



Think College!
Postsecondary Education for
Students with Intellectual Disability

NC Developmental Disabilities Council
Employment and Transition Webinar Series
July 8, 2021

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Cate Weir
Project Director for the Think
College National Coordinating
Center at Umass Boston



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Topics to be Covered

- Getting to Know the National Coordinating Center
- A (super brief) history of the inclusive postsecondary education movement
- What are college programs for students with ID?
- How can we help students prepare for college?
- Higher Education Opportunity Act provisions for PSE programs for students with ID
 - CTP and Financial Aid
 - TPSID grants
- Selected national data from the TPSID grantees



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Federally funded since 2010 to provide coordination, training and technical assistance to any college or university who wants to establish or improve postsecondary education opportunities to students with intellectual disability on their campus, and to provide information and support to K-12 educators, families and students interested in PSE options.

www.thinkcollege.net

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TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE
From October 2019 through September 2020, the NCC...

- PRODUCED 9 WEBINARS
- DELIVERED 28 CONFERENCE PRESENTATIONS
- SOLVED 841 HELP DESK TICKETS
- CONDUCTED 22 AFFINITY GROUP MEETINGS
- HOSTED 12 COVID-related support group meetings for college staff

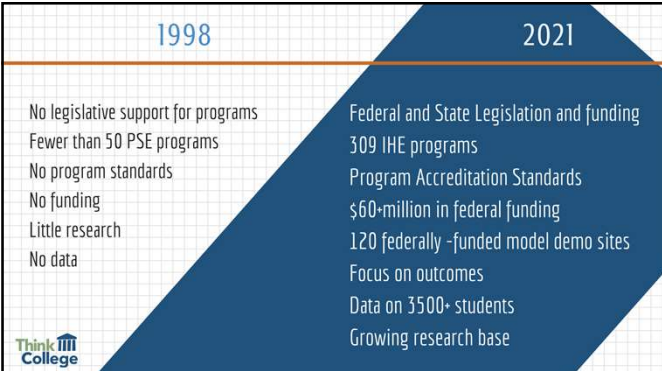
PUBLISHING
We published and disseminated:

- 24 Publications
- 3 Peer-reviewed Journal Articles
- 36 Website Articles
- 13 Innovation Exchange Pages
- Program Accreditation Standards Finalized

OUTREACH

- OVER 80K visitors to thinkcollege.net
- 4,000 Twitter Followers
- 10,000+ Facebook Followers
- 1,400 Family Facebook group
- 400 Programs Facebook group

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1998	2021
No legislative support for programs	Federal and State Legislation and funding
Fewer than 50 PSE programs	309 IHE programs
No program standards	Program Accreditation Standards
No funding	\$60+million in federal funding
Little research	120 federally-funded model demo sites
No data	Focus on outcomes
	Data on 3500+ students
	Growing research base

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Creates the Comprehensive Transition Program

Provides access to Federal Financial Aid

Provides funding for model demonstration projects and a coordinating center

Requires development of model accreditation standards

Supports data collection from TPSID programs

Higher Education Opportunity Act, 2008

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Types of College Programs

- **Transition and Postsecondary Programs for Students with Intellectual Disabilities (TPSID)**
 - Model Demonstration projects funded by the US Department of Education, Office of Postsecondary Education (total of 121 since funding began)
- **Comprehensive Transition Programs (CTP)**
 - Programs that have been through an approval process and can offer access to federal financial aid (currently a total of 121)
 - **Some programs are both*
 - *Some programs are neither*

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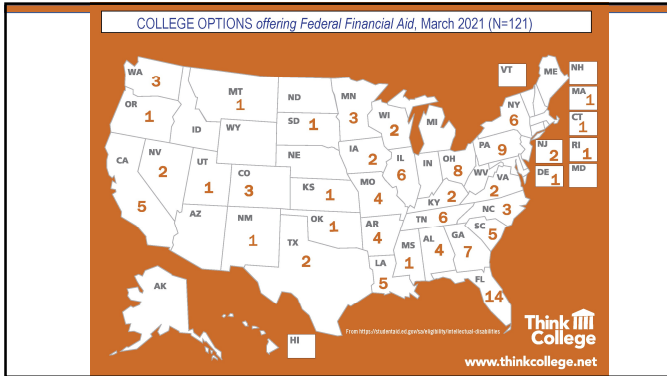
Eligible student with ID with financial need

Program approved as CTP

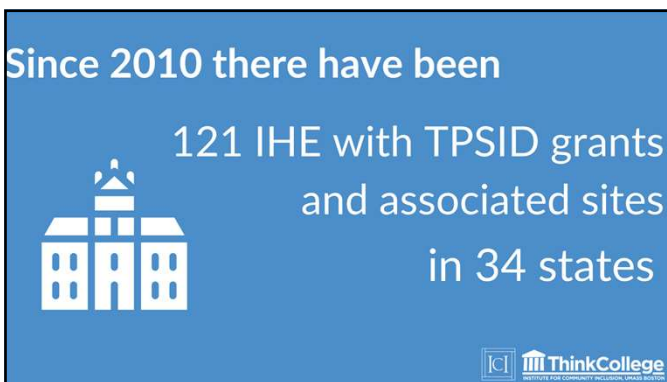
Access to Title IV Financial Aid

- Federal Pell Grant
- Federal Supplemental Education Opportunity Grant
- Federal Work-Study

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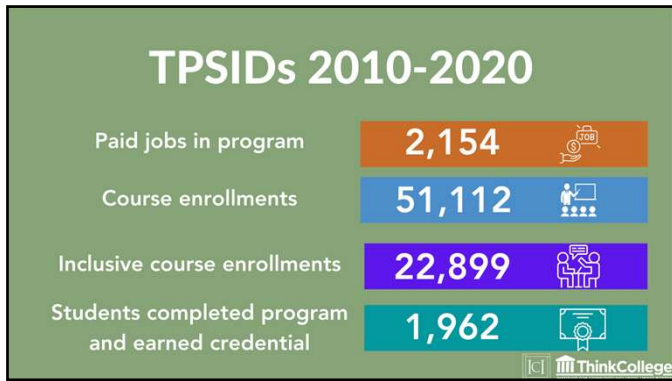
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TPSIDs by the numbers

	Cohort 1 2010-2015	Cohort 2 2015-2020	Cohort 3 2020-2025
Grantees	27	25	19
States	23	19	16
Programs	58	65	36
Students	2,167	2,122	TBD

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INSTITUTE FOR COMMUNITY INCLUSION, LEADERSHIP, AND HOPE

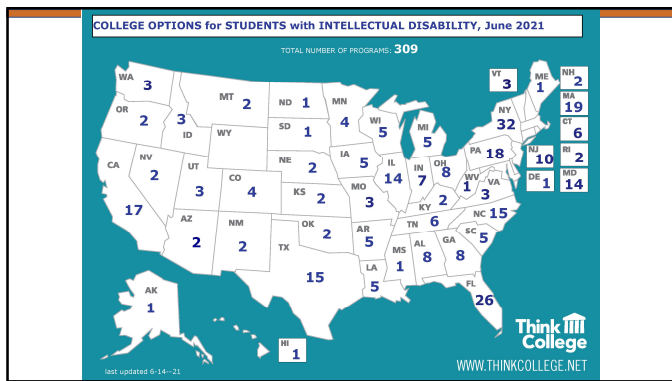
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Some Key Features of College Programs

- Different admissions process & requirements
- Accept students who are non-degree seeking
- Vary in length from 1 to 4 years
- Vary in level of inclusion
- Students earn a certificate at the end
- May offer federal student aid (not loans)



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Student Experience

- Enrolling in college courses for credit or audit
- Internships/work study
- Paid jobs (on/off campus)
- Campus Life/Organizations
- Learning to live independently



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Think College Search

A searchable database of college programs for students with intellectual disability

Search | Review | Save Favorites | Compare

<https://thinkcollege.net/college-search>

The screenshot shows the 'Think College Search' interface. On the left, there are filters for 'RECENTLY VISITED' (Alabama A&M University, Arkansas State University, Bridgewater State University, University of Maryland, University of Oklahoma, Texas A&M University) and 'LOCATION' (Alabama (7), Alaska (1), Arkansas (2), Show more states). Below these are checkboxes for 'Includes Distance Learning', 'Serves Students in High School', 'Offers Financial Aid', 'Offers Housing', and 'Programs not limited by students' school districts'. A 'THINK COLLEGE' checkbox is also present. On the right, there is a 'Find the College that is right for you!' section with a map of the United States. The map shows the number of programs in each state, with a legend indicating 'NUMBER OF PROGRAMS' ranging from 1 to 10+.

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“ It would be a travesty if this initiative -this terrific opportunity we have worked so hard to create - becomes another separate, segregated special program where young adults are treated as subjects and beneficiaries instead of affording them the respect they deserve as self-determined college students. ”

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Sharon Lewis
Former Principal Deputy
Administrator, Administration for
Community Living

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Family is the key to success

- Be future-focused
- Have high expectations
- Let your child take chances and make mistakes
- Allow voice and choice
- Inclusion is essential
- When the time is right, get a job!
- Take advantage of natural supports
- Share success stories

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Preparing for Postsecondary Life

20 Powerful Strategies

Prepare Your Child for Inclusive Post-Secondary Education

Make sure your child is a regular attendee at an over-night, sleep-away camp.	Have your child become comfortable with electronic communication, including email and attachments	Empower your child to manage a schedule using a cell phone (calendar, timers, reminders, etc)	Strategize a system for independent medication management	Help your child practice talking about disability characteristics, best learning styles, and needs.
Sign up for a drama or improv group	Have your child call and make appointments for doctor/dentist/advisor	Give your child a budget for clothing. Step back from the selection process.	Support choice-making.	Start a savings program for college.
Build expectations for postsecondary life (working, living, independently)	Open a bank account with your child. Give your child the debit card and train responsible use of money.	Let your child fail, and talk through making a different choice next time.	Help your child become comfortable with down-time & using time constructively	Use public transportation, even if YOU don't live on the bus line.
Encourage moderation strategies around food and money	Fill your life with interest other than the social/sports/activity schedule of your child. (i.e. Get your own life)	Support your child in volunteering for a cause or organization. (Excellent work experience!)	Dignify your child's desires with high expectations.	Use Family Support dollars to pay for inclusive camping experiences and extend that use for post-secondary programs

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College expectation	Secondary preparation
Getting to and from college	Early use of alternative public transport; apply for ADA/regional transit options. Build opportunities to plan travel to/from school
Navigating the campus	Build in opportunities to move about independently-increase duration, locations, time limits
Student Center	Create opportunities for students to plan their free time (e.g., meet friends, buy beverage/snack, managing campus card)
Disability Services	Review IEP for successful learning accommodation strategies/ self-identify disability
Academic Strategies Center/Adaptive Computer Lab	Build in opportunities to use accommodations rather than modifications/ review technology used in IHEs
Dining Center	Encourage students to buy lunch/ consider healthy choices/ socializing

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College expectation	Secondary preparation
Communicating with instructor	Discussing accommodations with teachers; discussing support; communication with teacher(e.g., absence, running late, set up meeting)
Following a syllabus	Reading and following a high school syllabus
Being prepared for class	Following checklist to complete prep: readings, notes, anticipated topics for discussion
Taking notes	Practice using Smartpen (e.g., Livescribe), following and summarizing class discussions
Working with a classmate	Complete class projects with a partner; work in groups
Using learning management system (e.g. Blackboard, eLearning, PLATO)	Practice navigating with free tool such as Schoology

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College expectation	Secondary preparation
Using technology to manage schedule	Build in opportunities for students to develop their own weekly schedule, make and record appts
Campus engagement: fitness center	Support students to build in fitness and sports as preferred and with a partner
Campus engagement: clubs	Support students to explore interests in high school or community clubs
Campus engagement: socializing/campus events	Assist students to engage in inclusive social activities in and out of school

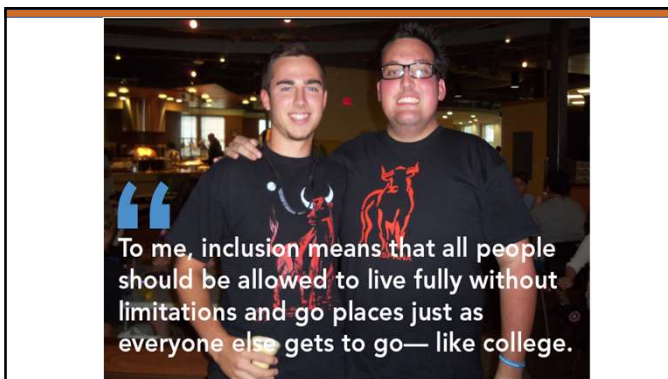
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