



POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION EVENT: KEY TAKEAWAYS

Personalized Fit Over Prestige

- Focus on the Individual Student's Needs: Move away from prioritizing college prestige and instead focus on identifying schools that align with a child's specific strengths, interests, and support needs.
- Use of Specialized Tools: Tools like Corsava can help match students with institutions based on personal and academic criteria, guiding decisions that focus on "fit" over name-brand recognition.

The Benefits of Gap Years

- Life Experience and Preparation: Gap years offer students the opportunity to mature, gain life experience, and build confidence before entering college. For neurodivergent students, this can be a crucial period for skill-building.
- Structured Gap Year Programs: structured programs offer both personal growth and skill development, while still maintaining a supportive environment.

Importance of Self-Advocacy in College

- Preparing Students for Self-Advocacy: Neurodivergent students often need to be proactive in managing their accommodations. Teaching students to self-advocate, understand their rights, and utilize resources is essential for success.
- Understanding Accommodations: Families should work with students to ensure they understand what accommodations are available and how to request them at college. A new or updated neuropsych evaluation may be necessary to secure these services (but it's college/ university specific)

Exploring Less Conventional Educational Paths

- Community Colleges and Vocational Programs: Community colleges offer a more flexible, cost-effective pathway that can be especially beneficial for neurodivergent students. These institutions often provide smaller classes, more personalized support, and the chance to explore interests before transferring to a four-year college.



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- **Alternative Pathways:** Nontraditional paths like vocational training or job-shadowing experiences were encouraged, as these can provide practical career-oriented skills without the pressure of a four-year college from the outset.

Writing Personal Statements and Essays

- **Telling Their Story:** Personal statements are a chance for neurodivergent students to highlight their unique strengths, challenges, and growth. Parents should guide students to develop their voice without taking over the writing process.
- **Use of Storytelling:** Alex recommended using anecdotes in personal statements to convey who the student is, not just their achievements. Personal storytelling can showcase resilience and adaptability, which are highly valued by admissions officers.

Navigating Peer Influence in College Decisions

- **Managing Peer Pressure:** Students are often influenced by peers' choices regarding colleges. Parents should have open conversations with their children about why certain colleges are or are not a good fit based on individual needs, rather than following friends' decisions.
- **Choosing Based on Fit:** Using resources like Corsava can help students focus on objective criteria when assessing schools, enabling them to make informed decisions that align with their strengths, goals, and personality.

Disability Services and the College Transition

- **Neuropsych Evaluations and Disability Services:** Students entering college may need a recent neuropsychological evaluation to secure accommodations through the school's disability services office. Parents should work with their child to ensure that necessary documentation is updated and submitted early.
- **Student Involvement in the Process:** Alex emphasized the importance of students being actively involved in understanding and requesting their accommodations, as this is a crucial part of becoming independent in college.



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Encouraging Social Engagement in College

- **Supporting Social Growth:** Many neurodivergent students, particularly those who are introverted or autistic, may struggle with the social aspects of college. Parents can help their children identify potential activities or clubs that align with their interests to encourage social interaction.
- **Giving Space for Exploration:** It's important for students to have the freedom to try, succeed, or stumble in social settings. Encouraging small steps toward engagement can help ease the transition and build confidence in new environments.