

# 10 Tips for the College-Bound Student with AD/HD

The following comments are based on my own experience as the parent of two young adults with AD/HD. Both of them need more than the usual amount of parental “wisdom” when making decisions about life after high school. We have spent much time researching various colleges and weighted the disability programming highest when considering a school.

1. Many parents think that a small school is the answer for students with learning difficulties, and many times a small school is a good choice. However, more important than size of the school is the quality of its disabilities support program. The student who needs to attend a less expensive state university will probably be successful if there is a well established and proven program that helps the student compensate for the disability.
2. A private room may be good for the student with AD/HD who gets distracted by other people. However, for those who procrastinate or who get distracted by their own thoughts and daydreams, a viable alternative would be to live on a study/quiet floor. These floors have scheduled quiet hours and attract students who are serious about their studies. The student with AD/HD would then be surrounded by good peer models.
3. Form a relationship with an advisor or counselor. Many universities and colleges have a staff that serves those with disabilities. The student should register with that office during the summer or during first year orientation. The office staff will be able to offer the student compensatory services to help cope with the learning problem. For example, a note taker or tutor may be provided for a large lecture class.
4. Try to avoid long lecture classes. If this is not possible, try to get permission to record them.
5. Most colleges have established study groups. Definitely take advantage of them.
6. Try to get books in audio format for use while driving and working out.
7. Understand your own study habits and sleep requirements. Register for classes during the times you know you will have the most energy.
8. Professionals should know right away that you have AD/HD and what your specific learning needs are. Most instructors are receptive to accommodations if they are approached before the student is in academic difficulty.
9. Many young adults with AD/HD stop taking their medication or take it haphazardly. Then, they don't realize that they have slipped academically until they are in an academic crisis. For most people, the medication brings real benefits. Take it at your regularly scheduled times.
10. Finally, explain your difficulties to your professors and ask for extra help. Be able to state what accommodations have worked for you in the past.

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