

College 101: Supporting College Readiness Skills Among Students With Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities

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Inclusive postsecondary education (IPSE) gives students with Intellectual and Developmental Disability (IDD) the opportunity to attend college in a supported environment; however, there are few resources available to prepare students transitioning to IPSE (Grigal et al., 2013). OT practitioners are key to closing this gap by helping students build foundational skills in ADLs, self-determination, executive function, and more (Berg et al., 2017). The purpose of this study was to assess college readiness skills and self-determination of transition aged students with IDD in response to a weeklong college preparatory program, and how these skills benefit a student's post-secondary transition and success. A single group pre-/post-test design was used to examine the students' college readiness skills and self-determination and the students' satisfaction with the program. Students who applied and were accepted to the program were recruited for the study which yielded eight total participants with a documented diagnosis of IDD. Students completed a researcher-developed Campus Life Skills Assessment and the Self-Determination Inventory prior to and following the one-week program. A satisfaction survey was used to assess the feasibility of the program. Descriptive statistics were analyzed for all measures, as well as a Wilcoxon Signed-Rank and paired samples t-test. Cohen's D was used to calculate an effect size to assess the program's clinical significance. The program was found to have a statistically significant effect in increasing college readiness skills ($p=0.012$) and a moderate clinical effect on self-determination ($d=0.339$). 87.5% of students agreed or strongly agreed that the program successfully increased their college skills. These findings indicate the program was effective in evoking change in college campus readiness/life skills and self-determination. OT practitioners are a vital part of an IPSE team and are perfectly positioned to help facilitate these skills.

References

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