The ACL’s guide to

**PREPARING FOR COLLEGE**

for students with intellectual and developmental disabilities and their families

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**THINK EARLY**

- At age 14 or earlier, start thinking about your interests, passions, and future goals.

- Then ask yourself: can college help me get there?

**KNOW YOUR OPTIONS**

- 3 colleges in Colorado offer inclusive higher education programs.

- Research information and videos online.

- Call program staff to ask questions.

**GET PREPARED**

- **In school**
  - Take leadership in planning and participating in IEP meetings.
  - Set IEP goals to prepare for college academics and social life.
  - Know your rights to higher education under ADA.

- **In the community**
  - Get involved in extracurricular and volunteer opportunities.
  - Develop your awareness of safe versus unsafe situations.
  - Use good decision-making with new people, friends, and romantic partners.

- **As a self-advocate**
  - Work on making choices independently and speaking up about what you want.
  - Practice talking about your disability and the supports you need.
  - Come up with strategies for keeping a schedule, managing medications, and other independent living skills.

- **As a family**
  - Explore financial aid resources and make a plan for paying for college.
  - Discuss how parent and student roles will change in college.
  - Ensure disability documentation is up-to-date.

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**IS COLLEGE WORTH IT?**

With college, people with IDD are 3x more likely to be employed.

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**AND COLLEGE OFFERS...**

- Lifelong learning
- Community engagement
- A fulfilling future