



Educational Resources

A Newsletter of

Lindy Kahn Associates, Inc., Certified Educational Planners

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Editor: Lindy Kahn

COLLEGE FAIRS

October 13, 2008
Catholic High Schools
College Fair
Strake Jesuit
Houston, TX
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

October 14, 2008
Fall Performing and
Visual Arts College Fair
Rice University
Alice Pratt Brown Hall
Houston, TX
7:00 – 9:00 p.m.

October 16, 2008
HISD South Region College Fair
The Power Center
12401 S. Post Oak
Houston, TX
6:00 – 8:00 p.m.

November 12 & 13, 2008
CollegeWeekLive.com
Virtual College Fair
www.collegeweeklive.com
registration required (no cost)
10:00 a.m. – 8:00 p.m. EST

COLLEGE BLOGS

Try out some of these blogs
for an insider's view of college
life.

Multiple Schools:
www.thecollegeblognetwork.com

Skidmore:
<http://cms.skidmore.edu/blogs/index.cfm>

Dickinson: <http://blog.dickinson.edu>

Oberlin: <http://blog.oberlin.edu>

Swarthmore:
<http://www.swarthmore.edu/x15365.xml>

Baylor:
https://bearspace.baylor.edu/Group_BaylorProud/www/about.html

Green, Greener, Greenest:

Universities are finding ways to be environmentally friendly

Environmentalism is taking serious root on campuses. You can see it across the nation, from the zero-waste stadium at the University of California, Davis, to a \$10,000 gift of solar panels to Vassar from the class of 2007. Students have gotten into the spirit, waging competitions to boost recycling and slash energy use in dorms. There are courses and entire majors built around environmental issues. There are even a few scholarships.

For evidence of how the movement has spread, consider the nationwide RecycleMania competition among colleges. The 2008 champion wasn't a powerhouse university like Harvard or Stanford with an established reputation for environmentalism. It was tiny Kalamazoo College in Michigan. During the 10-week contest, K'zoo students recycled 59% of their trash. (Harvard and Stanford totaled 27% and 30%, respectively.)

Green buildings are also cropping up on campuses, from Duke with its green-roofed "Smart Home" (a dorm that also functions as a laboratory for green living) to the new University of California, Merced, where all the buildings meet the exacting standards of the U.S. Green Building Council. One of the most unusual projects is at Furman University in Greenville, S.C. In June 2008, the college opened a solar-powered showcase home called Cliffs Cottage in conjunction with Southern Living magazine. At 3,400 square feet, it could be an environmentalist's trophy home. It features geothermal heating, organic gardens, bamboo flooring (since bamboo is quick-growing) and Energy Star appliances. The house generates six to 10 times more energy than it uses, thanks to solar panels outside and energy-sparing technologies within. For a year, Cliffs Cottage will be open to the public. After that, it will become Furman's Center for Sustainability, with classes on green living.

At Dartmouth, four dorms now have flat-screen LCD displays in the hallways showing cartoonlike polar bears in various levels of comfort or distress, depending on the amount of energy being used on the floor at that moment. As depicted by graphic-arts minor Sonia Lei, high energy use sends the bears plunging into the sea as their ice floes melt and crack. Low energy use keeps them happy and healthy, chasing butterflies on their bergs.

At Oberlin College in Ohio, six dorms have wall-mounted "energy orbs" in the lobbies. The glass domes glow with colors from red (indicating double the normal energy use) to green (when the load is half of the usual), with a full gradient of oranges, yellows and lime greens in between. The orbs serve as a nonverbal reminder. "You don't even have to consciously look at the orb, it just enters your awareness," says John Petersen, chair of environmental studies.

For those seeking more-rigorous ways to study the environment, there's no lack of options. Colorado State University offers more than 100 courses in fields from engineering to atmospheric science. "Students can work with professors who are engaged in the latest ideas on reducing climate change and producing new energy sources," says CSU president Larry Edward Penley. Several years ago, engineering students came up with a way to retrofit two-stroke engines on snowmobiles, making for cleaner, more efficient machines. A company called Envirofit International is now marketing the technology in Asia to help cut pollution from auto rickshaws. Students will also be able to help with multiple research projects at the huge new wind farm CSU is building.

Ultimately, the goal for many students will be to translate their experiences into internships and jobs. For Maggie Stonecash, a 2008 Dickinson graduate, that means spending six months helping to manage the college's 15-acre organic farm. She and her fellow interns take field trips to places like the Rodale Institute, which is a leader in sustainable farming, and to nearby farms that raise grass-fed beef or use "no till" practices to spare the topsoil. They live on the farm for "full immersion" (and they live in yurts—large, round Mongolian-style tents, which are solar-powered and off the grid). "I feel passionate about organic farming as a way to help bring back a sustainable lifestyle," Stonecash says. More power to her.

Anne Underwood & Daniel Stone
Newsweek
August 20, 2008



College Applicants, Beware: Your Facebook Page Is Showing

High-school seniors already fretting about grades and test scores now have another worry: Will their Facebook or MySpace pages count against them in college admissions?

A new survey of 500 top colleges found that 10% of admissions officers acknowledged looking at social-networking sites to evaluate applicants. Of those colleges making use of the online information, 38% said that what they saw "negatively affected" their views of the applicant. Only a quarter of the schools checking the sites said their views were improved, according to the survey by education company Kaplan, a unit of Washington Post Co.

Some admissions officers said they had rejected students because of material on the sites. Jeff Olson, who heads research for Kaplan's test-preparation division, says one university did so after the student gushed about the school while visiting the campus, then trashed it online. Kaplan surveyed schools with the most selective admissions. The vast majority of the colleges surveyed had no policy about when it was appropriate for school officials to look at prospective students' social-networking sites.

Colleges' recent interest in social-networking sites is leading many aspiring students to take a hard look at their online habits and in some cases to remove or change postings. With a high-school graduating class nationwide of 3.3 million students, colleges are expected to be sifting through a record number of applications this year. High-school guidance counselors advise applicants, even if they restrict public access on their sites, to refrain from including anything that could hurt them in college admissions. They especially caution against foul or offensive language, nudity, or photos of drinking and drug use.



John Hechinger
Wall Street Journal
September 18, 2008

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NET NEWS: INTERESTING AND HELPFUL INTERNET SITES



ON-LINE APPLICATIONS:

www.collegenet.com
www.collegelink.com
www.ezcollegeapps.com
 Common Application:
www.commonapp.org
 Texas Common App:
www.applytexas.org

SPECIAL INTEREST SITES:

Hillel: The Foundation for Jewish
 Campus Life- www.hillel.org
 Council for Christian Colleges and
 Universities: www.cccu.org
 College Athletic Association (NCAA):
www.ncaa.org or
www.ncaaclearinghouse.net
 Occupational Outlook Handbook:
www.bls.gov/oco

SAT Info:

www.collegeboard.org

ACT Info:

www.actstudent.org

Princeton Review:

www.review.com

DIRECTORIES OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY WEBSITES

www.allaboutcollege.com
www.careersandcolleges.org
www.college-access.net
www.petersons.com
www.collegeview.com/collegesearch/
www.usnews.com/usnews/edu/college/
www.mycollegeguide.org

CALIFORNIA COLLEGES/UNIVERSITIES:

www.cacollegesuide.com

DIRECTORIES OF AMERICAN UNIVERSITIES

www.clas.ufl.edu/CLAS/
american-universities.html
www.globalcomputing.com/university.htm

BY STATE:

<http://collegiateway.org/colleges.html>
www.collegeview.com

COLLEGE FAIRS:

www.nacac.com/fairs.html

ADVOCACY AND LEGAL:

Wrightslaw:
www.wrightslaw.com
 Disability access information:
www.janejarrow.com

FINANCIAL AID / LOAN CALCULATORS:

www.fastweb.com
www.finaid.org/calculators
www.collegeispossible.org
www.nasfaa.org
www.freescholarship.com
www.college-scholarships.org

GENERAL LD AND AD/HD:

Assoc Higher Education & Disability:
www.ahead.org
 ADD Assoc.: www.add.org
 Children & Adults with ADD:
www.chadd.org
 Learning Disabilities Online:
www.ldonline.org
 Learning Disabilities Assoc.:
www.ldantl.org
 National Center for LD:
www.ncld.org
 Council for Exceptional Children:
www.cec.org
 International Dyslexia Assoc.:
www.interdys.org
 Learning Disabilities Worldwide:
www.ldworldwide.org

TRAVEL

As you know, my travel schedule takes me all over the U.S. to visit colleges, boarding schools, therapeutic schools and programs, and special needs facilities. I recently visited Minnesota, Missouri, Montana, New Mexico, and Oregon. My upcoming trips this fall and winter will take me to Colorado, Maryland, and Virginia. I do check my voice mail daily and will try to return all phone messages within 24 hours. Thank you all for your patience.



LINDY'S RECENT TRIPS

HIGH SCHOOL SENIORS your fall to-do list . . .

1) GET TEACHER RECOMMENDATIONS:

PICK YOUR TEACHERS WITH THE FOLLOWING CRITERIA:

- Teachers that like you, know you best, and can describe your work in and out of
- Teachers in your favorite subject areas can be good, but great recommendations can come from teachers who've watched you struggle and can verify your determination and hard work.
- Teachers that fit the criteria outlined by the school to which you're applying.



WHEN ASKING FOR A RECOMMENDATION, YOU SHOULD PROVIDE THE FOLLOWING:

- At least a month's notice with an explanation of what it is for and what the deadline is.
- A brief outline with reminders of projects and activities under the direction of the teacher.
- For each college: a stamped #10 envelope, with the address of the Admissions Office. Use the teacher's name and your high school mailing information for the return address.
- Supply a copy of your resume to help fill in the teacher's knowledge of you.
- Always write a thank you letter to your teachers for their time and

2) PLAN COLLEGE VISITS:

THE TOUR: The tour is both an opportunity to see the campus and a chance to ask the guide (usually a student) questions.

INFO SESSIONS: Attend one of the information sessions, where admissions officers will detail academics, extracurricular life and the admissions process. Bring a list of questions and take good notes.

MEETING WITH ADMISSIONS OFFICERS: When you arrange tours and information sessions, ask for the name and contact information of the admissions representative in charge of your high school or region. It is generally a good idea to make contact with that person.

ATTENDING CLASS: Make arrangements in advance through the admissions office. Most professors welcome visitors - just be on time!

INTERVIEWS: If the school offers on-campus interviews, you should schedule one along with your tour and information session. This can be a great way to show your interest in and learn more about the college just be sure to spend some time preparing for the meeting.

THANK YOU'S: Remember to send thank you emails to any admissions officer, teacher, or student interviewer with whom you met while you were on campus!

LOOK AROUND: Inspect the quality of the dorms and cafeteria's, and the measures that the campus has taken for security. Also get to know the town.

Can't make it to a faraway school? Try a "virtual visit" using tips from: www.collegeboard.com/student/csearch/majors_careers/45103.html



VOLUNTEER: SPECIAL OLYMPICS

Volunteers are the lifeline of the Special Olympics program.

More than 1.5 million individuals worldwide, dedicate their time, to Special Olympics.

These volunteers serve as coaches, officials, committee members, competition assistants and more. For information on events, volunteering or participating in events visit

www.specialolympicstexas.org
or contact Renee Klovenski at
713-290-0049 or
rklovenski@sothx.org.

2008 / 2009 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Saturday, October 11,
2008 (time TBA)
Greater Houston
Softball Tournament
Location: Collins Park
Address: 6727
Cypresswood Dr.,
Spring, TX 77379

Saturday, December 6,
2008 (time TBA)
Greater Houston
Bowling Tournament
Location: Copperfield
Bowling Center
Address: 15615 Glen
Chase, Houston, TX

Friday, January 16,
2009 (7:30am-
11:00am)
Greater Houston Figure
Skating Competition
Location: Memorial City
Mall
Address: I-10 @
Gessner, Houston, TX



SPECIAL FEATURE

Working with Children who have Attachment Issues

In the first year of life, an infant and caregiver have a reciprocal relationship in which the infant experiences a need and the caregiver responds by meeting the need. At the end of the first year, or about the time the child takes its first steps, the child has formed a fixed internal model for attachment based on the previous interactions experienced with the caregiver. This model is used to help the child predict and interpret caregivers' behaviors and respond to those behaviors, and it is essentially the lens through which the child sees the world.

This attachment cycle continues through the first five years of life, but remains relatively static after the child's first independent steps. If the child experiences the world as safe, primarily through interactions with caregivers, the child is likely to form a secure attachment and develop emotionally at a normal rate. If the fixed internal model of attachment a child forms is based on negative interactions, a child's world may be seen through a lens of pain, distrust, and loneliness, leading to the development of attachment issues.

Attachment issues can manifest in several ways. One of the more complex, yet far-reaching effects is in the make up of the brain. Early childhood trauma can result in significant changes to the brain. In addition, physical stressors, such as stress hormones and lack of movement, are theorized to cause neurological damage. Severely traumatized children may show neurological effects such as a difficulty expressing what they are thinking or feeling, difficulty using abstract thinking to solve problems while under stress, difficulty managing intense feelings or regulating their feelings, and difficulty paying attention or settling down. Many professionals that work with children with attachment issues are also struck by the amount of rage and fear they seem to feel. After the first year of life, most children's emotional processing moves primarily from the amygdale to the frontal lobe. In severely traumatized children, emotions continue to be processed in the amygdale instead of moving to the frontal lobe, just as they were when the child was an infant. These emotions are simple and intense. The continued processing of emotions in the amygdale may cause all the intense emotions that the child feels to be tinged with rage and fear.

Trauma can also effect higher brain development. Higher brain function takes place in the cerebral cortex. Children with underdeveloped areas of the cerebral cortex think and feel like a five-year-old even as they reach adolescence. Unless taught alternative skills, these children will continue to think and feel like a five-year-old when they become adults.

**Possible Influences on Attachment Difficulties:**

- Birth trauma
- Unwanted pregnancy
- Physical, emotional, or sexual abuse
- Physical or emotional neglect
- Separation from birth mother
- Frequent moves or placement in the foster care system; disrupted adoptions
- Traumatic Experiences
- Young or inexperienced parent with poor parenting
- Parental drug or alcohol use
- Inadequate day care; multiple caregivers
- Chaotic family situation
- Harsh and inconsistent parenting
- Overindulgent parenting

- Continuum of Attachment Issues -

Healthy Attachment: In a small percentage of children who experience severe attachment disruptions, there seems to be no psychological or neurological problems.

Attachment Difficulties: In about a third of the children who experience severe attachment disruptions, the following symptoms are present: possible diagnosis of RAD or PTSD, co-morbid disorders, including depression, anxiety disorder, psychosis, bi-polar disorder; no major behavioral problems.

Attachment Problems: In about a quarter of the children who experience severe attachment disruptions, the following symptoms are present: diagnosis of RAD or PTSD, co-morbid disorders as above, Moderate behavior problems (2-6 major categories of oppositional behaviors) at school and/or home.

Attachment Disorder: In about a third of the children who experience severe attachment disruptions, the following symptoms are present: diagnosis of RAD or PTSD, co-morbid disorders as above, severe behavior problems (7-8 major categories of oppositional behaviors) at school and/or home.

Children with attachment issues learn to cope with a world that they see as dangerous and unsafe in varying ways. Some of the more common coping mechanisms include dissociation, self-abuse, abuse of others, temper tantrums to release pent up energy, and retaliation against those that show them love. Other coping mechanisms result in behaviors that are often described as oppositional. Ultimately, these children are trying to gain a sense of control over their environment and the significant players in their environment in an attempt to keep themselves safe. Coping mechanisms that are oppositional in nature include persistent arguing, refusal to take responsibility for their actions, stealing, pathological lying, hoarding and sneaking food, being bossy, and doing the least they can to get by (minimalist behaviors). These children also often avoid eye contact unless it is initiated by them, lack an age-appropriate level of conscience, and are exceedingly impulsive.

Most families who parent a child with attachment issues need education regarding the disorder. Without information, this situation can seem hopeless and overwhelming. Before significant resolution of issues between the child and the parents can occur, parents must first work through their own issues surrounding attachment. These issues can include their own attachment history, feelings about adoption, guilt over their contributions to the attachment issues, and feelings about worth as a parent. Once these issues have been identified and significant work has begun, parents will be in a better place to learn new parenting skills in order to meet the needs of their child. Feedback and support for parents is also essential.

Essentially, children with attachment issues are emotionally stuck as toddlers. While many are intellectually mature, their emotional age is usually in the range of 2-5 years. This dichotomy can make for a confusing and sometimes explosive situation. The primary job of treatment staff and parents is to re-parent this child as if they were still their emotional age while keeping in mind their intellectual age.

These children will make progress at a much slower rate than most youth who require treatment. It is important that the treatment team, including the parents, establish baseline behaviors to which they can compare later behaviors. Celebrate all forward movement, no matter how small. Be a cheerleader when things are not moving forward and be ready to try new things.

*Erin Braley, M.S., NCC
Paradigm, winter 2007*

IMPORTANT TEST DATES TO REMEMBER!!

www.collegeboard.com

www.actstudent.org

SAT TESTING			ACT TESTING		
SAT & Subject	Registration Deadlines		ACT	Registration Deadlines	
Tests Dates	Regular	Late (fee required)	Tests Dates	Regular	Late (fee required)
November 1, 2008	September 26, 2008	October 10, 2008	October 25, 2008	September 19, 2008	Sept. 20- Oct. 3
December 6, 2008	November 5, 2008	November 18, 2008	December 13, 2008	November 7, 2008	Nov. 8-20, 2008
January 24, 2009	December 26, 2008	January 6, 2009	February 7, 2009	January 6, 2009	Jan. 7-16, 2009
March 14, 2009	February 10, 2009	February 24, 2009	April 4, 2009	February 27, 2009	Feb. 28- Mar. 13
May 2, 2009	March 31, 2009	April 9, 2009	June 13, 2009	May 8, 2009	May 9-22, 2009
June 6, 2009	May 5, 2009	May 15, 2009			



No SAT/ACT's Required....

Some schools have begun considering SAT and ACT scores as optional in the admissions process. Here are a few schools with no testing requirements.

- ❖ Armstrong University, Berkeley, CA
- ❖ Baldwin-Wallace College, Berea, OH
- ❖ Bard College, Annandale-on-Hudson, NY
- ❖ Cambridge College, Cambridge, MA
- ❖ Chatham College, Pittsburgh, PA
- ❖ Drew University, Madison, New Jersey
- ❖ Fisher College, Boston, MA
- ❖ Franklin and Marshall College, Lancaster, PA
- ❖ Guilford College, Greensboro, NC
- ❖ Gustavus Adolphus College, St. Peter, MN
- ❖ Hampshire College, Amherst, MA
- ❖ Lawrence University, Appleton, WI
- ❖ Mitchell College, New London, CT
- ❖ Newbury College, Brookline, MA
- ❖ Pitzer College, Claremont, CA
- ❖ Prescott College, Prescott, AZ
- ❖ Robert Morris College, Chicago, IL
- ❖ Rollins College, Winter Park, FL
- ❖ Sarah Lawrence College, Bronxville, NY
- ❖ Seton Hill University, Greensburg, PA
- ❖ Smith College, Northampton, MA
- ❖ St. John's College, Annapolis, MD
- ❖ Susquehanna University, Selinsgrove, PA
- ❖ Thomas Edison College, Trenton, NJ
- ❖ Trinity University, Washington, DC
- ❖ Union College, Schenectady, NY
- ❖ Wake Forest University, Winston-Salem, N.C.
- ❖ Wheaton College, Norton, MA
- ❖ Woodbury College, Montpelier, VT

LINDY'S BOOKSHELF

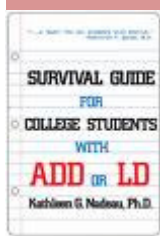


WHAT NOW?

How Teen Therapeutic Programs Could Save Your Troubled Child

By: Dr. Paul Case

Both Professionals and parents are called on every day to respond to the millions of teens who are struggling. Dr. Paul Case understands and offers answers to the most common concerns you face as you work with struggling teens and their families. Issues like: Understanding why teens struggle as they do; validation for the emotional rollercoaster parents experience; rationale for how a therapeutic program can address the teens problems; and hope for how the experience can transform the life not only of the teen but their entire family.



SURVIVAL GUIDE FOR COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH ADD OF LD

By: Kathleen G. Nadeau

This fully updated second edition is an outstanding compendium of explanation and advice gathered from the expertise, experience, and original studies of Kathleen G. Nadeau (Clinical Psychologist and nationally known specialist on attentional learning disabilities). It educates its readers on just how to find the most suitable college, how to build a productive and positive relationship with professors, make use of the support and services and accommodations provided, how to select and schedule the desired courses, choosing a major and prospective career, and how to manage time properly to get everything done.

BEEN THERE, SHOULD'VE DONE THAT:

995 Tips for Making the Most of College

By: Suzette Tyler

This is one of the best books currently available about how to really succeed in college. The basic format of the book is a collection of quotes from college students giving helpful truisms concerning various areas of the college experience. The editing and format is easy to read and well suited to any incoming freshman or seasoned college student. The tips offer invaluable information that most guidance counselors don't cover on everything from boosting one's GPA, to the pros and cons of joining a fraternity/sorority, dealing with roommates, staying safe, managing one's time, and much more.



COUNTDOWN TO COLLEGE

21 To-Do Lists for High School; Strategies for 9th, 10th, 11th, and 12th graders

By: Valerie Pierce & Cheryl Rilly

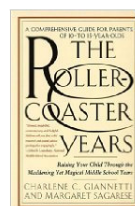


Countdown to College: 21 'To Do' Lists for High School is an easy to follow timeline to help students maximize their high school years and optimize their chances of 'getting where they want to go.' While encouraging exploration and self-discovery, these "to do's" provide the nitty gritty details necessary to the college admissions process. There will be no missed deadlines, or missed opportunities, as this step-by-step guide shows students and parents what to do and when to do it. The list format and quotes from students present the information in a logical way that is fun to read. Organizing the lists as tasks to be considered during each year of high school makes the college search process much less overwhelming.

THE ROLLER COASTER YEARS:

A Comprehensive Guide for Parents of 10-15 yr olds

By: Charlene Giannetti & Margaret Sagarese

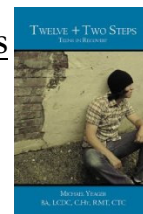


For the 20 million parents of 10- to 15-year-olds, The Roller-Coaster Years is a lively guide to mastering the ups and downs of early adolescence. Every parent knows about the terrible twos and the brooding teens, but few have anticipated the wild ride of these magical yet maddening years that can provide all the thrills and chills of a carnival ride. Now, drawing together the latest information from experts, supported and advised by the National Middle School Association, and with surprising insights from the authors' own surveys of parents, teachers, and the children themselves, The Roller-Coaster Years covers every facet of the physical, social, emotional, and intellectual development of early adolescents

TWELVE + TWO STEPS

Teens in Recovery

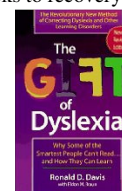
By: Michael Yeager



This workbook captures the essence of the 12-Steps and adds a new dimension to help young people challenge and change their negative core beliefs and say goodbye to pain or lost relationships in their lives. It offers relevant questions that someone in recovery needs to ask in order to become and stay addiction free. A rare book that helps addicts directly find their patterns and beliefs that were their roadblocks to recovery.

THE GIFT OF DYSLLEXIA

By: Ronald Davis & Eldon Braun



Davis emphasizes child development, psychology, and education rather than medical treatment. As a dyslexic individual and a teacher, he offers a unique perspective on the subject of learning disabilities. Through his own real-life experiences he shares what everyone needs to know about dyslexia, what the dyslexic student encounters in a typical school, and what is needed to teach such students effectively. To support his conclusion that dyslexics have special talents of perception, imagination, and intuition, Davis cites talented and brilliant figures from Einstein to Leonardo da Vinci to Walt Disney.

STOP NEGOTIATING WITH YOUR TEEN

Strategies for Parenting Your Angry, Manipulative, Moody, or Depressed Adolescent

By: Janet Sasson Adgette



A psychologist offers peace-making strategies for parents who don't know where to turn. The sullen, withdrawn, sarcastic teenager. The defensive, wary, and helpless parent. This book builds a bridge between the two sides--with practical and supportive advice on how to: Contain conflicts before they escalate into violence; Break through the teen's verbal intimidation; Avoid futile arguments; Turn confrontation into communication; Stand firm against teen rage; Manage teen manipulation; Build the teen's self-esteem; Talk to teens when no one knows what to say. For every parent who's screamed, what am I going to do with you?, this book finally provides the answer.

****ALUMNI- Please share your news with us about the events in your life. Tell me about moves, weddings, promotions, etc. Email me at lkahn@educationalconsulting.com.**

Another Barrier Broken

For intellectually disabled kids, college has finally become an option

In many ways, Katie Apostolides, an education major at Becker College in Worcester, Mass., is a typical undergraduate. As a freshman, she found it hard to leave her family behind in Pennsylvania and get used to dorm life. Like other new students, she worried that she'd never find close friends. One class—medical terminology—was unexpectedly difficult, and she had to withdraw in order to preserve her grade-point average. Her second year, she says, "has been going better." She's used to dorm life now. She's made friends. The workload is still challenging, but these days, she says, "I take the initiative to go up to teachers and ask for help."

Apostolides's troubles may seem ordinary, but she is far from an average college sophomore. She has Down syndrome—a chromosomal abnormality characterized by mild to moderate mental retardation. Profiting from a 30-year movement to keep disabled kids in mainstream school settings, Apostolides, 22, earned a degree from a public high school in Pennsylvania and now, supported by her parents and her own unflinching enthusiasm, is working on a college degree. She's not the only mentally disabled person attending college these days. In 2001, there were 15 postsecondary programs for intellectually disabled students. In 2006, the number swelled to 115.

Thirty years ago, mentally challenged kids were relegated to institutions, training programs and group homes. Regarded as unteachable, they were trained to do basic menial tasks instead of getting instruction in reading and math. That began to change in the 1970s when activist parents backed by new federal laws began pressing local school districts to "mainstream" intellectually disabled children and provide more community-based resources for them. At the same time, education specialists determined that many cognitively impaired children could learn more—provided they received early, intensive intervention. School districts began devising programs that mixed kids with disabilities into regular schools and sometimes, regular classrooms. "There was a massive shift in this country to supply more inclusion programs for intellectually disabled kids," says Debra Hart, coordinator for education and transition for the Institute for Community Inclusion at the University of Massachusetts.

Mainstreaming intellectually disabled kids paid off. Today, says Madeleine Will, vice president of public policy for National Down Syndrome Society, kids with intellectual impairments are "functioning better in the world of school, in the home and in the workplace." Parents who have spent the last 20 years creating educational opportunities for their disabled children say college is the next frontier. Steve Riggio, the CEO of Barnes & Noble, who is underwriting the two programs in New Jersey, says he hopes his own intellectually disabled daughter, Melissa, now a high-school junior, will benefit. Without well-constructed postsecondary programs, he says, after graduation, "she is facing a life without the opportunities that typical kids receive."



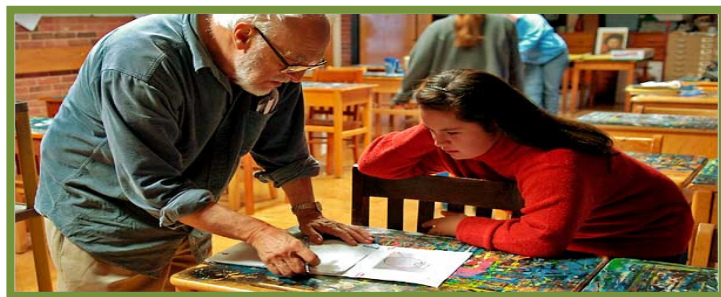
Lindsey Foley, 20, an intellectually disabled woman from Worcester, Mass., hopes that auditing a computer course at Quinsigamond Community College near her home will help her keep her job at the local YMCA. "I need to get better," she says. Because she can't read or write independently, Foley attends class with a tutor. She uses special software that "reads" textbooks and the Internet. When it is time to take a test, she goes to the learning center where a "scribe" reads the test questions aloud and records her answers. So far, her mother, Robin, points out, Lindsey has not failed a test. "Ha!" Lindsey adds with pride. Next year, she says, she hopes to take classes in English and sign language.

Not every college program offers the same level of inclusion and classroom support. Some colleges run life-skills courses on campus but keep intellectually disabled kids away from their mainstream curriculum. Others offer a hybrid, allowing the students to audit regular classes and supplement their course load with skill-building seminars such as cooking and human relationships. Other colleges allow them to matriculate.

What if intellectually disabled students can't cut it? "There are plenty of students without special needs who have to take a class repeatedly before they master the material," says Mercer administrator Sue Onaitis, who is coordinating their program for intellectually disabled students. "We believe that it's OK for all of our students to try and fail. There's a kind of dignity there."

These programs aren't cheap. Tuition for intellectually disabled kids is usually the same or more than the tuition for regular learners. In some states, local school districts will help defray the costs. If they don't, parents have to dig deep since intellectually disabled students usually can't obtain financial aid. In 2007, an amendment to the Higher Education Bill was introduced in the House that would provide federal work-study funds for intellectually disabled students who attend college. John Russo says he'd welcome all the help his son could get. John, 18, has a cognitive disorder that has kept him out of public schools. Though he reads at the fourth-grade level, he's like other teenagers in many ways—he plays in a band, has shown a flair for design and is dreaming of the day when he can get a driver's license. Russo believes that postsecondary education will help his son make the crucial leap to the working world. Given the right opportunity, he says, his son had the patience and determination to succeed. "It's not like he's never had an obstacle thrown at him," he says. Overcoming obstacles, he says, is the story of his life.

By: Peg Tyre
Newsweek Web Exclusive



Know Your Rights:

Rehabilitation act of 1973 (Sec. 504):

- A college **cannot** use admissions tests that inadequately measure the academic qualifications of disabled students because appropriate modifications were not made for them
- A college **cannot** exclude a qualified student with a disability from any course of study
- A college **cannot** counsel a student with a disability toward a more restrictive career

Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990:

- Expectation that public colleges and universities allow for persons with disabilities to participate in the most integrated setting possible
- Reasonable modifications in policies, practices and procedures (note takers, longer time on exams, etc.)
- Surcharges to cover the costs of accommodations may not be imposed solely on persons with disabilities

Questions Parents Should Ask About Distance Learning

1) Is this school accredited?

Ensure it is accredited by one of the six premier American regional school accrediting commissions or secondary and post-secondary institutions may not recognize credits earned.

2) How long has the school been operating?

Longer school history does not necessarily make it better but it does mean more experience.

3) How much is tuition?

Ask whether they charge a flat rate or if there will be additional charges for books, materials, and course fees.

4) Are teachers certified and experienced in distance learning?

Core content should be taught by certified teachers, as it is critical that they have the knowledge and skills necessary provide good feedback.

5) What diplomas are offered?

Not every school offers a diploma. Before students enroll, ask if the school offers at least a standard diploma (a college prep diploma is a plus).

6) How many students are currently enrolled?

Bigger schools may offer more courses, while smaller schools may respond to student needs and offer personal touches.

7) How many students have completed a course or graduated?

The stronger the student connection with the school, the higher the completion rate.

8) How fast or slow can a student work?

The advantage of distance learning is flexibility in setting schedules. Accelerated programs can enable students to get to their goals sooner.

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