

College Planning Information

College Planning Information: Medical

If you plan to live away from home, discuss with your current medical providers where you will receive your medical care.

- Create a plan to receive your medications and medical supplies if living away from home. It is often possible to receive medical supplies in the mail.
- Create an emergency plan for what you need to do to obtain medical attention while at school.
- Create a summary of your medications, allergies, medical condition, surgeries, and medical providers, to carry with you at all times.
- Speak with the student health center. What services do they offer?
- Discuss risk-taking behaviors (such as drinking, smoking, and drug taking) and ask how they may interact with your medications or medical condition.
- If the school requests written information on your medical condition, ask your medical provider to supply that information. It may be helpful to have a written letter to give to instructors.
- Check with your insurance provider regarding out-of-state coverage or coverage for any new doctors whom you will see at college.
- Make sure you know how long your insurance plan will cover you. You may want to look into insurance plans offered by the school.

College Planning Information: Academic

Speak with your high-school counselor regarding your transition to college and what academic accommodations you might need. The college may also require documentation from the high school regarding academic testing, if applicable.

- What type of academic programs does the college offer? Are there programs of study that interest you?
- Search for colleges that may have specialized services to meet your needs.
 - Federally funded colleges are required to comply with the Americans with Disability Act and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act.

- However, it still often becomes the responsibility of the student and family to advocate for a student's needs.
- Speak with the Student Disability Center or Academic Advisors at the college to find out about the services they provide and the services you need.
- Decide if you need special accommodations for the classroom such as a note taker, more time on an exam, modifications of assignments, adaptive technology, or assistance getting to and from class. Check with the disability services to see if they will provide these accommodations.
- If you need academic help, do not wait to ask for help. Speak with your family, teachers, advisors, student disability services, and other academic services available as soon as you can.

College Planning Information: Campus Life

- Discuss whether you are interested in attending a community college, local college, or out of state. Will you live at home or live on campus?
- If you are planning to live away from home, consider the skills you will need to live independently. Discuss these needs with your family, school, and medical providers and then start practicing these skills.
- Decide if you need special accommodations for your housing, such as a private bathroom, single room, or meal accommodations.
- Will you live in a dorm, private apartment or at home?
- If you are living on your own, decide if you need some one to help you, such as a personal care attendant.
- Set up a plan for moving move about campus. Will you walk, drive, take public transportation or use transportation services through the school?
- Start to think about ways you will balance your academic responsibilities along with your social activities.
- Look into campus activities, clubs, and sports that may be of interest to you.

College Planning Information: Financial

- Speak with the college's financial aid office and ask about scholarship opportunities.
- For people with disabilities, look into your local vocational rehabilitation programs through the Department of Rehabilitation Services who may be able to help with funding:
<http://www.dhs.state.il.us>
- Many agencies and foundations dedicated to specific medical conditions offer academic scholarships.

Helpful Links: Financial

- To complete a free application for Federal Student Aid FAFSA visit <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov> or call 800-433-3243 for more information.
- You may be eligible to get help completing your FAFSA with Ladder Up at www.goladderup.org or call 312-466-0771.
- Visit <http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml> for more information regarding financial aid for students with disabilities.
- Visit the George Washington University HEATH Resource Center at www.heath.gwu.edu for information on educational disability support services, financial assistance, scholarships and more.

Parent-to-Parent Advice: “The one thing I wish I knew...”

- Network with other parents and families of children with special needs for ideas and support.
- Offer support to your child and encourage her or him to be her or his own advocate. Let your child grow up and take the reins.
- Talk with your child and make sure he or she is really prepared to be away from home. Talk to your child and express your feelings and listen to how they feel. Come to an agreement as to what actions to take when a problem or situation arises.
- Know your rights. In hindsight, I would have gone right to the dean for working out special accommodations.
- I wish I knew that my daughter could have had her car at school in a handicapped spot. It certainly would have saved her struggles with medical equipment up the stairs to public transportation, etc.
- I wish I knew that taking one less class made things much easier one semester when my daughter had missed quite a bit of school. The one less class still kept her as a full-time student.
- I wish I knew that medical supplies could be sent in the mail.

Additional Websites for College, Financial Aid, and Scholarships

- **City Colleges of Chicago**
<http://www.ccc.edu/>
- **CollegeZone**
www.collegezone.com
800-899-4722
- **Disability.gov: Connecting the Disability Community to Information and Opportunities**
www.disability.gov
- **Disaboom: Information and Resources for People With Disabilities**
<http://www.disaboom.com/scholarships>
- **Federal Financial Aid and College: An Overview for Students with Disabilities**
http://www.heath.gwu.edu/files/active/financial_aid_excerpt.pdf
- **Federal Student Aid FASFA**
<http://www.fafsa.ed.gov>
800-433-3243
- **FinAid**
<http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml>
- **HEATH Resource Center**
<http://www.heath.gwu.edu>
- **Hispanic College Fund**
<http://www.hispanicfund.org/scholarships/>
- **Proyecto Vision**
<http://www.proyectovision.net>
- **“Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education: Know Your Rights and Responsibilities”**
<http://www.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>
- **Think College**
www.thinkcollege.net
617-287-4310
- **U.S. Department of Education**
www.ed.gov

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