

10 Tips for College Success for

Students with ASD



EMORY

NELL HODGSON
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SCHOOL OF
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EMORY
UNIVERSITY

Emory Autism Center

10 TIPS FOR SUCCESS

1. Office of Accessibility Services
2. Accommodations & Support
3. Disclosure, Self-Advocacy, & Self-Determination
4. Mentoring
5. Remember Your Support Network
6. Academic Supports
7. Create Structure
8. Planning/Organization
9. Social Engagement
10. Health & Wellness

“Once I learned how to disclose my diagnosis to my peers and professors, I became more successful in my academic and personal life.”

Outcomes and Challenges for College Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD)

About 1 in 3 young adults diagnosed with ASD attend college. Of those, less than 2 in 5 will graduate or earn a credential of any form.

College students with ASD often experience challenges with executive functioning and social engagement, communication and self-advocacy, and independent living skills. While college students with ASD (especially those at Emory University) are bright and academically capable, these challenges make success in college especially tough!

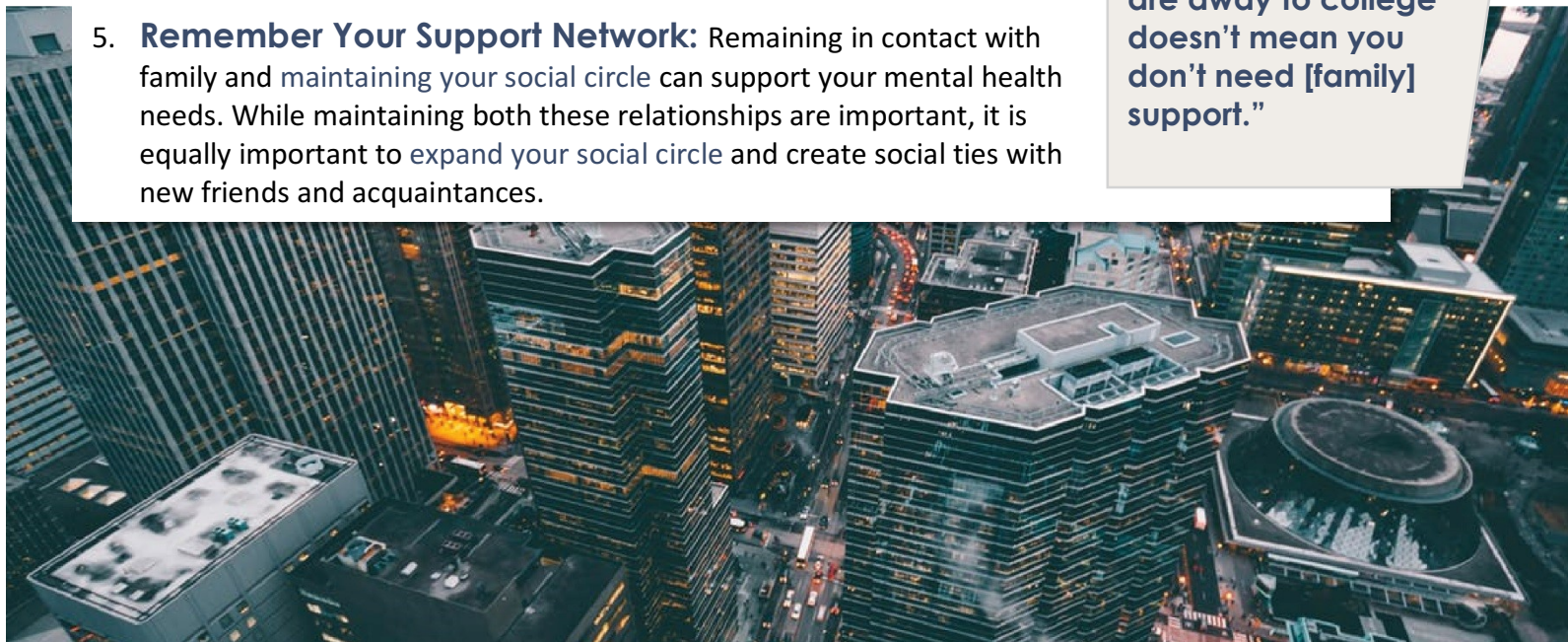
We hope some of these tips will help improve and address some of these outcomes and challenges while increasing success, happiness, and overall well-being for college students diagnosed with ASD!

10 Tips for College Success for Students with ASD

1. **Office of Accessibility Services:** Register with the Office of Accessibility Services and identify potential accommodations with your assigned staff member that will increase your success. Some accommodations include extended time for exams and assignments, distraction reduced testing environment, access to note takers, priority registration, tutoring, reduced course load, and priority seating, among others.
2. **Accommodations & Support:** Meet with professors to review your specific accommodations and arrange for regular (weekly or bi-weekly) meetings. Ensure you work with the Office of Accessibility Services for each of your tests to schedule testing through their facilities.
3. **Disclosure, Self-Advocacy, & Self-Determination:** Communicate with your professors and other staff about your strengths, challenges, and needs related to your diagnosis (e.g., autism spectrum disorder, attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder, etc.). This includes answering any questions your professor may have and helping them to understand your specific needs. Take this opportunity to learn more about what to expect from the class and/or share your interest in the content. Consider working with the Office of Accessibility Services or a counselor to work on self-advocacy skills and practicing disclosure.
4. **Mentoring:** Find a mentor through a mentoring program. This includes seeking out peers, staff, faculty, and individuals in your career field or with similar interests. Mentoring others is also a great way to refine your skills.
5. **Remember Your Support Network:** Remaining in contact with family and maintaining your social circle can support your mental health needs. While maintaining both these relationships are important, it is equally important to expand your social circle and create social ties with new friends and acquaintances.

“How ASD is described in a textbook is different than my experience with ASD. Explaining this difference to my professors helped them in better supporting me and my unique needs.”

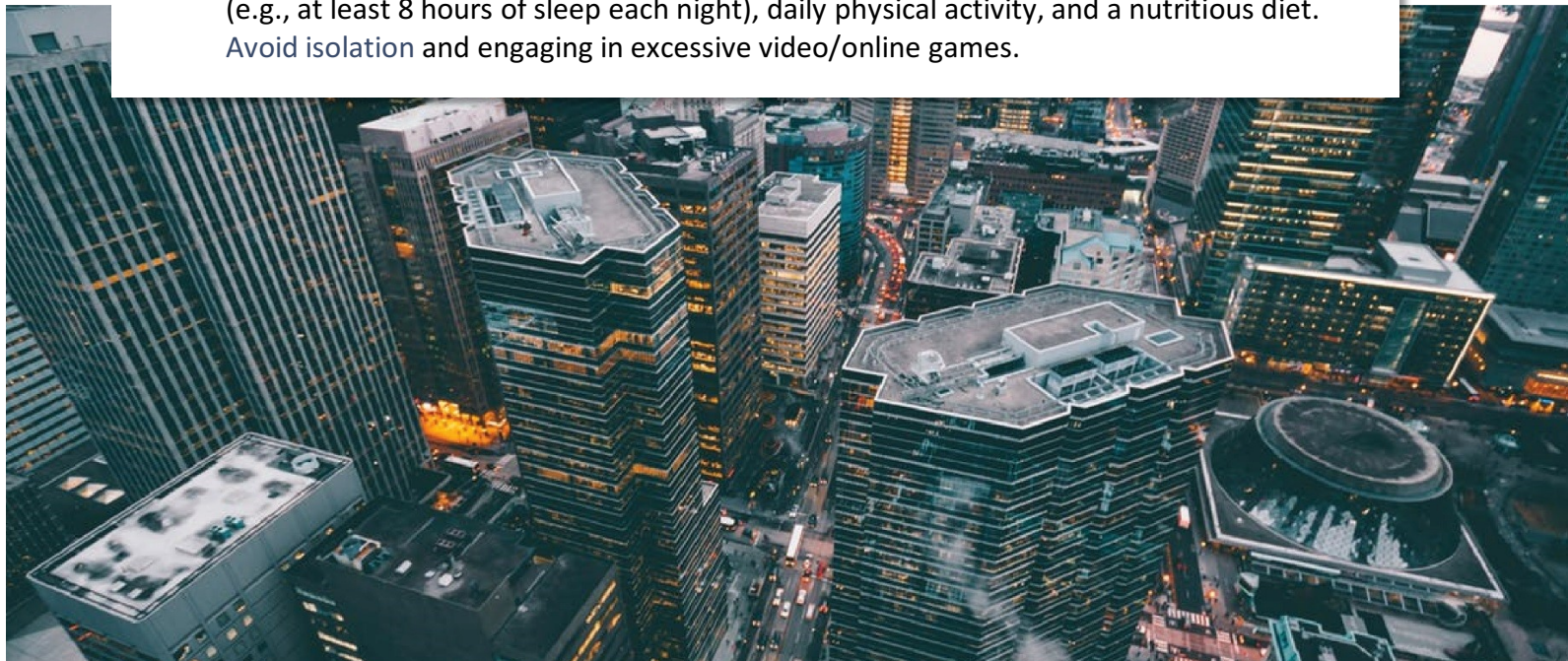
“Just because you are away to college doesn't mean you don't need [family] support.”



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6. **Academic Supports:** Seek out additional academic services and supports as needed. This may include: planning/coaching, tutoring, writing center, academic advising, and more. Be mindful that many supports may be temporary, rather than permanent, and fade away as you demonstrate success.
7. **Create Structure:** Set and follow a clear schedule, including attending classes, mealtimes, appointments, meetings, study/homework time, exercise, bed and wake times. Seek out opportunities that will add structure to your day such as volunteering, internships, or getting a part-time job. Try to stay consistent in adhering to your routine.
8. **Planning & Organization:** Use your personal technology to help keep you on track—set reminders and alarms and use notes, speech-to-text, calendar apps, to-do lists, etc.
9. **Social Engagement:** Join a special interest group, club, or Religious organization. Participate in campus events. There are lots of fun events taking place on campus and it is important to participate in social opportunities. Seek out campus supports, such as the Counseling Center or Emory Autism Center, to bolster your social communication skills.
10. **Health & Wellness:** Pay attention to your health and wellness. Engage in healthy lifestyle behaviors and connect to the Office of Health Promotion or Student Health for resources. Healthy lifestyle behaviors include getting adequate sleep (e.g., at least 8 hours of sleep each night), daily physical activity, and a nutritious diet. Avoid isolation and engaging in excessive video/online games.

“My college had a lot of extracurricular groups that I could choose from. I found friends this way.”



Emory Resources

Emory Autism Center	404-727-8350
Emory University Counseling and Psychological Services	404-727-7190
HelpLine	404-727-4357 (HELP)
Student Health Services Psychiatry	404 -727-7551
Office of Accessibility Services	404-727-9877
Office of Undergraduate Education	404-727-6036

College Resource Guide

Organization for Autism Research (OAR) Finding Your Way: A College Guide for Students on the Spectrum	https://researchautism.org/findingyourway/
Autistic Self Advocacy Network (ASAN) Navigating College	https://autisticadvocacy.org/resources/books/navigating-college/
Autism Speaks Postsecondary Educational Opportunities Guide	https://www.autismspeaks.org/sites/default/files/2018-08/Postsecondary%20Guide.pdf

College & ASD Websites

College Autism Network	https://collegeautismnetwork.org/
College Autism Spectrum	http://collegeautismspectrum.com/

ASD Texts

<i>A Freshman Survival Guide for College Students with Autism Spectrum Disorders: The Stuff Nobody Tells You About!</i> by Haley Moss	
<i>The Parent's Guide to College for Students on the Autism Spectrum</i> by Jane Thierfeld Brown	
<i>Students with Asperger Syndrome: A Guide for College Personnel</i> by Jane Thierfeld Brown, Lorraine E. Wolf, and G. Ruth Kukiela Bork	