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Preparing for Employment and Career Development During College

Educational Brochure for Parents

Overview

Career development is an essential component of college success for students with autism. Employment preparation should begin early in the college experience and continue throughout enrollment. Developing career awareness, work skills, and professional behaviors during college increases the likelihood of meaningful employment after graduation.

Parents can support this process by encouraging exploration, participation in work-based learning experiences, and engagement with career and vocational rehabilitation services. Early and intentional planning helps students connect academic goals to future employment outcomes.

Key Areas of Career Development During College

- Identifying strengths, interests, and vocational goals
- Exploring career options related to academic programs
- Participating in internships, part-time work, or volunteer experiences
- Developing workplace communication and professional behavior skills
- Learning about disclosure and accommodations in employment settings

Parent Support Checklist

- ✓ Encourage early use of campus career services
- ✓ Support exploration of internships and work-based learning opportunities
- ✓ Discuss how academic choices relate to employment goals
- ✓ Encourage development of resumes and interview skills
- ✓ Support connection with vocational rehabilitation services when appropriate

Recommendations for Parents

Parents are encouraged to view employment preparation as an ongoing process rather than a final-year task. Supporting gradual exposure to work experiences, reinforcing professional expectations, and encouraging independence can help students build confidence and readiness for competitive employment. Collaboration with career services and vocational rehabilitation providers can further support successful transitions from college to the workforce.

For More Information

For individualized guidance, transition planning, or vocational rehabilitation services related to college students with autism, please contact:

Dr. T. Scott Smith

Vocational Rehabilitation Counselor

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