames for requesting accommodations. It is, then, up to you to contact the appropriate officials if you feel you will need services.

**2. Are there any scholarships for disabled students?**

Generally, no, there are no Federally-funded scholarship or loan programs specifically targeted to students with disabilities. However, there may be local or regional scholarships or loan programs established by eleemosynary or charitable organizations for which you might be eligible. You should contact the Student Aid Office at the colleges you are considering; they are knowledgeable about the various scholarships and loan programs available and often can give you a list which describes the qualifications and application deadlines required for the various loans and scholarships. If you are not a client of Vocational Rehabilitation, you may wish to apply for services from VR to see if you are eligible and could receive support.

The HEATH Resource Center produces a helpful guide to scholarship and other funding sources. Look for the “Financial Aid Guide” publication at <http://www.heath.gwu.edu/node/9>

**3. How do I find out what my rights are in college?**

The college may very well provide you this information in the admission packet. Prior to that, you can go online to Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Dept. of Education’s page: <http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/disability.html> which provides access to the Federal law and regulations as well as some FAQ’s. You may also contact the college’s office for disabled student services which can provide you information on Federal, state, local, and campus regulations that you should know.

**4. Where do I go to get tested for a learning disability or ADD?**

If you regularly see a family doctor, ask him or her if they can make a referral to someone that can provide you with the appropriate testing. You may also contact the college’s office for disabled student services for a recommendation. You can go online and research possibilities through the Learning Disabilities Association of America, <http://www.ldanatl.org/>

**5. Campus transportation says they won’t give me a ride to my apartment. It’s right near campus – why not?**

As the name implies, campus transportation usually only works on campus. The college is mandated by Federal law only to ensure that the transportation system it utilizes is accessible to persons with disabilities. If the system does not provide everyone transportation to off-campus locations, then there is no requirement to provide such service to people with disabilities. However, it is always a good idea to discuss the issue with the college’s office for disabled student services. There may be alternatives available or modifications that could be made and that office might be able to negotiate that with you.

**6. Can I have my therapy animal with me in my dorm room?**

There is no definitive answer to this question; this is an issue that you must discuss with the appropriate college officials well in advance. Generally, you should bring this up to the office for disabled student services very early in the process so they can explain what the college’s rules, policies, and procedures are regarding therapy animals.

**7. My doctor says I should get unlimited time for taking tests. The disability office says I’m allowed time and a half – why?**

The college has the responsibility under Federal law for ensuring access to their programs and activities by students with disabilities. Often, the office for disabled student services is delegated the authority to make decisions on what is regarded as reasonable adjustments to ensure equal access because they have the knowledge, credentials, and experience to do this. The office often uses medical or other professional documentation provided by the student as a basis for making such decisions but they are not required to follow exactly the recommendations made in the documentation provided. If you feel the decision is not fair or appropriate, you may utilize the college’s appeal process or file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights.

**8. My professor refuses to give me my accommodations; what can I do?**

You should discuss the issue with the college’s office for disabled student services. The processes and procedures used by colleges for providing accommodations vary greatly but all are directed towards ensuring equal access to their programs for students with disabilities. The office can guide you through the appropriate actions you need to take or they may need to intercede. You may need to utilize the college’s appeals process or file a complaint with the Office for Civil Rights, both of which are processes that are generally used if all other avenues have failed.

## FAQ’s – Parents

**1. Which colleges are the best for students with learning disabilities?**

It would be impossible for anyone to rank colleges and universities in such a way. First, as you may already have learned years ago, the term learning disability is a catch-all phrase that describes a vast array of major impediments to learning. Under §504 of the Rehabilitation Act and the ADA, each college and university is required to provide academic adjustments (i.e., accommodations) to ensure that students with learning disabilities can have access to their programs. However, there are many colleges and universities that go beyond the minimum requirements and provide a variety of programs and services to better serve students with learning disabilities. If you believe your child would benefit from a more intense program of services, it will be necessary to research the various colleges and universities providing these services to determine which best fits your child’s needs. Two sources for finding this information include:

**The Princeton Review K&W Guide for Colleges for Students with Learning Disabilities or ADD**. ISBN 037576495X

**Peterson’s Colleges with Programs for Students with Learning Disabilities or Attention Deficit Disorders**. ISBN 0768912687

**2. What kinds of housing options are there for my child in college?**

Housing is exactly that, an option. Many colleges and universities do not provide any housing; others have outsourced their housing to private organizations or other agencies. Others offer very limited housing and others still will provide a full-scale of choices. If the college offers housing, it must ensure that the housing is accessible to students with disabilities. It is very important to discuss your child’s needs with appropriate college officials well in advance to ensure that any accommodations that might be necessary can be handled in a timely manner.

**3. Does the college have a set up to handle students with food allergies?**

If the college offers a meal plan, then it is important to discuss this issue with appropriate college officials well in advance to ensure that your child’s needs can be met under the meal plan. Often, food services on campus are contracted out to private companies and while this does not release the college from its obligations under a meal plan, it may complicate the process of informing appropriate officials of your child’s needs and implementing appropriate accommodations. If the college does not offer a meal plan of any sort and students are on their own to utilize on-campus or off-campus food establishments, then the matter is solely yours to resolve; however, it would still be worthwhile to discuss this issue with the disabled student services office on campus. More than likely, they have experiences and knowledge with this and can assist.

**4. Can we visit the disabled student office on our college tour?**

More than likely the office would love to have you visit and learn about their services, processes, and personnel. However, if your visit is occurring during an academic term, they may be very busy and if it occurs during the summer or between terms, they may not be in the office. Either way, it is imperative to make an appointment in advance so someone can be available to answer your questions.

**5. My child has an IEP/504 Plan. Why isn’t that good enough for college?**

An IEP or 504 Plan addresses your child’s needs in the K-12 educational program. Postsecondary education is a totally different arena. Almost everything about the postsecondary system is different from what you’ve experienced before. This includes how a college may address your child’s needs for accessing its educational program and the information it needs to accomplish this. While the IEP or 504 Plan may provide the disabled student services office with some of what it will need, additional information may be required. This chart gives a general overview of the differences in the various laws: <http://www.postitt.org/transition_topics/pu_compare.htm> See the additional information below about the IDEA, ADA and civil rights.

**6. My child will need some extra help to understand the class material. Can someone help him with that?**

The short answer is possibly, more than likely probably; however, you may have to pay for it yourself. Because of Federal guidelines, colleges are not mandated to provide tutorial services to ensure access to their educational programs. Often, colleges provide tutorial services to all their students and, if so, they must ensure that the tutorial programs are accessible. Because of the wide range and variety of tutorial services offered by colleges, this would be a mandatory issue to bring up to the colleges your child is considering to attend.

**7. How does my son get special arrangements for the SAT?**

You must make arrangements with Educational Testing Services (ETS) who administer the SAT. Usually, the high school officials who have been working with your son or the school official responsible for administering the SAT should have all the information necessary and should be assisting with the process. Of course, you could contact ETS directly to find out what would be necessary. You should plan on this well in advance of any scheduled administration of the exam.

**8. We just bought an adapted laptop for our daughter with a physical disability. Can the college help pay for any special equipment for her?**

The college is responsible for ensuring that their programs and activities are accessible to students with disabilities. If this means that physical modifications are needed such as a raised desk or lowered laboratory table, then the college takes care of that. Special equipment of a personal nature is not necessarily paid for by a college. However, the distinctions between modified equipment for accessibility and personal special equipment can vary so it is always best to discuss these issues with the disabled student services personnel at the college. If your daughter is a client of Vocational Rehabilitation, she should be discussing these issues with her counselor as well.

## Transition Resources A – Z

### Assistive Technology

**Center for Assistive Technology and Environmental Access http://www.catea.org/**CATEA is an established interdisciplinary research and design center devoted to applications of technology to alleviate problems of human need, providing service, research and education under the auspices of a world-class academic institution. Multiple Web resources, teleconferencing and new media production allow Center staff to provide technical assistance and information dissemination across the globe.

**Rehabilitation Engineering and Assistive Technology Society of North America (RESNA) http://www.rsna.org/**
RESNA is an interdisciplinary association of people with a common interest in technology and disability. Their purpose is to improve the potential of people with disabilities to achieve their goals through the use of technology. They serve that purpose by promoting research, development, education, advocacy and provision of technology; and by supporting the people engaged in these activities.

**Abledata (**[**http://www.abledata.com**](http://www.abledata.com)**)**
ABLEDATA provides objective information about assistive technology products and rehabilitation equipment available from domestic and international sources. Although ABLEDATA does not sell any products, they can help you locate the companies that do.

**Job Accommodation Network (**[**http://www.jan.wvu.edu**](http://www.jan.wvu.edu)**)**
JAN, a free consulting service designed to increase the employability of people with disabilities by: 1) providing individualized worksite accommodations solutions, 2) providing technical assistance regarding the ADA and other disability related legislation, and 3) educating callers about self-employment options.

**The American Network of Community Options and Resources**
ANCOR is a nonprofit trade association representing private providers who provide supports and services to people with disabilities. ANCOR is distinguished in this industry by its balance of leading practices resources and advocacy for member agencies and the people and families they serve and support. ANCOR’s efforts in the area of public policy, federal legislative and regulatory initiatives, judicial results, state-level initiatives and the culling of leading practices have uniquely positioned it as the national presence for private providers.

**The American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services**
The American Congress of Community Supports and Employment Services (ACCSES) is a national, nonprofit organization of vocational rehabilitation service and community supports committed to maximizing employment opportunities and independent living for individuals with mental and physical disabilities.

**The John J. Heldrich Center for Workforce Development**
The Center provides an independent source of analysis for reform and innovation in policy-making and employs cutting-edge research and evaluation projects to identify best practices in workforce development and employment and workplace policy. It is also engaged in significant partnerships with the private sector to design effective education and training programs and is committed to assisting job seekers and workers attain the information, education, and skills training they need to move up the economic ladder.

**The National Center on Workforce and Disability**
The National Center on Workforce and Disability is geared for assisting Adults and youth. It is a comprehensive technical assistance resource that can assist organizations and professionals who provide workforce development and employment related services to people with disabilities. They provide training, technical assistance, policy analysis, and information to improve acc The National Collaborative on Workforce and Disability for Youth (NCWD-Y) is a comprehensive technical assistance resource to assist the workforce development community to address issues affecting the employment of youth with disabilities. The NCWD-Y includes partners with expertise in disability, education, employment and workforce development issues. The Collaborative strives to ensure that youth with disabilities are provide full access to high quality services in integrated settings that maximize employment and independent living opportunities for all in the workforce development system.

### Career Exploration and Assessment Tools

**ACT (Work Keys tests and profiles of occupational requirements).** [**http://www.act.org**](http://www.act.org)
ACT is an independent, not-for-profit organization that provides more than a hundred assessment, research, information, and program management services in the broad areas of education and workforce development. Though designed to meet a wide array of needs, all ACT programs and services have one guiding purpose: helping people achieve education and workplace success.

**Bureau of Labor Statistics’ Career Information for Students:** [**http://stats.bls.gov/k12**](http://stats.bls.gov/k12)
The Bureau of Labor Statistics is the principal fact-finding agency for the Federal Government in the broad field of labor economics and statistics. With the strongest commitment to integrity and objectivity, the BLS will be premier among statistical agencies, producing impartial, timely, and accurate data relevant to the needs of our users and to the social and economic conditions of our Nation, its workers, and their families.

**CareerInfoNet:** [**http://www.acinet.org**](http://www.acinet.org)
CareerOneStop is a U.S. Department of Labor-sponsored Web site that offers career resources and workforce information to job seekers, students, businesses, and workforce professionals to foster talent development in a global economy.

**Major-to-Career Converter:** [**http://jobshadow.monster.com/converter/**](http://jobshadow.monster.com/converter/)
Job Shadowing is led by the National Job Shadow Coalition and is supported through a national sponsorship by Monster and co-sponsorship by News Corporation.

**Marketing Education Resource Center:** [**http://www.mark-ed.com**](http://www.mark-ed.com)
They are a not-for-profit center, designed to help all who are preparing students for their futures in the business world. A consortium of 43 state education departments operates this center.

**O\*NET on-line. Making occupational information interactive and accessible for all. Includes occupation and skills search, details and crosswalks for individual careers.** [**http://online.onetcenter.org**](http://online.onetcenter.org)
The O\*NET system serves as the nation's primary source of occupational information, providing comprehensive information on key attributes and characteristics of workers and occupations. The O\*NET database houses this data and O\*NET OnLine provides easy access to that information. O\*NET online makes occupational information interactive and accessible for all. It includes occupation and skills search, details and crosswalks for individual careers.

**Center for Learning Connections.** [**http://www.learningconnections.org**](http://www.learningconnections.org)
The Center for Learning Connections (CLC) designs training and manages projects to help individuals and helps organizations respond to change and improve quality. We are especially effective in working with educators (at all levels and locations), welfare and workforce development professionals, and community based organizations. The CLC is a self-supporting office located at, and legally part of, Highline Community College, Des Moines, Washington.

**Work Values, rating satisfactions from work: a self-evaluation:** [**http://www.uwplatt.edu/counseling/career/values.html**](http://www.uwplatt.edu/counseling/career/values.html)
How do your skills relate to careers and occupations? Online evaluation form to help you identify what careers are best for your skills.

**Steps to Career/Life Planning success.** [**http://www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/steps.asp**](http://www.cdm.uwaterloo.ca/steps.asp)
This site has an eManual that has been organized into six "steps" to help you manage your career development process.

### Disability specific information

**ADHD:** [**http://www.chadd.org**](http://www.chadd.org)
CHADD (Children and Adults with Attention-Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder) is the nation's leading non-profit organization serving individuals with AD/HD and their families. CHADD has over 16,000 members in 200 local chapters throughout the U.S. Chapters offer support for individuals, parents, teachers, professionals, and others.

**Deaf and Hard of Hearing:** [**http://www.pepnet.org**](http://www.pepnet.org)
PEPNet's national network of regional centers provides resources, information, in-service training, and expertise to enhance educational opportunities for individuals who are deaf or hard of hearing and their families.

**Learning Disabilities:** [**http://www.ldonline.org**](http://www.ldonline.org)
Ldonline is the world's leading web site on learning disabilities and ADHD, serving more than 200,000 parents, teachers, and other professionals each month. LD OnLine seeks to help children and adults reach their full potential by providing accurate and up-to-date information and advice about learning disabilities and ADHD. The site features hundreds of helpful articles, monthly columns by noted experts, first person essays, children’s writing and artwork, a comprehensive resource guide, very active forums, and a Yellow Pages referral directory of professionals, schools, and products.

**Heath Resource Center** [**http://www.heath.gwu.edu**](http://www.heath.gwu.edu)
The George Washington University HEATH Resource Center is an online clearinghouse on postsecondary education for individuals with disabilities. The HEATH Resource Center Clearinghouse has information for students with disablities on educational disability support services, policies, procedures, adaptations, accessing college or university campuses, career-technical schools, and other postsecondary training entities. We have information on financial assistance, scholarships, and materials that help students with disabilities transition into college, university, career-technical schools, or other postsecondary programs.

**Find your state vocational rehabilitation office:** [**http://www.workworld.org/wwwebhelp/state\_vocational\_rehabilitation\_vr\_agencies.htm**](http://www.workworld.org/wwwebhelp/state_vocational_rehabilitation_vr_agencies.htm)
WorkWORLD™ is decision support software for personal computers designed to help people with disabilities, advocates, benefit counselors, and others explore and understand how to best use the work incentives associated with the various Federal and State disability and poverty benefit programs. It automates the computation of benefits, and takes into account the complex interaction of income, benefit programs, and work incentives.

### Know Your Rights.

**U.S. Department of Education’s Office for Civil Rights
Office for Civil Rights** [**http://www.ed.gov/ocr**](http://www.ed.gov/ocr)
The mission of the Office for Civil Rights is to ensure equal access to education and to promote educational excellence throughout the nation through vigorous enforcement of civil rights. They serve student populations facing discrimination and the advocates and institutions promoting systemic solutions to civil rights problems. An important responsibility is resolving complaints of discrimination. Agency-initiated cases, typically called compliance reviews, permit OCR to target resources on compliance problems that appear particularly acute. OCR also provides technical assistance to help institutions achieve voluntary compliance with the civil rights laws that OCR enforces. An important part of OCR's technical assistance is partnerships designed to develop creative approaches to preventing and addressing discrimination.

**Disability Discrimination:** [**http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/disability.html**](http://www.ed.gov/policy/rights/guid/ocr/disability.html)
ED was created in 1980 by combining offices from several federal agencies. ED's mission is to promote student achievement and preparation for global competitiveness by fostering educational excellence and ensuring equal access.

**“Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities”** [**http://www.ed.gov/ocr/transition.html**](http://www.ed.gov/ocr/transition.html)
The information in this pamphlet, provided by the Office for Civil Rights (OCR) in the U. S. Department of Education, explains the rights and responsibilities of students with disabilities who are preparing to attend postsecondary schools. This pamphlet also explains the obligations of a postsecondary school to provide academic adjustments, including auxiliary aids and services, to ensure the school does not discriminate on the basis of disability.

### Transition overview

**The Post-outcomes network:** [**http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/**](http://www.ncset.hawaii.edu/)
The Postoutcomes Network is one of four networks at the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET).

**The National Center for Secondary Education and Transition:** [**http://www.ncset.org/**](http://www.ncset.org/)
The National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET) coordinates national resources, offers technical assistance, and disseminates information related to secondary education and transition for youth with disabilities in order to create opportunities for youth to achieve successful futures.

### Outside the US

**United Kingdom – Resource page** [**http://www.ability.org.uk/support\_groups\_disability.html**](http://www.ability.org.uk/support_groups_disability.html)
The Ability Project aim is to show that quality of life is related to how free a person is to make their own choices and for a significant number of disabled people computer technologies and the Internet holds the keys to those choices. Ability understands that, despite the daunting task many disabled persons and disabled groups etc. face when using the Internet as a means of obtaining information or down loading related software, it is still the preferred place to find information.

**Association for Children with Disabilities – Australia** [**http://www.acd.org.au/home/index.htm**](http://www.acd.org.au/home/index.htm)
They are an information, support and advocacy organization for children with disabilities and their families, in Victoria, Australia.

**Canadian resources (Manitoba):** [**http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/linkd/families/associations.shtml**](http://www.umanitoba.ca/outreach/linkd/families/associations.shtml)

As you may already know, assistive technology and augmentative communication may play a very important role in the lives of children with disabilities and their families. This site provided links to these valuable resources.

### Parent education and support

**Parent Advocacy Coalition for Educational Rights:** [**http://www.pacer.org/**](http://www.pacer.org/)
The mission of PACER Center is to expand opportunities and enhance the quality of life of children and young adults with disabilities and their families, based on the concept of parents helping parents.

**PACER Center Projects related to Transition:** [**http://www.pacer.org/tatra/index.htm**](http://www.pacer.org/tatra/index.htm).
This national project provides training, information and materials to parent center staff across the country who are helping the families of youth with disabilities learn about transition, independent living and vocational rehabilitation services.

### Preparing for college

**Documenting disabilities** [**http://www.ahead.org/resources/bestpracticesdoc.htm**](http://www.ahead.org/resources/bestpracticesdoc.htm)

### Student support groups

**Connecting Youth to Communities and Careers:** [**http://www.c3online.org/**](http://www.c3online.org/)

Project C3 is an innovative partnership between several Minnesota state agencies and PACER Center, a nonprofit agency serving Minnesota families of youth with disabilities. The goal of Project C3 is to help young adults become successfully employed or to continue their education in high school, colleges or universities.

**National Educational Association of Disabled Students:** [**http://www.neads.ca**](http://www.neads.ca)The National Educational Association of Disabled Students is a consumer organization, with a mandate to encourage the self-empowerment of post-secondary students with disabilities. NEADS advocates for increased accessibility at all levels so that disabled students may gain equal access to college or university education, which is their right. The Association provides information on services and programs for students with disabilities nationwide, publishes a regular newsletter, and conducts research on issues of importance to its members. Members include disabled students, educators, organizations and professional service providers.

### Understanding IDEA

**Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (OSERS) web site on IDEA 2004:** [**http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html**](http://www.ed.gov/policy/speced/guid/idea/idea2004.html)
ED’s purpose is to establish policies on federal financial aid for education, and distributing as well as monitoring those funds. Collecting data on America's schools and disseminating research, focusing national attention on key educational issues, and prohibiting discrimination and ensuring equal access to education.

**Council for Exceptional Children:** [**http://www.ideapractices.org/**](http://www.ideapractices.org/)
The Council for Exceptional Children (CEC) is the largest international professional organization dedicated to improving educational outcomes for disabled children.

**Families and Advocates Partnership for Education:** [**http://www.fape.org/**](http://www.fape.org/)
The Families and Advocates Partnership for Education (FAPE) project is a partnership that aims to improve the educational outcomes for children with disabilities. It links families, advocates, and self-advocates to information about the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA). The project is designed to address the information needs of the 6 million families throughout the Country whose children with disabilities receive special education services.

**WrightsLaw, Special Education Law Library:** [**http://www.wrightslaw.com/idea/index.htm**](http://www.wrightslaw.com/idea/index.htm)
IDEA Wrights Law includes information about IDEA topics such as child find, eligibility, evaluations, reevaluations, high stakes testing, IEPs, IEP teams, IEP meetings. accommodations, alternate assessments, placements, transition, parental rights, and more.

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