

How can students with autism be supported through college?

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Thirty years ago it was rare for a student with ASD to enter college. But over the past decades, there has been much improvement in the detection and awareness of ASD in children. Now, with the provision of effective treatments, those with average or above average intellectual abilities are enrolling at universities. However, college presents new challenges for these students as well as for college support personnel, and gathering and analyzing college experiences of students with ASD is fundamental to their success. Now a special issue addressing the experiences of ASD students has been published in Springer's *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*.

In the US alone there are roughly 550,000 children with ASD who will be transitioning into adulthood over the next decade, and it is expected that approximately 45 percent of these emerging adults will enroll in a university, college, or technical/vocational school in the coming years.

This trend is promising because completion of a post-secondary degree is a significant predictor of positive adult outcomes in ASD populations, impacting the likelihood that an individual will be able to find employment, obtain financial autonomy, and live independently.

However, students with ASD have a lower likelihood of completing their degree (38.8 percent) compared to students from the general population (52.4 percent) and those with disabilities (40.7 percent).

The special issue "College experiences for students with ASD" includes articles covering the topics of self-reported [experiences](#) from [college](#)

[students](#) with ASD, explorations of bullying prevalence and underlying issues, parental insight into ways in which ASD students can be supported, as well as a review of evidence-based programs for college students with ASD, and discussion of emerging support options.

Articles in this special issue add to the valuable body of literature which will improve the outcomes of individuals with ASD embarking on post-secondary education in the years to come.

More information: Jackson, S.L.J., Hart, L. & Volkmar, F.R. (2018) Editorial: College Experiences for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder, *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders* [DOI: 10.1007/s10803-018-3463-7](#)

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