

# Section Four: College Bound

This is the section where many pieces of the preparing-for-college puzzle start coming together! Students discuss, reflect, explore and learn a range of exciting possibilities that can lead them to answers for many of their questions regarding postsecondary STEM opportunities.

- ⇒ Where will I go to college?
- ⇒ What do I want to study there?
- ⇒ What will it take to apply and get that acceptance letter?
- ⇒ What forms of assistive technology will help me be successful in high school, in testing, and in college?
- ⇒ How can I succeed in my SAT or ACT testing?
- ⇒ Will I have the finances in place to pay for my education?
- ⇒ How can I plan now for a happy and positive future?

In the *Increasing Access and Success in the STEM Disciplines* project, staff followed this section with three individual student-centered planning meetings for each student. Project staff found these meetings were vital in helping each student take the next steps in their transition to postsecondary education. We strongly recommend that you use this process with your students, as well.

These person-centered planning meetings generally take place in the student's home or a nearby setting of the family's choice. Parents, friends and extended family may attend, based on the preference of the student. We talk about what is important to the student, their goals, and what they, and we, as cheerleaders, boosters and invested partners; can do to assure success! It is exciting, motivating and fun!

# College Application Process

This activity prepares students for the realities of handling multiple decisions and deadlines as they apply for college. The document entitled “Priority Cluster” provides a visual of some of the competing priorities and deadlines that students face during this period, and a jumping off point for discussion about how students cope with these challenges. After this preliminary discussion, the instructor introduces a video from the *Going to College* website which shows students talking about their experiences in balancing priorities and applying for college. Following the video, the instructor directs the students to the universal/common application website, which allows students to complete one application which can then be used or adapted to distribute to various colleges and universities.

# College Application and Process

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Purpose:**

- ⇒ Familiarize students with college application process and related documents
- ⇒ Provide information about college application websites

**Key Concepts:**

- ⇒ College application process
- ⇒ Timelines
- ⇒ Rolling admissions

**Preparation:**

Set up LCD projector and laptop with internet connection and go to the following websites:

- ⇒ [Going to College - Applying for college](#)

Virginia Commonwealth University-Going to College. (2009). *Applying for college*. Available online at <http://going-to-college.org/planning/applying.html>.

- ⇒ [The Common Application](#).

The Common Application. (2014). Available online at <https://www.commonapp.org/>

Write each of the following questions on a sheet of chart paper and then hang them around the room. Have markers available.

1. What is the best way for you to manage multiple deadlines?
2. What resources are available in your high school to help you write an impressive personal essay for your college application?
3. What are some advantages and disadvantages of disclosing your disability in your college essay?

Have computers available for students to use, if possible.

Provide the URL to the *Going to College* website so students can download the *Comparing Colleges* activity form (or have paper copies available):

- ⇒ [Comparing Colleges activity form \(Doc\)](#).

Virginia Commonwealth University - Going to College. (2009). *Comparing colleges* (doc). Available for downloading at <http://going-to-college.org/docs/comparingcolleges.doc>

continued on pg. 96

## Leading the Activity:

### Part 1:

Instructor gives a very brief overview regarding the college application process. Talking points include the following:

- ⇒ Each college has its own application requirements, form, fees, due dates and acceptance procedures.
- ⇒ It is important to keep track of this information in a manageable way.
- ⇒ Initially, it is important to look good on paper.
- ⇒ Most college application packets will require the following:
  - ◇ the actual completed application,
  - ◇ your high school transcripts,
  - ◇ your college admissions test scores,
  - ◇ a personal essay,
  - ◇ a few references and
  - ◇ your payment submitted by a particular due date.

Instructor invites the students in pairs/carousel format, to answer the questions posted on the three pieces of chart paper hung around the room. (Alternative option: this can be done as a group discussion, if the group size is small.)

### Part 2:

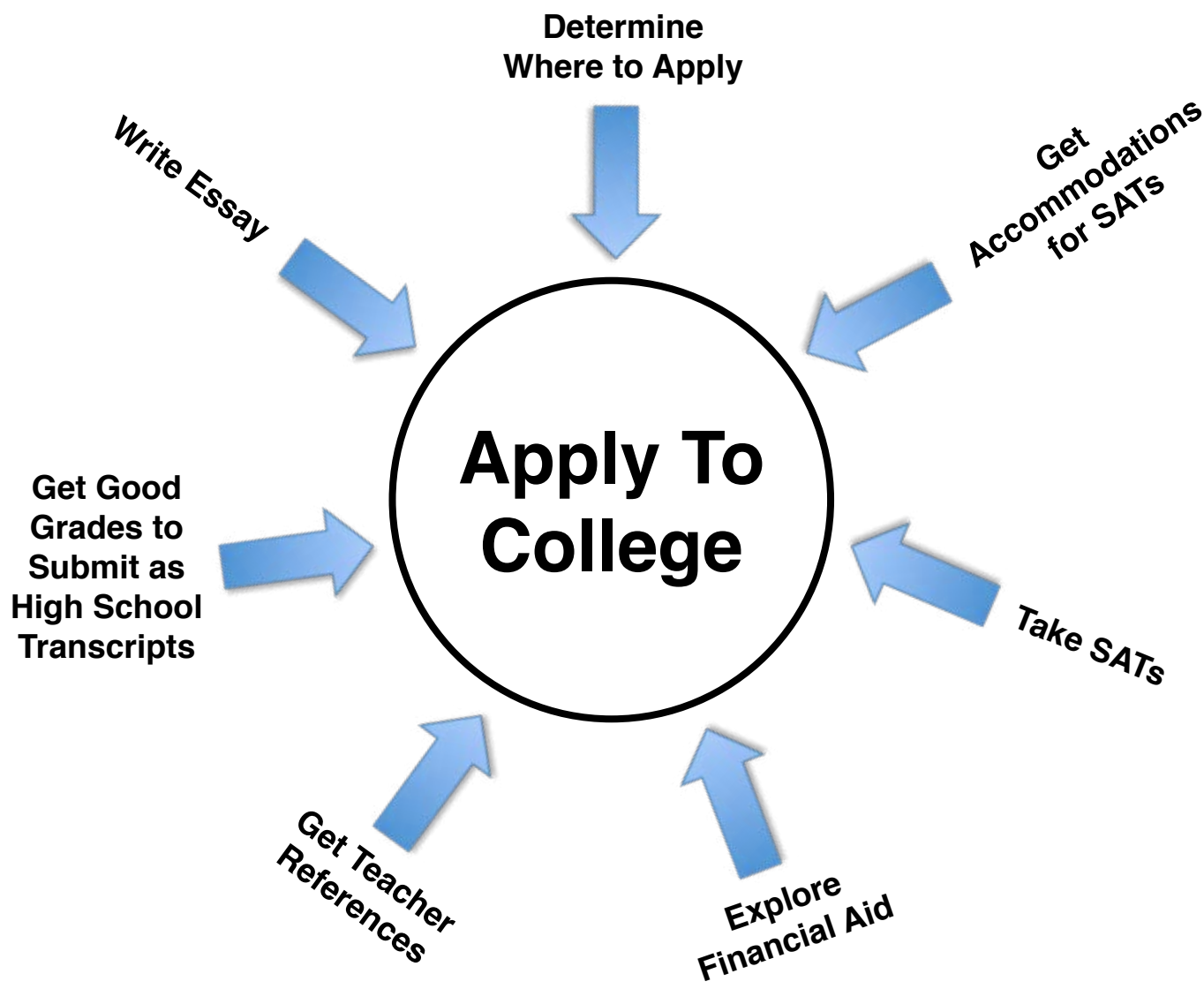
- ⇒ Introduce the video from the *Going to College* website where students talk about their experience with the college application process. Offer time for group reflection on this video.
- ⇒ Introduce the universal/common application concept and provide time for students to individually explore *The Common Application* website.
  - ◇ Suggest that students look at the list of member colleges and universities and/or do a search for a school in which they are interested.

\*\*Refer to the “Comparing Colleges” document from the Going to College website.

## How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

# Priority Cluster



# Assistive Technology (AT)

This activity introduces high school students with disabilities to a variety of assistive technology devices and computer applications. The instructor will provide links for three websites that demonstrate different types of AT that many students in the *Increasing Access and Success in the STEM Disciplines* project found helpful: Time Timer®, a time management device, that helps students to see the passage of time visually; Dragon Dictate®, speech recognition software, which turns speech into text and can make virtually any computer task easier and faster; and Learning Ally, a nonprofit organization with the largest library of audiobooks and audio textbooks for students with dyslexia or other print disabilities. The instructor should plan to have some examples of assistive technology for the students to try hands-on.

Students in the *Increasing Access and Success* project enjoyed using the Livescribe™ Smartpen. Students also explored the TechMatrix website, which allows individuals to search for appropriate assistive technology to match their needs by content (e.g., math, reading, science, etc.); by grade level; and by IDEA eligibility criteria (e.g., autism, developmental delay, hearing impairment, specific learning disability, etc.).

This assistive technology session also includes a list of AT applications (apps) that a former student, Zach J., introduced to the class via Skype; and a document called “Questions to Ask Colleges,” which students can use to guide discussions with college admissions.

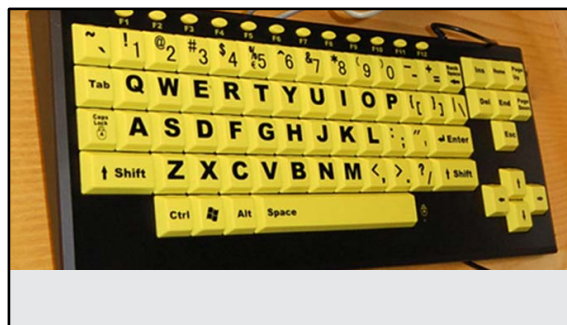


Photo courtesy of the University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

# Students Sample Assistive Technology (AT)

**Time:** 1 hour

**Purpose:**

To allow students with disabilities to sample a variety of assistive technology supports in a classroom setting.

**Key Concepts:**

Assistive technology, apps, and executive functioning (i.e., staying organized, time management strategies)

**Preparation:**

Review the following links:

- ⇒ [How a Time Timer Works](#)  
Time Timer LLC. (2010, January 21). *How a Time Timer Works* [Video file]. Available online at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hjDWwq0Snlw>
- ⇒ [Dragon Dictate](#)  
Cancom. (2011, March 29). *Nuance – Dragon Dictate for Mac* [Video file]. Available online at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=al6ur-Ycfcw>
- ⇒ [Learning Ally – Audiobooks](#) available for low cost to students with documented print disabilities.  
Learning Ally. (2014). *Audiobooks*. Available online at <http://www.learningally.org/Browse-Audiobooks>
- ⇒ [20 Free Apps for Executive Functioning](#) — Apps to assist with executive functioning (e.g., staying organized, etc.).  
A Day in our Shoes. (n.d.). *20 free apps for executive functioning*. Available online at <https://adayinourshoes.com/apps-executive-functioning-adults-students/>
- ⇒ [Educational App Store](#)  
Educational App Store - Supporting the digital wellbeing of children. (n.d.). Available online at <https://www.educationalappstore.com/app/category/special-education-apps>
- ⇒ [Livescribe Smartpen](#)  
Smartscribe [Bazerk Bazerk]. (2010, October 29). *Livescribe smartpens all-in-one demo* [Video file]. Available online at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2q8\\_fR0ITl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2q8_fR0ITl)

continued on pg. 100

It's a good idea to have an iPad or another tablet with you to demonstrate some of the compatible apps found on the websites listed above. Also, if possible, have some Livescribe Smartpens for demonstration purposes and student use.

Review the following documents that provide students with additional ideas regarding assistive technology:

- ⇒ [Assistive Technology: Checklist of Questions to Ask Colleges \(PDF\)](#)

Rabinovitz, R. (2011). *Assistive technology: Checklist of questions to ask colleges* (PDF). The National Center for Learning Disabilities, Inc. Available online <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/at-checklist-questions-ask-colleges-pdf/>

- ⇒ [Zach J's Tech Ideas \(.docx\)](#) — Download this document and share with the students for their portfolio either as print copy or on a flash drive.

University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Suggestions from Zach J.* (Doc). Available online at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/suggestions-zach-docx/>

### Leading the Activity:

1. Review the first three websites listed below on a projected screen, or allow students to watch on their own computers/tablets. After each, elicit student conversation about how these might be useful in their lives. Share any additional information they don't discuss.
  - a. Time Timer YouTube video
  - b. Dragon Dictate
  - c. Audiobooks available for low cost to students with documented disabilities
2. Download compatible apps to tablet/device for demonstration purposes. If possible, allow students to peruse and “play” with the apps and determine their functionality for them. As students express interest in particular apps, discuss how they could be used in their life. If time allows, search for additional apps that could support student needs, or apps that they express interest in.
3. Apps to assist with executive functioning (e.g., staying organized, on time, etc.)
  - a. 20 Free Apps for Executive Functioning
  - b. Complete Guide to Educational and Special Needs Apps.
4. Watch the YouTube video listed below to show some of the functions of the Livescribe smartpen. After watching the video, if available, allow students to try the Livescribe smartpens with the specialty notebooks, or with iPads and the app that supports Livescribe smartpens. Help students understand the functionality of this type of AT. Ask students to talk about where they might find them useful.
  - a. Livescribe Smartpen

continued on pg. 101



5. Have students navigate to Explore Technology website. Explore some of the technology available, based upon educational subject, grade level, instructional support needed, or IDEA disability category.
6. Share the following documents:
  - a. Questions to Ask Colleges About AT
  - b. Zach J's Tech Ideas

### **Additional Resources:**

Allow students to use their own technology devices, and to share them with the class to expand learning.

### **Student Participation:**

Students will be highly participatory in this activity, by sharing their own needs and experiences with technology.

### **Documents/Materials Needed:**

Projector, iPad (if available), other tablets

1. Questions to Ask Colleges About AT
2. Zach J's Tech Ideas

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

## Suggestions from Zach J.

### Skype Session with New Students (January 2014)

- ⇒ [Navigating College: A Handbook on Self Advocacy. \(PDF\)](#) — A book Zach received and highly recommends.
 

Autistic Self Advocacy Network. (2012). *Navigating college: A handbook on self-advocacy* (PDF). Available online at <https://autisticadvocacy.org/wp-content/uploads/2014/01/NavcollFinal.pdf>
- ⇒ [Nanda Home](#) — website with mobile alarm clock.
 

Nanda Home. (n.d.). Available online at <http://www.nandahome.com/>
- ⇒ [Time Timer Watch](#) — Zach learned about the time timer and related products in the *Navigating College* book. He has a watch with a time timer face which he likes very much.
 

Time Timer LLC. (2014). *Watches*. Available online at <http://www.timetimer.com/store/category/11/watches>
- ⇒ Zach (and maybe his school) use [Learning Ally](#) to obtain audiobooks. Zach has benefited a great deal from access to audiobooks.
 

Learning Ally. (2014). *Success stories*. Available online at <https://www.learningally.org/parents-students/how-to-use-audiobooks/success-stories/>
- ⇒ [Livescribe Smartpen](#) — Zach has a Livescribe pen and finds it very useful.
 

Smartscribe [Bazerk Bazerk]. (2010, October 29). *Livescribe SmartPens all-in-one demo* [Video file]. Available online at [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2q8\\_fR0ITl](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J2q8_fR0ITl)
- ⇒ [Lumosity](#) — Zach has a subscription to Lumosity.com and he feels that playing the games on the site has helped improve his memory, focus and other skills. Check it out – from this link you can do an assessment and try out some of the games.
 

Human Cognition Project. (n.d.). *Lumosity*. Available online at <http://www.lumosity.com/>

# Choosing a College

This activity encourages students to think about and discuss what is important to them as individuals as they consider choosing a college. It offers an opportunity to explore, compare and contrast various colleges using a template (comparing colleges) to capture this information. Some of the considerations that students consider are location/proximity to home; size of the college and classes; and majors available, etc.



Photo credit: Edwin Remsberg

# Considerations for Choosing a College

## Purpose:

This provides students with an opportunity to begin to identify possible colleges based on geographical area, size, learning environment, and majors.

## Key Concepts:

Identifying Colleges

## Preparation:

- ⇒ Make sure all students have access to the Internet. Provide students with the link to [Big Future — Find Colleges](#) web page. If possible, send them the URL or provide it on a flash drive so that they click on it.

The College Board. (n.d.). *BigFuture — Find colleges* (web page). Available online at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges>.

- ⇒ Print and provide the [Comparing Colleges](#) document from the *Going to College* website. (This can also be provided to the students in electronic format.)

Virginia Commonwealth University. *Going to College*. (2009). *Comparing colleges* (Doc). From the Planning for College section of the *Going to College* website. Available for download at <http://going-to-college.org/docs/comparingcolleges.doc>. Also available at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/files/2014/06/c-comparingcolleges.doc>

## Leading the Activity:

Explain that students will be going online to begin exploring colleges that might meet their needs.

1. Use the following questions to lead a discussion:
  - a. What are some characteristics on your “wish list” for college? For example, great sports teams, knowledgeable professors or small student-teacher ratios.
  - b. How can you find out the college options in your state or in other states?
  - c. What are ways to compare the pros and cons of several college choices?
  - d. What have other college students shared with you about their experiences of choosing a college?
2. Ask students go to the *Big Future — Find Colleges* website: <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/find-colleges>.
  - a. Use the *Comparing College* doc to look at two or three different colleges of interest. Have students fill out the form to gather more information.

continued on pg. 105

### **Student Participation:**

Sometimes students may need some individual prompting in order to use the site.

Students will participate in the discussion section as well as searching on the website and completing the *Comparing Colleges* document.

### **Documents/Materials Needed:**

- ⇒ Internet access
- ⇒ Computers, laptops, or tablets (Students can bring their own or you can provide)
- ⇒ *Comparing Colleges* document

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

# Deciding on a Major

The instructor begins this activity by distributing or posting the four questions that are on the *Deciding On a Major* document. This introduces the thought process involved in deciding what the students would like to study when they go to college. The activity can be done either in a large group, a small group, or through pair share, depending on the comfort level of the group. Ask the students to go online to the *Virginia Career View* website on their individual computers or tablets. This site allows them to explore a number of STEM careers and discover what a professional in that field might actually do in a typical day. The site also allows the students to compare the amount of education required, typical salary for a professional in that field, and the projected need for that type of work in the future. This exploration introduces the students to a number of STEM careers and provides a “reality check” on what it would take to get there, as well as the potential rewards for staying the course. Students can record their process on the *Deciding on a Major* worksheet.



Photo credit: Edwin Remsberg



Photo courtesy of the University of Maine

# Which College Major is Right for Me?

## Purpose:

To encourage students to consider the variety of options available to them as college majors, as well as the practical aspects that may impact that choice.

## Key Concepts:

- ⇒ Consideration of student interests and motivation
- ⇒ Potential career options through exploration
- ⇒ Years of study required
- ⇒ Availability of employment in that field/projected need for that field of study
- ⇒ Salary range

## Preparation:

- ⇒ LCD projector, individual student copies or chart paper with pair share discussion questions listed below.

## Leading the Activity:

Introduce the topic: Deciding on a major.

Student: Pair Share (5 minutes) discussing the following questions.

1. Have you already decided what you would like to have as your major field of study in college?
2. If you have decided, how did you come to that conclusion?
3. If you haven't decided, what are you currently considering?
4. What else might you be interested in pursuing?

## Instructor:

Ask students if anyone would like to share how that conversation went. (Wait to see if there is student response.) If not, then ask, "What majors were discussed?" Explain that the [Virginia Career VIEW](#) website will provide some specific information about a variety of majors in the STEM field. Ask them to first look at a major they are considering, and review the information about length of study/degree required, salary and description of the actual work/jobs associated with that field of study.

Virginia Career VIEW. (2014). Available online at <http://www.vaview.org/careers/>

Do the same for at least one other major that interests them.

\*\*The student handout, *Choosing a College Major Worksheet* is available on the next page and accompanies this website exploration.

continued on pg. 108

**How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?



## Choosing a College Major Worksheet

- Go to the [Virginia Career View, Vital Information for Education and Work](http://www.vaview.org/careers/) website  
Virginia Career VIEW. (2014). Available online at <http://www.vaview.org/careers/> Scroll down to “Search by Career Cluster.”
- Click on “Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics”
- Select a major of interest to you.

What education level is required?

---

What does the salary range look like?

---

What are the projections for future employment?

---

- Click on the major and read about what employees in this field actually do.

When you read about what the employment available in that field is, are you....

- More interested in spending 8 + hours a day in this type of employment?
- Less interested in spending 8 + hours a day in this type of employment?
- About the same?

- Select ANOTHER major that may interest you.

What education level is required?

---

What does the salary range look like?

---

What are the projections for future employment?

---

- Click on the major and read about what employees in this field actually do.

When you read about what the employment available in that field is, are you....

- More interested in spending 8 + hours a day in this type of employment?
- Less interested in spending 8 + hours a day in this type of employment?
- About the same?

# All About Financial Aid

This activity begins with an introduction to the types of financial aid available to college students: grants, loans, work-study, and scholarships. It is a simple matching/guessing game that is conducted with the whole group. Definitions of each type of financial aid are listed on a sheet of paper and the corresponding types of financial aid are then matched to the definitions. (The definitions, types of aid, as well as the key to match them, are found in the *Types Of Financial Aid* document that follows the activity). In the *Getting Financial Aid* session, there are two documents with websites that offer assistance in finding financial aid for college. (Many of the students are “not there” yet, but the parents may be interested. Reminding students to share these sites with parents and revisiting the topic during the person-centered planning process is helpful.) Briefly visit a couple of these sites. One is the *FAFSA4caster*, which is an early eligibility estimator that can help the family plan ahead. Other websites may be specific to the type of student disability, so the instructor may want to carefully review the various sites listed and select one or two that may be relevant to his or her students’ needs.



Photo courtesy of the University of Maine CCIDS



Photo courtesy of the University of Maine

# Getting Financial Aid

**Time:** 10 minutes

**Purpose:**

- ⇒ To describe the different kinds of financial aid that is available to all students.
- ⇒ To provide some resources for families to assess eligibility and apply for financial aid.

**Key Concepts:**

- ⇒ Grants
- ⇒ Scholarships
- ⇒ Loans
- ⇒ Work-Study

**Preparation:**

- ⇒ Download and print out the document, [Types of Financial Aid \(PDF\)](#)  
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Types of financial aid* (Doc). Available for download from <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/types-of-financial-aid-pdf/>
- ⇒ Tape the descriptions of the types of aid on a wall.
- ⇒ On the final page of that document, you will find the key (for instructor only); and the 4 types of financial aid (grants, loans, work study and scholarships). Cut along the dotted lines to form individual strips.
- ⇒ Computer and LCD projector.
- ⇒ Download and review [How to Pay for College \(PDF\)](#) (document can be found after this activity as well).  
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *How to pay for college* (Doc). Available for download from <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/how-to-pay-for-college-pdf/>
- ⇒ Download and review [Scholarship Information \(PDF\)](#) (document can be found after this activity as well).  
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Scholarship information* (Doc). Available for download at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/scholarship-information-pdf/>

continued on pg. 112

**Leading the Activity:**

1. In the large group, ask the students to guess which type of financial aid goes with each of the definitions taped on the wall.  
(Example: Hold up the strip that says “Scholarship” and ask the students: “Which definition best describes the type of financial aid known as a “scholarship”?)
2. Tape the type of financial aid next to the correct definition. (Or ask a student to do that.)

**Part Two of Getting Financial Aid** (using computer and LCD projector):

1. Open the document *How to Pay for College* and refer to the following websites to familiarize students with the resources contained there.
  - a. Instructor(s) may want to emphasize the [FAFSA4caster](#) site for families who want to estimate what their aid might be.
  - b. [College Funding for Students with Disabilities](#) site
  - c. [Federal Student Aid \(free application\)](#) site
2. Go to the [Big Futures - College Board - Financial Aid 101](#) site. This is a tutorial for all things financial aid. (Again, this is just to familiarize students with the resource.)

The College Board. (n.d.). *Pay for college - Financial aid 101*. Available online at <https://bigfuture.collegeboard.org/pay-for-college/financial-aid>

3. Share the *How to Pay for College* document and the *Scholarship Information* document to make students aware of possible resources. **Remind the students that the availability of scholarships may vary year to year. Encourage them to conduct their own searches for scholarship opportunities in their interest areas.**

**Additional Resources:**

**\*\***When students are exploring colleges and considering their major courses of study, they may wish to contact the admissions agent and ask for a referral to individuals within their proposed field of study who are familiar with the scholarships available for that field of study. (Example: “Who might I speak with regarding scholarships or grants for incoming students in the field of chemical engineering?”)

**How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

## How to Pay for College

[American Association on Health and Disability \(AAHD\) Scholarship](#) — Program supports students with disabilities who are pursuing higher education. Preference will be given to students who plan to pursue undergraduate or graduate studies in the fields of public health, health promotion, disability studies, disability policy and disability research.

American Association on Health and Disability. (n.d.). *AAHD scholarship program*. Available online at <http://www.aahd.us/initiatives/scholarship-program/>

[Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarships \(2\)](#) offer financial assistance to two graduating seniors with documented learning disabilities (LD) who are pursuing postsecondary education.

National Center for Learning Disabilities. (n.d.). The Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarships. Available online at <https://www.nclد.org/scholarships-and-awards>

[College Funding for Students with Disabilities](#)

University of Washington, DO-IT. (2013). *College funding for students with disabilities*. Available online at <https://www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities>

[disABLEDperson National Scholarship Competition](#) — This scholarship competition for college students with disabilities awards a \$1,000 scholarship. Applicants must submit a short essay, be enrolled full-time at an accredited two- or four-year college or university, and be a U.S. citizen.

disABLEDperson Scholarship Info: <https://www.disabledperson.com/scholarships/info>

[Estimate Your Federal Student Aid](#) — A free financial aid calculator that provides an early estimate of a student's eligibility for federal student aid. This information helps families plan ahead for college. You must use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) to apply for aid once you've decided to apply for admission and attend college.

Federal Student Aid. (n.d.). *Estimate Your Federal Student Aid*. Available online at <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/>

[FastWeb!](#) — A commercial online scholarship search service.

FastWeb! (2014). Available online at [http://edu.fastweb.com/v/o\\_registration/flow/step1](http://edu.fastweb.com/v/o_registration/flow/step1)

[FinAid!: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities](#). — On this web page, you'll find information about scholarships and fellowships for students with disabilities. Be sure to browse the rest of the site also, since some of the more general listings and scholarship databases may contain information relevant to students with disabilities.

FinAid! (2014). *Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities*. Available online at <http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml>

continued on pg. 113

[Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) — To apply for federal student aid, students complete the FAFSA® or Free Application for Federal Student Aid. IMPORTANT: The FAFSA becomes available in early January each year, and there are different deadlines for different programs. Students must fill out the FAFSA every year they're enrolled in school in order to stay eligible for federal student aid.

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Federal Student Aid*. Available online at <http://www.fafsa.ed.gov/>

[Incight Scholarship](#) — Provides scholarships for students with disabilities. Applicants must have a documented disability and be enrolled full-time at any college, university, or trade school, etc.

Incight Education. (n.d.). Incight Scholarship. Available online at <https://www.incight.org/scholarship>

[Planning Ahead: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities. 2014-2015 Edition \(PDF\)](#) — This document provides an overview of the financial aid process and options.

The George Washington University, National Youth Transitions Center. (2014-2015). *Planning Ahead: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities. 2014–2015 Edition*. (49 pg. PDF). Available online at [https://www.heath.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2346/f/downloads/2014\\_2015\\_heath\\_financial\\_aid\\_publication.pdf](https://www.heath.gwu.edu/sites/g/files/zaxdzs2346/f/downloads/2014_2015_heath_financial_aid_publication.pdf)

[Saving for College](#) (for parents and students) — Every dollar saved reduces the overall cost of college and the amount of student loan debt to be repaid after graduation.

Minnesota Office of Higher Education. (n.d.). *Saving for college*. Available online at <https://www.mnsaves.org/>

## Scholarship Information

The U.S. Department of Education, Office of Federal Student Aid, strongly advises students and their families to [avoid scams](https://studentaid.gov/resources/scams) (https://studentaid.gov/resources/scams) while seeking scholarships for postsecondary education. Don't pay for help to find money for college: try the free sources of information listed on their website, first.

### Other sources of competitive scholarships for students with disabilities:

[American Association on Health and Disability \(AAHD\) Scholarship](#) — Scholarship program supports students with disabilities who are pursuing higher education. Preference will be given to students who plan to pursue undergraduate or graduate studies in the fields of public health, health promotion, disability studies, disability policy and disability research.

American Association on Health and Disability. (n.d.). *AAHD scholarship program*. Available online at <http://www.aahd.us/initiatives/scholarship-program/>

[Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarships \(2\)](#) offer financial assistance to two graduating seniors with documented learning disabilities (LD) who are pursuing postsecondary education.

National Center for Learning Disabilities. (n.d.). The Anne Ford and Allegra Ford Thomas Scholarships. Available online at <https://www.ncl.org/scholarships-and-awards>

[CareerOneStop, Free Scholarship Search](#) — Sponsored by the U.S. Department of Labor, Employment and Training Administration. Search more than 7,000 scholarships, fellowships, loans, and other financial aid opportunities. Choose “Disabled” under Affiliation Restrictions: over 100 scholarship opportunities listed.

CareerOneStop, U.S. Department of Labor. (2014). *Scholarship search*. Available online at <http://careerinfonet.org/scholarshipsearch/ScholarshipCategory.asp?searchtype=category&nodeid=22>

### [College Funding for Students with Disabilities](#)

University of Washington, DO-IT. (2013). *College funding for students with disabilities*. Available online at <https://www.washington.edu/doit/college-funding-students-disabilities>

[disABLEDperson National Scholarship Competition](#) — This scholarship competition for college students with disabilities awards a \$1,000 scholarship. Applicants must submit a short essay, be enrolled full-time at an accredited two- or four-year college or university, and be a U.S. citizen.

disABLEDperson Scholarship Info: <https://www.disabledperson.com/scholarships/info>

continued on pg. 116

[FAFSA Estimator](#) — A free financial aid calculator that provides an early estimate of a student's eligibility for federal student aid. This information helps families plan ahead for college. You must use the Free Application for Federal Student Aid (FAFSA®) to apply for aid once you've decided to apply for admission and attend college.

Federal Student Aid. (n.d.). *FAFSA Estimator*. <https://studentaid.gov/aid-estimator/>

[FastWeb!](#) — A commercial online scholarship search service.

FastWeb! (2014). Available online at [http://edu.fastweb.com/v/o\\_registration/flow/step1](http://edu.fastweb.com/v/o_registration/flow/step1)

[FinAid!: Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities](#) — On this web page, you'll find information about scholarships and fellowships for students with disabilities. Be sure to browse the rest of the site also, since some of the more general listings and scholarship databases may contain information relevant to students with disabilities.

FinAid! (2014). *Financial Aid for Students with Disabilities*. Available online at <http://www.finaid.org/otheraid/disabled.phtml>

[Free Application for Federal Student Aid](#) — To apply for federal student aid, students complete the FAFSA® or Free Application for Federal Student Aid. IMPORTANT: The FAFSA becomes available in early January each year, and there are different deadlines for different programs. Students must fill out the FAFSA every year they're enrolled in school in order to stay eligible for federal student aid.

U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.). *Federal student aid*. Available online at <https://studentaid.gov/>

[Grants and Scholarships – Finding and Applying for Scholarships](#) — Scholarships are gifts. They don't need to be repaid. There are thousands of them, offered by schools, employers, individuals, private companies, nonprofits, communities, religious groups, and professional and social organizations.

Federal Student Aid, U.S. Department of Education. (n.d.) *Finding and applying for scholarships*. Available online at <https://studentaid.ed.gov/types/grants-scholarships/finding-scholarships#what-kinds-of-scholarships-are-available>

[Incight Scholarship](#) — Provides scholarships for students with disabilities. Applicants must have a documented disability and be enrolled full-time at any college, university, or trade school, etc.

Incight Education. (n.d.). Incight Scholarship. Available online at <https://www.incight.org/scholarship>



[Microsoft DisAbility Scholarship](#) — The mission of DisAbility Scholarship at Microsoft is to empower and enable high schools students with disabilities to (a) go to college, (b) realize the impact technology has on the world, and (c) target a career in the technology industry. A primary goal of this scholarship is to increase the pool of persons living with a disability enrolling in higher education and, in long term, decrease the unemployment bias for this demographic.

Microsoft. (2014). Global Diversity and Inclusion. *Microsoft disability scholarship*. Available online at <http://www.microsoft.com/en-us/diversity/programs/microsoftdisabilityscholarship.aspx>

[National Scholarships for Students with Disabilities](#) — List published by ScholarshipMentor.

ScholarshipMentor. (2014). *Scholarships for disabled students: National scholarships for students with disabilities*. Available online at <http://scholarshipmentor.com/scholarships-disabled-students>

# Taking Standardized Tests

Students are often anxious about taking tests and experience a range of outcomes. Since most colleges require SAT or ACT examinations, this activity raises that “specter,” and attempts to draw out students’ experiences and feelings on the subject. Following that initial discussion, the instructor shows the students a video from the Going To College website, “Taking Standardized Tests.” This video shows several students talking about how they prepared for their SAT tests and the accommodations that helped them be successful.

After viewing the video, instructors ask the students for their feedback or observations. Then, the instructor offers several online resources that the students explore on their computers. One of these resources is “FairTest” from The National Center for Fair and Open Testing website, which offers a list of schools where testing is optional. Another resource is the “CollegeBoard, Testing, Students with Disabilities” website where accommodations are arranged when students take the SAT.

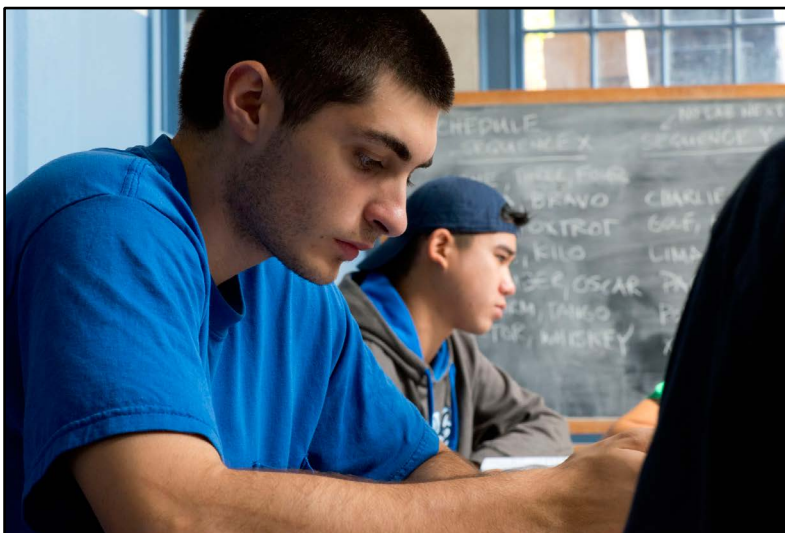


Photo courtesy of the University of Maine

# Taking Standardized Tests

**Time:** 20 minutes

**Purpose:**

To introduce students to resources that may help them feel more confident in taking standardized tests and achieving better scores.

**Key Concepts:**

Standardized tests, SAT/ACT, prep courses, and accommodations

**Preparation:**

Review the following links:

- ⇒ [Taking standardized tests \(video\)](#)

Virginia Commonwealth University, Going to College. (2009). *Taking standardized tests*. (video). Available online at <http://going-to-college.org/planning/tests.html>

- ⇒ [Colleges and Universities That Do Not Use SAT/ACT Scores for Admitting Substantial Numbers of Students Into Bachelor Degree Programs](#)

FairTest. The National Center for Fair and Open Testing. (2014). *Colleges and universities that do not use SAT/ACT scores for admitting substantial numbers of students into bachelor degree programs*. Available online at <http://www.fairtest.org/university/optional>

- ⇒ [Providing testing accommodations for students with disabilities](#)

CollegeBoard. (2012). *Providing testing accommodations for students with disabilities*. Available online at <http://professionals.collegeboard.com/testing/ssd>

**Leading the Activity:**

1. Show the video listed above, *Taking standardized tests*, from the *Going to College* website.
2. Ask students if they have taken any standardized tests, and what they were. Discuss if they were challenging, and if students are willing to share, why.
3. Continue discussion about how standardized tests are often a requirement to accessing and being accepted into college. Show students information on the *FairTest* website listed above.
4. Discuss the supports that are available to students to improve their testing abilities and scores. (e.g., *School-based guidance counselors, books*)
5. Discuss the accommodations that students may have access to while taking standardized testing, and how they can find that information. Show students information on the *CollegeBoard* website listed above.

continued on pg. 120

### **Student Participation:**

Students will be encouraged to share information that they know about standardized testing, and to share what they learn and have questions about.

### **Documents/Materials Needed:**

LCD projector, and computer/laptop

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

# Self-Determination

Self-determination is essentially the ability to establish goals, develop a plan for pursuing those goals, monitor one's progress in one's progress toward goals, and make revisions to the plan as needed. Youth who develop self-determination skills in high school are more likely to succeed in college and in their careers than those who do not. In fact, research indicates that one's level of self-determination may be the best predictor of future success – both for students with and without disabilities.

In this section, students learn about self-determination and about how they can increase their self-determination skills in a number of ways including the following:

- Reviewing Self-Determination Success Stories from videos and flyers from the DO-IT center at the University of Washington;
- Practice identifying postsecondary education goals and establishing a plan for achieving them;
- Identifying a specific goal or goals related to the development of self-determination; and
- Learning about person-centered planning strategies that they can use in pursuing postsecondary education goals and in identifying resources that they will need to achieve them.

The final component of this section is on person-centered planning. In addition to providing students with an understanding of the person-centered process, it is also designed to introduce them to the next, and perhaps most important, phase of the project. We have found that ongoing person-centered planning serves several important functions. First, it helps students put into practice some of the things they learned in the workshops. Second, it gives them an opportunity to take more control of their own planning – and in the process, develop more self-determination skills. Third, it helps students and families stay on track as they work to successfully transition from high school to postsecondary education.

# What is Self-Determination?

**Time:** 30 Minutes

**Purpose:**

To review the concept of self-determination and explore its meaning in more detail.

**Key Concepts:**

- ⇒ Self-determination
- ⇒ Goal-directed behavior
- ⇒ Self-regulated behavior
- ⇒ Autonomous behavior
- ⇒ Self-advocacy

**Preparation:**

- ⇒ Download [Taking Charge: Stories of Success and Self-Determination \(PDF\)](#) by Sheryl Burgstahler  
 Burgstahler, S. (2012). *Taking charge: Stories of success and self-determination* (PDF). University of Washington, DO-IT project. Available online at: <https://www.washington.edu/doiit/taking-charge-stories-success-and-self-determination>
- ⇒ Download and [Taking Charge Study Guide \(PDF\)](#).  
 University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Study guide - Taking charge: Stories of success and self-determination* (Doc). Available to download from <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/study-guide-taking-charge-stories-of-success-and-self-determination-pdf/>
- ⇒ Review the above documents and share with the students in either an electronic format on flash drives or paper copies.

**Leading the Activity:**

- ⇒ Remind students that you have discussed self-determination earlier. Ask for volunteers to briefly say what self-determination means to them.
- ⇒ Explain that you are going to ask them to read a 6-page document that describes self-determination in more detail and shares the experiences of college students and professionals.
- ⇒ Explain that there will be three concepts that are used in the definition of self-determination that they will discuss that students might not be familiar with: include: goal-directed behavior; self-regulated behavior; and autonomous behavior. Ask each student to conduct an online web search to find the meaning of one of these concepts. Make sure that each of the concepts is identified by at least one person.

continued on pg. 123

Ask students to report out either in a small or large group.

- ⇒ Ask students to read the article using the study guide. They can record their answers to the questions by writing, typing or speaking. Tell them they will be using their answers in a follow-up discussion when everyone has completed reading the article.
- ⇒ Review the article as a large group using the students' study guide answers to guide the discussion.
- ⇒ Ask them at the end of the discussion what they now know about self-determination that they didn't know before.

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

## Study Guide for Burgstahler's (2012) "Taking Charge: Stories of Success and Self-Determination"

1. In this article, success is defined by four different people and in four different ways. Which definition can you identify with most? Is there something else you would add? (Pages 1 & 2)
2. Ten people talked about setting goals and keeping their expectations high. Did you get any ideas from this about setting your own goals? How do you keep your expectations high? (Pages 2 & 3)
3. What does "understanding your abilities and disabilities" have to do with self-determination? (Page 3)
4. What does "self-advocacy" mean and how do people use it to achieve their goals? (Pages 3 & 4)
5. How have you used technology to achieve your academic goals? Did you get any new ideas about how you would use it in the future?
6. Who is in your "support network?" Who do you think you will rely on for help when you are in college?



# Self-Determination Success Stories — Videos

**Time:** 40 Minutes

## Purpose:

To introduce students to five teens with disabilities learning to live self-determined lives.

## Key Concepts:

- ⇒ Self-determination
- ⇒ Self-advocacy
- ⇒ Goals
- ⇒ Assistive technology

## Preparation:

- ⇒ Prepare to show video [Taking Charge 3: Five Stories of Success and Self-Determination](#).  
University of Washington, DO-IT Project. (2008). *Taking charge 3: Five stories of success and self-determination* (video). Available online at <https://www.washington.edu/doiit/videos/index.php?vid=26>
- ⇒ Download the [Video: Taking Charge 3: Five Stories of Success and Self-Determination Worksheet \(PDF\)](#) to provide to students as a paper copy or electronically on their flash drives.  
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Video: Taking charge 3: Five stories of success and self-determination Worksheet* (Doc). Available for downloading at Increasing Access and Success in the STEM Disciplines: A Model for Supporting the Transition of High School Students with Disabilities into STEM-Related Post Secondary Education. Available online at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/taking-charge-3-five-stories-of-success-and-self-determination-worksheet-pdf/>

## Leading the Activity:

- ⇒ Explain that you will be showing a video entitled, “Taking Charge 3: Five Stories of Success and Self-Determination.”
- ⇒ Distribute the worksheet for this video. Explain that as they review the video, students should use the worksheet to do the following: (1) identify something that each of the people in the video struggled with; (2) identify one thing each person did to become more self-determined; (3) list someone that each person went to for support; (4) write the name of the person the students most identify with in the video (they can also write down why they picked that person or they can explain why to the group); and (5) identify one lesson they will take away.
- ⇒ Play the video. Pause between the vignettes if students need more time to record their answers.

continued on pg. 126

- ⇒ Ask students to share one or more of their answers on the worksheet.
- ⇒ Other questions you can ask to stimulate discussion:
  - ◇ How did people use technology to become more self-determined?
  - ◇ Remember Randy – who was totally blind from birth – what were his own goals for himself and how did that help him become more self-determined?
  - ◇ A number of people talked about setting goals for themselves. How did that help them become more self-determined?
  - ◇ Self-determination often means needing to be a self-advocate. Can you think of any situations in this video where people advocated for themselves?
  - ◇ What do you think about the approach that Jessie’s mother [the second Jessie] used to help her become more independent?

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

## Taking Charge 3: Five Stories of Success and Self-Determination Worksheet

1. Identify one thing that each of the students in this video struggled with.

⇒ Jessie

---

⇒ Randy

---

⇒ Todd

---

⇒ Nate

---

⇒ Jessie (2)

---

2. Identify one thing that each of the people in this video did to practice self-determination:

⇒ Jessie

---

⇒ Randy

---

⇒ Todd

---

⇒ Nate

---

⇒ Jessie (2)

---

continued on pg. 128

3. Who do each person go to for support?

⇒ Jessie

---

⇒ Randy

---

⇒ Todd

---

⇒ Nate

---

⇒ Jessie (2)

---

4. Who do you most identify with in the video? Why?

---

---

---

---

---

5. Can you identify one lesson that you take away from this video?

---

---

---

---

---

# Setting Goals

**Time:** 30 Minutes

## Purpose:

To explore the importance of setting goals for college and career and to provide an opportunity to identify some short and long-term goals.

## Key Concepts:

- ⇒ Goals
- ⇒ Long Term Goals
- ⇒ Short Term Goals

## Preparation:

- ⇒ Make sure that everyone has access to the information at [Going to College - Setting my goals](http://going-to-college.org/myplace/goals.html) web page.  
Virginia Commonwealth University, Going to College. (2009). *Setting my goals*. Available online at <http://going-to-college.org/myplace/goals.html>
- ⇒ Prepare to show the video at this site. If everyone does not have access to the web, you can print the information from the site that you will use. Prepare to record answers to the brainstorming activities.

## Leading the Activity:

- ⇒ Ask students to brainstorm some areas where they might need to set some goals for themselves as they transition to college. Record their responses. Examples of goal areas include: Taking responsibility for my own healthcare, Managing my time effectively; Learning to advocate for accommodations I need; Maintaining a healthy lifestyle (Exercise and eating healthy meals); Learning to use assistive technology; Identifying my strengths and interests; Identifying a major; Identifying what I want in a college; Learning what colleges have the kind of program I am interested in; Participating in an internship in something related to my field.
- ⇒ Review and discuss the questions in the “What do you think?” section.
- ⇒ Show and discuss the video.
- ⇒ Ask students to read the “Victory is Sweet” and “Types of Goals” section.
- ⇒ Brainstorm with students some long-term goals. These can include goals for the current school year, goals to accomplish before high school graduation, college, or career goals. Record their responses.
- ⇒ Select several of the long-term goals that students have identified and ask them to identify some short-term goals that will go into achieving this long-term goal. Record their responses.
- ⇒ Review the section: “Steps to setting goals.”

continued on pg. 130

- ⇒ Ask students to select one or two of the goals from their brainstorming. Ideally these should include a long-term and a short-term goal. Ask them to answer each of the modified questions below from “Steps to setting goals.”
1. What is your goal? I want to ...
  2. When do you want to accomplish this goal?
  3. What is your plan for reaching your goal?
    - a. Break it on down. Take that large goal and break it into smaller short-term goals.
  4. What needs to be done first?
    - a. Organize your goals by prioritizing your plan/short-term goals. Which ones are most important? What do you need to accomplish first?
  5. What are the resources, assistance or people you will need to help you reach your goal?
  6. What are the things that may interfere with reaching your goal?
  7. How will you know if your plan is working? .
  8. How can you adjust your goal or plan to make it work?
    - a. If your plan is not working how will you adjust it. Will you need to modify the original goal?

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?

# Identifying a Self-Determination Goal

**Time:** 40 Minutes

## Purpose:

To identify places where students can begin to practice self-determination and to identify people to enlist to support students' acquisition of self-determination skills.

## Key Concepts:

- ⇒ Self-determination

## Preparation:

- ⇒ Prepare chart paper, white board, or other means for recording answers to brainstorming activity.
- ⇒ Download and prepare [Identifying a Self-determination Goal Worksheet \(PDF\)](#) worksheet in formats that all students will be able to access.

University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Identifying a self-determination goal worksheet* (DOC). Available for download at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/identifying-a-self-determination-goal-worksheet-pdf/>

## Leading the Activity:

- ⇒ Explain that a big part of self-determination involves knowing how to set goals, develop a plan, monitor your progress, and revise your plan, if necessary. Increasing self-determination skills can be a goal in itself though! In fact this may be one of the most important goals anyone can learn. Self-determination skills learned in high school and college can be used throughout a person's life.
- ⇒ Brainstorm: Ask each student to identify some ways that they might practice self-determination in school and at home. Record their answers.
- ⇒ Ask each student to identify one area where they could exhibit greater self-determination (e.g. taking greater responsibility for own health care; taking a more active role in IEP meetings; identifying and practicing using assistive technology that might be useful in college; working on planning, outlining, evaluating, and revising written assignments more independently).
- ⇒ Distribute the worksheet: "Identifying a Self-Determination Goal" and ask people to write down under item 1 the general area they have identified in which they would like to increase their self-determination skills.
- ⇒ Under item 2, students should indicate where they could work on learning and practicing self-determination in this area. This could be at home, at school, or somewhere else like a part-time job or internship.

continued on pg. 132

- ⇒ For item 3 on the worksheet they should identify exactly what it will look like when they are more self-determined in this area. Explain that this will be a self-determination goal. Some students may need some help in being specific and. You may have to ask some leading questions. Refer to the example on the worksheet or provide other examples to help them understand how specific they should be.
- ⇒ Under item 4 they should identify some specific skills they will need to learn. Again some students might require some help in identifying skills with sufficient specificity. For example, if a student says “I want to be a better self-advocate,” you might ask: “In advocating for what?” or “What skills do you want to learn to do this – to communicate better with teachers? With parents? With college administrators?” or “Do want to be able to be able to advocate better in writing or in person?”
- ⇒ Under item 5, the student should identify some first steps they can take in achieving their goal. Explain that these are first steps in the process and that they do not need to identify how they are going to get to their ultimate goal.
- ⇒ Next ask them to identify the professionals, family members, friends, and others whose support they will need to enlist to work on this goal. Explain that everyone needs some support as they begin to take more responsibility for their own lives. Answers should be written under item 6 on the worksheet. You may want to prompt them by reminding them of the students they saw in the video and who they went to for support.
- ⇒ Finally, explain that some of the people they know may not have a lot of experience in supporting youth to become more self-determined. Ask them to indicate under question 7 on their worksheet what resources they might provide to those who are providing support. Remind them that by enlisting others to support them as they gain more self-determination skills, they are practicing self-determination.

### **How are you addressing Universal Design for Learning Principles in this activity? Are you:**

- Presenting the information flexibly in multiple ways?
- Providing multiple and flexible means for expression?
- Providing multiple and flexible ways to engage the learner?



# Identifying a Self-Determination Goal Worksheet

1. Identify an area in which you would like to increase your ability to be self-determined. For example, at home you could take more responsibility for planning and preparing meals or in taking more responsibility for your own healthcare. In school, you could taking take a more active role in IEP meetings; identifying and practicing with assistive technology that might be useful in college; and learning how to ask for accommodations from teachers or professors. You can use one of these examples or come up with your own.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Where could you begin to work on learning and practicing those skills?

- Home
- School
- Somewhere else \_\_\_\_\_

3. What will it look like when I am more self-determined in this area? This is your goal. (Be specific. For example if you would like to take a more active role in your IEP meeting, you might say: "I will identify at least four goals prior to the meeting that I would like addressed in the IEP and I will explain in the meeting why those goals are important to achieve." Or you might say, "With support from my teacher I will lead the next IEP meeting.")

---

---

---

---

---

continued on pg. 134

4. What skills will I need to learn to accomplish this goal? Identify the specific skills you will need to *learn* and *practice*.

---

---

---

---

5. What are some first steps I can take?

---

---

---

---

6. Who can I get support from in accomplishing this goal? For helping learn the skill? In helping me find new opportunities to practice self-determination? For help in identifying other steps I need to take to achieve my goal? (For example, if you want to have a more active role in leading your IEP meetings, you may have to approach a teacher or special education teacher to talk with them in advance about doing this. You might also have to find out more about what is involved in leading your own meeting.)

---

---

---

7. What resources do you **and** those who are supporting you need to help you become more self-determined? (See Self-Determination Resources on the next page for some ideas.)

---

---

---

---

# Person-Centered Planning as Self-Determination

**Time:** 20 Minutes

## **Purpose:**

To learn how person-centered planning will be used at the completion of the STEM workshops to help the student transition successfully from high school to college. Students will learn what person-centered planning is and how they can use it to build their self-determination skills.

## **Key Concepts:**

- ⇒ Person-Centered Planning (PCP)
- ⇒ Self-Determination
- ⇒ Action Planning

## **Preparation:**

- ⇒ Download the presentation, [Person-Centered Planning in STEM \(PDF\)](#).  
University of Maine Center for Community Inclusion and Disability Studies. (2014). *Person-centered planning in STEM* (PDF). Available for download at <https://ccids.umaine.edu/resource/person-centered-planning-in-stem-pdf/>
- ⇒ Review Person-Centered Planning activities in Section 5, Person-Centered Planning Toolbox.

## **Leading the Activity:**

1. Explain that the next step in this process is to work with each of the students, their families and others who they want to invite to meetings to do some planning for their transition to college.
2. Share the “Person-Centered Planning in STEM” presentation with the students via an LCD projector or pass out printed copies. Use the presentation notes on the following page.
3. Many youth with disabilities have negative perceptions about planning, often equating it with meetings in which people focus on their disability. Many are not motivated by the idea of meetings or taking a more active role in a process which they perceive as focusing on what is wrong with them. Emphasize throughout this activity that this is a fun and positive activity.
4. If you have time, review some of the PCP activities listed in Section 5, Person-Centered Planning Toolbox.

## Presentation Notes for PCP in STEM



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

# Person-Centered Planning in STEM

Slide 1

Explain that the next step in this process is to work with each of the students, their families and others who they want to invite to meetings to do some planning for their transition to college. This may be the most important step. This is where students and their families can put into action the things that they have learned in these sessions.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## What is Person-Centered Planning?

People working together to develop a positive description of an individual and to plan for a future consistent with the person's goals and dreams.

We often use the acronym "PCP" to refer to person-centered planning.

Slide 2

Explain that it is important for students to understand that the planning process is a positive one – and often fun. It always starts with a positive description of the person and her or his strengths. Some students may have had negative experiences with planning in the past. If they talk about those negative experiences, you can use that as an opportunity to explain how PCP can be very different.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## Why Do We Use PCP in This Project?

- The transition to college requires a great deal of planning.
- PCP provides a way to break this large process into small steps.
- PCP helps you identify who can help you with your planning and how they can help.
- As you take more responsibility for your planning, you can learn important self-determination skills.

Slide 3

Explain that effective transition to college takes a great deal of planning.

PCP provides a way for the student and her or his family to organize that planning by breaking the plan down into small concrete steps. Once these steps have been identified, the PCP team can decide who will be responsible and when they'll be completed.

PCP helps the student to enlist the support of others to help him or her pursue educational and career goals.

PCP allows the student to begin to take greater control of his or her own planning. This is an important step towards becoming more self-determined.



## Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

### PCP Consists of:

- Vision
- Positive Personal Profile
- Interests, Strengths, Gifts
- Preferences
- Action Steps
- Visual Record
- Review of progress and ongoing revision of plan

Slide 4

In person-centered planning we identify:

- **A vision** of the future that includes the person's dreams for college, a career, and adult life;
- **A positive personal profile** in which the person is described in positive terms. (We often ask team members to tell us what they would say if they were bragging about the person.)
- **Interests, strengths and gifts.** Team members identify what the person does well and his or her unique set of strengths and gifts;
- **Preferences.** This can include the person's preferences for a career, major, lifestyle, or college as well as the kinds of support they will get, how that support will be provided, and their preferred learning style.
- **Action steps.** Here the team specifies who will be responsible for each goal and when it should be completed.
- **Visual record.** Someone is responsible for recording the results of the meeting – usually on chart paper – and posting them so that they are accessible throughout the meeting. They should also be available in alternative formats for those who have visual impairments. Often facilitators include pictures in the record.
- **Review of progress and ongoing revision of plan.** PCP is not a single meeting. As the student and his or her team try things, they learn more about who the person is and what she or he wants to achieve. Typically, students have at least three PCP meetings to plan their transition to postsecondary education. If they find them useful, they may choose to continue them through college and as they enter careers.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## Typically We Use PCP to:

- Improve the Overall Quality of a Person's Life
- Identify Needed Employment Supports
- Plan the Transition from School to Adult Life
- Identify Community Living, Housing, and Support Options
- Select Assistive Technology
- Enhancing Community Connections
- Develop a Plan for Getting Appropriate Healthcare

Slide 5

Explain that PCP can be used in a lot of ways. Listed on the slide are some of the things that people use PCP for. PCP in this project is more focused though on the transition to college. The college transition plan can include some of these topics mentioned on this slide such as assistive technology plans, a plan for housing when the student goes to school, or a healthcare transition plan.





Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## STEM-Related PCP

STEM-related PCP is more specific than other forms of PCP. Topics covered in this PCP process may include:

- Identifying possible rewarding careers
- Matching your strengths and interests with careers
- Finding out more about careers and identifying the education you will need to succeed in your chosen career.
- Identifying what you need to do to prepare for college
- Choosing a college
- Choosing a major

Slide 6

Briefly review the topics on this slide and the following slide.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## STEM-Related PCP (2)

- Obtaining healthcare when you are away from home
- Maintaining a healthy lifestyle
- Identifying supports that you will need to succeed in transition and in college
- Determining who you need to enlist to help you reach your goals
- Determining what Assistive Technologies will be useful to you in college
- Identifying action steps, who will be responsible for those steps and a timeline for completion

Slide 7

Ask students if they can think of anything else they might include in a PCP.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## Good News!

You have already done a number of things in this project that you can use in developing your PCP including:

- Examining your strengths, interests, and learning style
- Identifying accommodations you need
- Explored the use of assistive technology that may be useful to you in PCP

Slide 8

Refer students back to activities that they have already completed.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## Action Planning

- One of the keys to effective PCPs is “action planning.”
- You are in charge of your planning, but different team members will take responsibility for helping you achieve your goals.
- As you identify goals through the process, you will also identify specific things that you and other team members need to do to help you achieve the goals. This is the action plan.

Slide 9

Emphasize that this is the most important part of PCP. After identifying goals, it is vital to come up with a plan for achieving those goals. This is the action plan.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## The Action Plan Consists of:

- The step or action that someone is going to take. For example, the step might be that you will visit a college.
- Who will work on this step? In the case of a college visit, it might be you and your parents.
- When it will be done? In this example, you will identify the date when the visit will have been completed.

Slide 10

Review the three components of the action plan.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## Breaking Actions into Smaller Steps

- It often helps to break actions into smaller steps.
- In the example of college visits, there are a number of steps that could come first:
  - Determine when you could meet with someone from the Disability Support Services office.
  - Develop a list of questions that you can ask college personnel when you visit.
  - Identify times when your parents would be available to take you on the trip to visit the school.

Slide 11

Emphasize again that transition planning is a big process. PCP allows the student and his or her family to break the process into smaller steps and to identify how it will be accomplished. Review the example on the next slide.



Center for Community Inclusion & Disability Studies

## PCP Activities

- A number of activities have been identified that your planning facilitator may use to identify some goals, steps to achieving those goals, and the support you will need along the way.
- She or he will review those activities with you and YOU can decide what you want to use in your PCP.
- Have fun!

Slide 12

Explain that the students will have a number of PCP activities they can choose from. You may also describe some of the activities found in the Person-Centered Planning Toolbox in Section 5. Also explain that they can change the activities if they like. This is their process!