

# **CONCURRENT SESSION: RETHINKING HIGHER EDUCATION FOR STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASDs)**

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# OUR INFO

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# PRESENTATION OVERVIEW

This session provides insight about:

- ⊙ Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs) prevalence and impact for higher education
- ⊙ Case studies/ ASD students
- ⊙ Suggestions for faculty teaching students with ASDs
- ⊙ Recommendations for the future of higher education



# PREVALENCE OF AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASDs)

- ◎ The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, “CDC” are reporting that 1 in every 88 children are being diagnosed with an ASD today.
  - ◎ Published reports
  - ◎ Lack of research
  - ◎ Media
  - ◎ Video

# THINKING IN PICTURES

## TEMPLE GRANDIN

© <http://youtu.be/XcWx8UVhzpQ>

# STUDENTS IN COLLEGE WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS (ASDs)

- ◎ Case Studies
  - ◎ Who are the students?
  - ◎ What are their issues?
    - Transitioning from high school to college
    - Stress
    - Classroom setting
  - ◎ Video

# UNDERSTANDING ASPERGER SYNDROME: A COLLEGE PROFESSOR'S GUIDE

© <http://youtu.be/233-3jtEZck>



# DISCLOSING A DISABILITY

- ⦿ Resources
  - ⦿ Accommodating social/“invisible” disabilities
  - ⦿ Institutional commitment
  - ⦿ Peer support





# SUPPORT FROM STAFF & ADMINISTRATORS

- ◎ Recommendations for higher education
  - FYE Administrators can provide support to faculty, staff, and students
    - Institutional commitment
    - Disability Services
    - Academic/Student Affairs
    - Student Affairs/Student Activities

# SUPPORTING COLLEGE STUDENTS WITH AUTISM SPECTRUM DISORDERS

© <http://youtu.be/kt-TOt9vqJk>



# FACULTY RECOMMENDATIONS

- ◎ What can institutions do to best meet the needs of ASD students?
  - ◎ Build relationships
  - ◎ Encourage regular interaction (i.e., peer mentoring)
  - ◎ Learn from them--how their ASD affects them
  - ◎ Work with parents
  - ◎ Share and talk with your colleagues internally and externally
  - ◎ Video



# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HIGHER EDUCATION

- ◎ **Raising awareness**
  - ◎ Professional development opportunities
  - ◎ Start talking about it on campus



# OTHER RESOURCES

- © See handout for additional resources



# SESSION ASSESSMENT

- © Please complete our session survey
- © Thank you for your participation and your feedback!



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## **Additional Resources Page**

### **Rethinking Higher Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)**

***Presented by: Lauren M. Kelley, Ph.D. & Brittany C. Joseph, M.Ed.***

#### **Articles and Books**

Kelley, L. and Joseph, B. (2012). *Rethinking Higher Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Importance of Adult Transitions* available at:  
[http://www.cscconline.org/files/6713/3097/9778/Rethinking\\_Higher\\_Education\\_for\\_Students\\_with\\_Autism\\_Spectrum\\_Disorders\\_APA.pdf](http://www.cscconline.org/files/6713/3097/9778/Rethinking_Higher_Education_for_Students_with_Autism_Spectrum_Disorders_APA.pdf)

G. Ruth Bork, G. R., King, L., Thierfeld Brown, J., and Wolf, L. (2012). *The Parent's Guide to College for Students on the Autism Spectrum*.

Wolf, L., Thierfeld Brown, J. & Kukiela Bork, G. R. (2009). *Students with Asperger Syndrome: A Guide for College Personnel*: Shawnee Mission, Kan.: Autism Asperger Pub. Co.

Shore, S. (2004). *Ask and Tell: Self-Advocacy and Disclosure for People on the Autism Spectrum*: Shawnee Mission, Kan. : Autism Asperger Pub. Co.

Palmer, A. (2005). *Realizing the College Dream with Autism or Asperger Syndrome: A Parent's Guide to Student Success*. <http://www.annpalmerautism.com/>

Langford, S., Zakrajsek, T., & Rood, S. (n.d.) *Teaching students with Asperger syndrome (and other disabilities) in the college classroom, creating an inclusive classroom*.

Brown, K. R. (2012). *Institutional practices that support students with Autism Spectrum Disorders in a postsecondary educational setting* (Doctoral dissertation). Bowling Green State University.

#### **Websites**

<http://www.CollegeAutismSpectrum.com>

<http://www.autism-society.org/about-autism/symptoms/> (Autism information)

<http://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/autism/addm.html> (Center for Disease Control)

[http://www.med.upenn.edu/pan/prof\\_conference.html](http://www.med.upenn.edu/pan/prof_conference.html) (Autism Goes to College/News Links)



## Websites, continued

<http://www.professorsadvice.com/> (Preparing to be nerdy where nerdy can be cool: College planning for students on the Autism spectrum)

<http://www.pages.drexel.edu/~fdh23/> (Drexel University Autism Support Program)

<http://www.aspergersyndrome.org/Articles/A-College-Education-for-Individuals-with-Autism.aspx> (A personal story about a college experience with Autism)

<http://disabilitystudies.syr.edu/resources/autismaspergers.aspx> (Syracuse University, The Center on Human Policy, Law, and Disability Studies)

<http://convention.myacpa.org/archive/programs/Louisville12/Handouts/1809/Brown%20ACPA%202012%20ASD%20presentation.pdf> (Presentation on institutional practices that support students with Autism Spectrum Disorders)

<http://www.navigatingcollege.org/> (Self advocacy resources for college students on the spectrum)

## Videos

<http://www.coultervideo.com/> (video resources for autism)

Thinking in Pictures (Temple Grandin)

Link: <http://youtu.be/XcWx8UVhzpQ>

Understanding Asperger Syndrome: A College Professor's Guide Link: <http://youtu.be/233-3jtEZck>

Supporting College Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders

Link: <http://youtu.be/kt-TOt9vqJk>

# **Faculty Recommendations**

## **Rethinking Higher Education for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders (ASDs)**

***Presented by: Lauren M. Kelley, Ph.D. & Brittany C. Joseph, M.Ed.***

### **Easing the Transition to Life in College**

- Be clear, be direct, don't use jargon or jokes to explain important information
- Encourage the student to journal about their experiences adjusting to life in college (often times it is easier for them to communicate in writing)
- Try to maintain a routine and help them transition to unexpected changes
- Provide guidance and feedback after class

### **Homework Help**

- Make assignment instructions clear, understandable, in writing, and available in more than one place (on the board, printed out, and available online)
- Explain the purpose of the assignment and specific benefits that the student could receive upon completing the assignment
- Arrange for a classmate or peer mentor to work directly with the student

### **Developing Social Skills**

- Provide a peer mentor to help understand different social cues
- Demonstrate and provide examples to explain unacceptable behavior and the possible consequences

### **Sensory Issues and Odd Behaviors**

- I have had students shuffle cards endlessly, spin around on a computer chair, pace in the back of the classroom, and listen to relaxation music on an iPod – while odd and somewhat sensory seeking, all of these things allowed the students to maintain their attentiveness, relax, and focus in class

### **Interacting with Peers**

- Provide the student with the opportunity to self-disclose during introductions on the first day of class (if they choose to do so)
- Let the student tell their “story” as a connected part of the class, to make others aware of Autism on campus
- For group work/seating arrangements/lab partners, select peers that you believe would be understanding and tolerant
- If a conflict arises from peer interactions, explain to the student in a literal way how they can change their actions to improve peer to peer relationships in the classroom