

# Self-Advocacy

## For College Students on the Autism Spectrum

### TRAINING SUMMARY:

This course is an introduction to effective self-advocacy for students on the autism spectrum who wish to succeed in college and related post-secondary educational settings. Self-advocacy is vital for college students because colleges are only required to provide disability services to those who identify, document, and explain their needs. Students on the autism spectrum may need training and support to effectively communicate their needs and to navigate the academic, social and administrative complexities of colleges and similar learning environments. This training module introduces students on the spectrum to the knowledge and responsibility they will need for success. It can be used by students already in college or other adult education programs, by high school students as they prepare for the post-secondary transition, and can be shared with the teachers, counselors, aides, and peer mentors who support them.

### TRAINING GOAL:

The goal of this training is for students on the autism spectrum to become better self-advocates in college and related post-secondary educational settings through increased awareness of the expectations, opportunities, and services that they will encounter.

### TRAINING OBJECTIVES:

The objectives of the training are for the participants to:

1. Understand **what it means to be a self-advocate** and appreciate the role of self-advocacy within the larger movement for self-determination and disability rights
2. Learn about the **rights of college students with disabilities under the ADA and Section 504**, how their responsibilities differ from those of high school students, and the importance of self-disclosure
3. Identify and consider **appropriate auxiliary aids and services** that might be used by students on the autism spectrum, and how to secure them
4. Identify and consider how to take advantage of the range of **academic, vocational, social, and health-related supports and opportunities** on college campuses
5. Enhance understanding of **daily living skills** that are vital to college success: effective verbal and nonverbal communication strategies; awareness and care of personal appearance; study skills; time and money management; and personal safety and security
6. Enhance understanding of **quality of life issues** that are vital to college success: maintaining mental and physical health; navigating friendships; coping with peer pressure; taking advantage of opportunities for personal growth

### METHODS TO ACHIEVE OBJECTIVES:

This training can be delivered live in a traditional classroom setting incorporating lecture, video, discussion, and interactive group exercises.

A Student Guide is available.