

**The DSS Dilemma:
Using Parent Insights While Encouraging Student Independence**

Disability service providers in higher education must achieve a balance between allowing parents to participate in students' transition to college and helping students advocate for themselves.

Parents and students should be encouraged to visit the campus disability services office, once their child has decided what post-secondary institution they would like to attend.

Students should know whether the campus and the disability services office are a good match for them and their future education goals.

During the campus visit both parents and student should arrange to meet with the disability service office.

Parent(s) should be encouraged to offer all the information regarding past supports and the students' dispositions, but remember it is very important to hear about the students' needs from their own perspective.

During this meeting a description of the support(s) the student received while in high school should be discussed; and describe the "high school to college" transition process while outlining the parent's new role in the student's education while on the post-secondary campus.

Students should request a very specific outline illustrating how the accommodation process works, which should also include the roles the student, parent and DDS will each play.

The service provider should explain all relevant forms and define who will be responsible for each step.

Students should understand that it is best if they are the one, not parent(s), who contacts professors, tutors, learning centers, etc.

The service provider should also be willing to assist the student, if need be, with determining how and what information to communicate to professor(s).

Service providers should offer clear examples of when it is appropriate for parents to contact the disability services office, and when it is not.

*This and more Executive Summaries available at
<http://www.schools.utah.gov/equity/section504/default.html>

Adapted and condensed from: Section 504 Compliance Handbook, May 2010