

Navigating College Transitions and Financial Aid: Supporting Students with Disabilities and their Families: Webinar Resources



Maryland Center for Developmental Disabilities
at Kennedy Krieger Institute
Building Partnerships. Changing Lives.

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INTRODUCTION

The transition to young adulthood and postsecondary education can be an especially difficult process for families of children with disabilities. Specifically, students with intellectual and developmental disabilities often face a lack of support during this transition, which can make it increasingly difficult for them to access higher education leading to lower rates of college degree attainment for this population. When students with disabilities are restricted in their ability to access educational opportunities, they can face lower rates of employment and significant financial inequities. This document provides a range of resources to help students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families through this transition period, including disability-related scholarships, financial aid opportunities, transitioning tools, peer support services, and information on educational accommodations that students with disabilities are entitled to.

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- **[AccessSTEM](#)** — Provides access to an online community of peers and professionals that can help students with disabilities transition into college learning.
<https://www.washington.edu/doit/accesstem-team-application>
- **[A Transition Guide to Postsecondary Education and Employment for Students and Youth With Disabilities](#)** — Provides an extensive guide on the transition process for youth with disabilities transitioning into young adulthood.
<https://sites.ed.gov/idea/files/postsecondary-transition-guide-august-2020.pdf>
- **[BestBuddies Friendship Program](#)** — Connects students with disabilities to peers on campus or in the community for help adjusting to college life and enjoying leisure activities outside of school.
<https://forms.bestbuddies.org/4895599>
- **[Campus Disability Resource Database \(CeDaR\)](#)** — Provides a tool to find services and information pertaining to students with disabilities at most degree-granting institutions across the country. <https://www.cedardatabase.org/>
- **[College Scholarships: Grants for Students with Disabilities](#)** — Provides links to national organizations and college institutions that provide grants to students with disabilities.
<http://www.collegescholarships.org/grants/disabilities.htm>
- **[Community College of Baltimore County: CASE Single Step Program](#)** — Offers a program that has various course and certificate options for students with disabilities.
<https://www.ccbcmd.edu/Programs-and-Courses/Adults-with-Disabilities/CASE-Single-Step-Course-and-Certificate-Offerings.aspx>
- **[Disabilities, Opportunities, Internetworking, and Technology](#)** — Lists a variety of accommodation options to consider for college students with disabilities.
<https://www.washington.edu/doit/effective-communication-faculty-and-students-disabilities>
- **[Disability Care Center: Scholarships](#)** — Offers two disability-related scholarships, including one for students with a special education major and one for students with disabilities.
<https://www.disabilitycarecenter.org/giving-back/scholarships/#blue-grey2>
- **[Disability Rights Education & Defense Fund](#)** — Provides resources for various aspects of special education, including the IEP process, assistive technology, evaluations, and the transition to adulthood. <https://dredf.org/special-education/special-education-resources/>



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- **[Division of Rehabilitation Services](https://dors.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx)** – Provides support to individuals with disabilities who are job-seeking or planning to pursue higher education.
<https://dors.maryland.gov/Pages/default.aspx>
- **[Federal Student Aid: Am I Dependent or Independent?](https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf)** – Guides students with disabilities through the process of identifying whether they are a dependent or independent on the FAFSA.
<https://studentaid.gov/sites/default/files/fafsa-dependency.pdf>
- **[Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities](https://www.onlineschools.org/financial-aid/disabilities/#:~:text=For%20All%20Types%20of%20Disabilities%201%20American%20Association,...%208%20Through%20The%20Looking%20Glass%20Scholarship.%20)** – Lists a range of scholarships and financial aid opportunities that are designed for students with disabilities and who are eligible for online college programs. <https://www.onlineschools.org/financial-aid/disabilities/#:~:text=For%20All%20Types%20of%20Disabilities%201%20American%20Association,...%208%20Through%20The%20Looking%20Glass%20Scholarship.%20>
- **[Howard Community College: Project Access](https://howardcc.edu/services-support/academic-support/disability-support-services/project-access/)** – Offers a college preparation program for students with disabilities who are transitioning from high school. <https://howardcc.edu/services-support/academic-support/disability-support-services/project-access/>
- **[Kennedy Krieger Institute: CORE Foundations](https://www.kennedykrieger.org/community/initiatives/meaningful-community-services/core-foundations#:~:text=CORE%20Foundations%20at%20Kennedy%20Krieger%20Institute%20supports%20individuals,plan%2C%20daily%20schedule%2C%20and%20goals%20for%20each%20individual.)** – Offers a program for individuals with disabilities that provides supportive services in areas of employment, community involvement, and social engagement. <https://www.kennedykrieger.org/community/initiatives/meaningful-community-services/core-foundations#:~:text=CORE%20Foundations%20at%20Kennedy%20Krieger%20Institute%20supports%20individuals,plan%2C%20daily%20schedule%2C%20and%20goals%20for%20each%20individual.>
- **[Kennedy Krieger Institute: Life After High School](https://www.kennedykrieger.org/sites/default/files/library/documents/community/maryland-center-for-developmental-disabilities-mcdd/project-heal/life-after-high-school-transition-opportunities-6-5-18.pdf)** – Provides a breakdown of the transition period from high school to postsecondary education, including a list of disability accommodations and a transition checklist that can assist with this process.
<https://www.kennedykrieger.org/sites/default/files/library/documents/community/maryland-center-for-developmental-disabilities-mcdd/project-heal/life-after-high-school-transition-opportunities-6-5-18.pdf>
- **[Maryland ABLE](https://www.marylandable.org/)** – Offers an opportunity for individuals with disabilities to save private funds.
<https://www.marylandable.org/>



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- **[Maryland Community Connection: Summer Youth Employment Program](https://marylandcommunityconnection.org/summer-youth-employment-program-3/?doing_wp_cron=1651687638.9634730815887451171875)** – Offers a summer program that allows individuals with disabilities to gain paid work experience and preparation for job-seeking. https://marylandcommunityconnection.org/summer-youth-employment-program-3/?doing_wp_cron=1651687638.9634730815887451171875
- **[Maryland Department of Disabilities: Postsecondary Education](https://mdtransitions.org/postsecondary-education/)** – Offers guidance on how students with disabilities can prepare for postsecondary education. <https://mdtransitions.org/postsecondary-education/>
- **[Maryland Department of Disabilities: Postsecondary Disability Support Services](https://www.umaryland.edu/media/umb/oa/campus-life/disability-services-/documents/Post-Secondary-DSS---State-of-Maryland.pdf)** – Provides an overview of the differences between high school and college as well as how students with disabilities can receive support in college. <https://www.umaryland.edu/media/umb/oa/campus-life/disability-services-/documents/Post-Secondary-DSS---State-of-Maryland.pdf>
- **[Maryland Higher Education Commission: Community College Tuition Waiver](https://mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/Pages/FinancialAid/ProgramDescriptions/prog_disabilities.aspx)** – Offers a community college tuition waiver to students with disabilities who receive SSI or SSDI. https://mhec.maryland.gov/preparing/Pages/FinancialAid/ProgramDescriptions/prog_disabilities.aspx
- **[Microsoft Disability Scholarship](https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/programs/microsoftdisabilityscholarship.aspx)** – Offers a scholarship to students with disabilities who intend to pursue a technology-related degree. <https://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/programs/microsoftdisabilityscholarship.aspx>
- **[Montgomery College: Challenge Program](https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/workforce-development-continuing-education/developmental-education/challenge-program.html)** – Provides an educational program that is designed for adults with developmental disabilities. <https://www.montgomerycollege.edu/workforce-development-continuing-education/developmental-education/challenge-program.html>
- **[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment: Financial Aid](https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/financial-aid.asp)** — Links to a page to videos and other resources relating to financial aid for students with disabilities. <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/financial-aid.asp>
- **[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment: Inclusive Postsecondary Education for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/college-options.asp)** — Provides resource links on the importance of postsecondary education, how to find an institute, and the process for obtaining financial aid. <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/college-options.asp>



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- **[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment: Knowing Your Rights and Responsibilities](#)** — Provides links and resources to legislation in order to support students with disabilities through their legal rights in postsecondary education.
<https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/rights-and-responsibilities.asp>
- **[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment: Selecting the Right Program](#)** — Shares a list of topics to consider when selecting the proper postsecondary education program and resource guides within extra links. <https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/selecting-right-program.asp>
- **[National Parent Center on Transition and Employment: Understanding Academic Accommodations](#)** — Provides an overview of accommodations, a list of questions to ask your institution, and other video links for more resources.
<https://www.pacer.org/transition/learning-center/postsecondary/academic-accommodations.asp>
- **[National Technical Assistance Center on Transition](#)**: The Collaborative (NTACT:C)
<https://transitionta.org/>
- **[Niche: College Scholarships for Students with Disabilities](#)** – Lists scholarships for students with disabilities seeking a college education.
<https://www.niche.com/colleges/scholarships/?type=students-with-disabilities>
- **[Organization for Autism Research: Scholarships](#)** – Offers three scholarships to students on the autism spectrum and lists a variety of other available scholarships from outside organizations that can be explored. <https://researchautism.org/how-we-help/scholarships/>
- **[Pathfinders for Autism: Explore College Options](#)** — Lists resource guides and sites that offer support for parents and students as they determine the right postsecondary education institute for them. <https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/education/explore-college-options/>
- **[Pathfinders for Autism: Preparing to Transition to Postsecondary Education](#)** – Provides tips for parents as their child goes through the transition to postsecondary education.
<https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/education/pfa-tips-preparing-to-transition-to-postsecondary-education/>



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- **Postsecondary Transition Planning** — Explains the importance of planning for postsecondary transitions and tips on how to plan. <https://k12engagement.unl.edu/strategy-briefs/Postsecondary%20Transition%20Planning%204-14-17.pdf#:~:text=Postsecondary%20transition%20is%20the%20transition%20of%20high%20school,and%2010%25%20at%20four-year%20institution%2C%20respectively%20%28Newman%2C%202005%29>
- **Ruby's Rainbow: Scholarship for College Students with Down Syndrome** – Offers a scholarship to students with Down syndrome who plan to attend postsecondary education as well as answers to frequently asked questions. <https://rubysrainbow.org/scholarship-application/>
- **Salisbury University: Disability Resource Center Transition Program** – Provides a transition program to families of students with disabilities, which include sessions on advocacy, mentoring, assistive technology, and on-campus resources. <https://www.salisbury.edu/administration/student-affairs/disability-resource-center/accessability-summer-program.aspx>
- **Scholarships360: Top Scholarships for Students with Disabilities** – Provides a list of scholarships available to students with disabilities as well as supportive resources for higher education. <https://scholarships360.org/scholarships/scholarships-for-disabled-students/>
- **Student Training & Education in Public Service: Scholarships and Resources for Students with Disabilities** – Shares a list of scholarships that students with disabilities can apply for as well as career resources that they can access for support. <https://www.publicservicedegrees.org/financial-aid/students-with-disabilities-scholarships-resources/>
- **Think College: College Search** – Offers a tool to find inclusive postsecondary institutions based by state. <https://thinkcollege.net/college-search>
- **Think College: Federal Financial Aid for Students with Intellectual Disability** – Provides a brief overview of the federal financial aid process for students with disabilities who plan to attend college programs. https://thinkcollege.net/sites/default/files/files/resources/PL2_financialaid_F4.pdf



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- **[Think College: Paying for College](#)** – Answers frequently asked questions about financial support for students with disabilities. <https://thinkcollege.net/resources/innovation-exchange/paying-for-college>
- **[Think College: Scholarships for Students with Intellectual Disabilities](#)** – Provides a list of scholarships for students with intellectual disabilities and suggestions on how to inquire about other financial aid opportunities. https://thinkcollege.net/sites/default/files/files/resources/HTTC11_Scholarships_R.pdf
- **[Think College: What's Happening in Your State](#)** – Shares current programs and legislature related to inclusive postsecondary institutions. <https://thinkcollege.net/resources/whats-happening-in-your-state>
- **[Towson University: Best Buddies Program](#)** – Provides contact information for students to get involved in the Best Buddies International program. <https://involved.towson.edu/organization/bestbuddiesinternational>
- **[Towson University: Extended & Professional Education](#)** – Offers a list of non-traditional educational opportunities to explore. <https://www.towson.edu/academics/extended.html>
- **[Towson University: Hussman Center for Adults with Autism](#)** – Offers social groups and peer support for college students on the autism spectrum. <https://www.towson.edu/iwb/centers/hussman/>
- **[Understood: Financial Aid and Scholarships](#)** – Offers tips on how to find financial aid opportunities for students with disabilities and lists a variety of disability-related scholarships. <https://www.understood.org/en/articles/financial-aid-and-scholarships-for-students-with-learning-and-thinking-differences>
- **[University of Maryland: TerpsEXCEED](#)** – Offers a two-year postsecondary education program designed for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities. <https://www.ihehub-umd.org/terps-exceed>
- **[University of New Brunswick](#)** – Lists common accommodations for learners with physical disabilities. <https://www2.unb.ca/alc/modules/physical-disabilities/implications-for-learning.html>



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- [U.S. Department of Education: Resources](https://www2.ed.gov/programs/tpsid/resources.html) – Lists transition planning and postsecondary education resources for students with disabilities.
<https://www2.ed.gov/programs/tpsid/resources.html>
- [U.S. Department of Education: Students with Disabilities Preparing for Postsecondary Education](https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html) — Provides a checklist for students with disabilities to help them understand their rights and responsibilities in preparation for college life.
<https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/transition.html>

Media Resources

- [Disability Rights Texas: Students with Disabilities Transitioning from High School](https://youtu.be/hhqags1lpxg) -
<https://youtu.be/hhqags1lpxg>
- [Maryland Learning Links: Five Tips for Transition Planning for Maryland Families](https://www.marylandlearninglinks.org/five-tips-for-transition-planning-for-families/) -
<https://www.marylandlearninglinks.org/five-tips-for-transition-planning-for-families/>
- [Parents' Place of Maryland: Transition in Maryland – 5 Tips for Families](https://youtu.be/CYqnBrrn9jc) -
<https://youtu.be/CYqnBrrn9jc>
- [Parents' Place of Maryland: Yes! Your Child CAN Go to College!](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kb486TVsAlw&t=30s) -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kb486TVsAlw&t=30s>
- [TEDxTalks: College – possible for students with intellectual disabilities](https://youtu.be/cgzSH6GqiNs) -
<https://youtu.be/cgzSH6GqiNs>
- [TEDxTalks: Learning Disability in Higher Education](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSz_zjiS3E8) -
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kSz_zjiS3E8
- [Transitioning to College A Guide for Students with Disabilities](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvYhNKYwl4Y) -
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BvYhNKYwl4Y>
- [Transitioning to College with a Disability](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb7jBbp-EXE) - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qb7jBbp-EXE>

