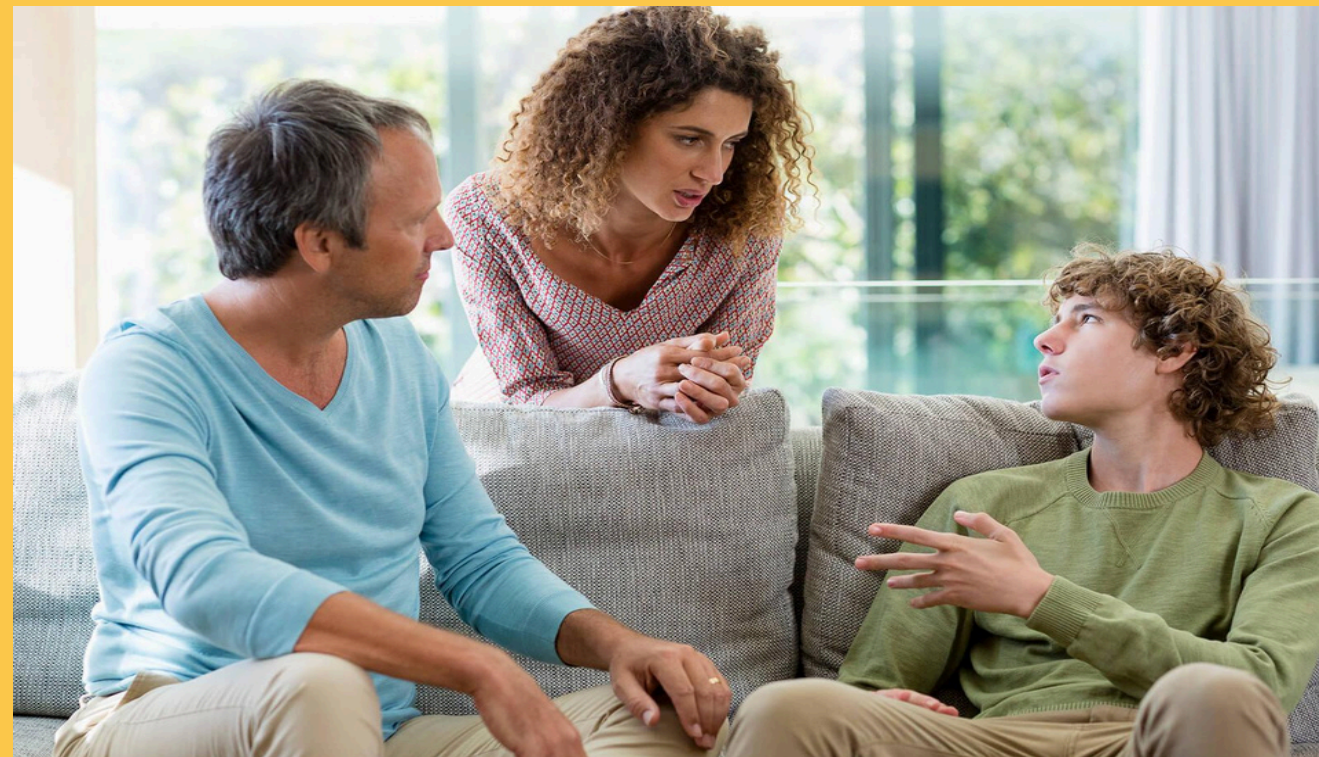


# Preparing Your Neurodiverse Teen for the Launch to College

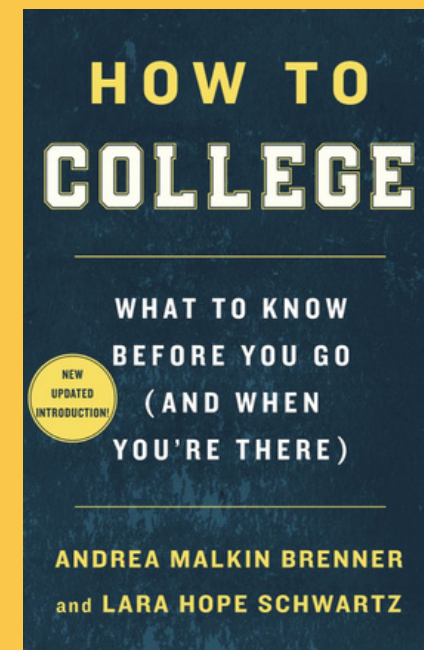


***Andrea Malkin Brenner, PhD***

# Andrea Malkin Brenner, PhD

## College Transition Educator

- 25 years as a college professor and university administrator
- Speaker at high schools & colleges
- Author of book, card decks, articles



# What I'll cover in this webinar:

1. How learning support differs between K-12 education and college
2. The shifting roles of parents/students
3. Beginning to build college-ready skills and having WWYD conversations now so they can succeed in college



\*The language used to  
describe neurodiversity  
**as well as**  
*how* students  
identify  
**REALLY** matters.





# IN K-12 EDUCATION

- Parents/guardians are responsible for advocating for their children's learning accommodation needs
- Teachers, guidance counselors, coaches, and tutors are also often involved and encouraged to provide support to the student and their family

# Differing Definitions Between Disability Support in K-12 and College

## K-12 Education is Based on **SUCCESS**

- **IEP Individualized Education Program**
- **ISP Individualized Service Plan**
- **IDEA Individuals with Disabilities Education Act of 2004**
- **504 PLAN based on Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973**

## College Education is Based on **ACCESS**

- **ADA Americans with Disabilities Act 1990**
- **SECTION 504 of the Rehabilitation Act 1973**
- **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS as defined by the college**

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In Summary: College academic support offices will work directly with students who have documented disabilities to provide **REASONABLE ACCOMMODATIONS.**

However, unlike in K-12 schooling, in college, **STUDENTS** (not parents, teachers, or the school) are required by law to drive the process to pursue accommodations.



# **IN COLLEGE, THE STUDENT SEEKING ACCOMMODATIONS MUST:**

## **BE ABLE TO ASK DISABILITY SERVICES**

- **About documentation needed to pursue accommodations**
- **If medical or neuropsych documentation is required (and how recent)**
- **About deadlines for the documentation**

## **BE ABLE TO CLEARLY EXPLAIN**

- **Their specific disability/associated challenges ("elevator speech")**
- **The accommodations they received in high school**
- **Assumed college accommodation needs**
- **Information on medications, diet, housing, etc.**

# THE IDEAL TRANSITION FROM:

## HIGH SCHOOL PARENT

## COLLEGE PARENT SHOULD

Organizes



Offers support

Fixes



Encourages problem-solving

Removes obstacles



Lets student traverse obstacles

Provides daily reminders



Rarely provides reminders

Reiterates expectations



Helps student set own expectations

ACADEMIC STANDARDS	HIGH SCHOOL	COLLEGE
<b>TIME MANAGEMENT</b>	School begins and ends at same time each weekday (approximately 35 hours of class per week in up to 7 subject areas)	Classes will most likely meet 1-3 times per week and schedule will vary daily (approximately 12-15 hours of class per week in 4-5 different subject areas)
<b>PROFESSIONALISM AND PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Parents might contact teachers/counselors or visa versa</li> <li>•Teachers often send reminders of work due</li> <li>•Many assignments throughout marking period to assess progress and grades</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>•Student responsible for all contact with professors and academic resources</li> <li>•Student responsible for all deadlines</li> <li>•Feedback less frequent and often requires attending professors' office hours to assess progress and grades</li> </ul>
<b>PREPARATION FOR CLASS</b>	Teachers will often explain readings and relevant concepts in class	Student expected to understand most of what they read before classes begin and professors will build class lectures and discussion from there



How to help your teen begin to  
build their *skills now* so they can  
succeed in college:

Much of it is about teaching and  
facilitating independent

**PROBLEM-SOLVING**

# TAKING INVENTORY



- What are the things your teen already does well and independently?
- What are the areas in which you still tell your teen what to do?
- What are the areas in which you can step back and allow them to step up

# ***Just Some College-level Life Skills***

- to do laundry, iron, basic sewing
- to read schedules and book plane, train, and bus travel
- simple meal prep, cooking, baking, toasting, microwaving, and knife skills
- to care for/clean their living spaces
- learn how family is paying for college (cost, financial aid, scholarships)
- to use a phone to make appointments and ask for help
- their social security number (and what information to keep confidential)
- the basics of health insurance, co-pay, and prescription filling
- to treat common illnesses and manage medication dosages
- to keep/record a budget
- to write a professional email and leave a voicemail



# **Administrative Tasks Your College-bound Student Needs for College Success**

- Moving from parent to student management of daily tasks (calendar, attending meetings, filling out forms, sending emails)
- Student learns the nuances of administrative responsibilities and follow through (how many chances until I let them fail?)

# **Health/Wellness Tasks Your College-bound Student Needs for College Success**

- Moving from parent to student management of medical or behavioral diagnosis with direct contact with medical providers
- Student learns to be responsible for sleep-wake cycles, daily self-care, social decisions, and knowing the differences between stress - distress



# Begin to Discuss College Scenarios and Upcoming Decisions

**Personal Choices**

**Student:**

How would you care for a friend who is very drunk or has passed out?

What would you do if you see a student you don't know who is very drunk or passed out?

**Clubs And Organizations**

**Student:**

When you picture joining clubs, organizations, or other groups in college, do you think you'll want to:

- Hone skills and passions you have focused on previously?
- Try something completely new?
- Revisit an activity you enjoyed as a child but didn't have time for in high school?
- Any combination of these?

**Roommates And Friendships**

**Student:**

The majority of colleges are more economically diverse than most high schools.

How might you approach a situation where a new college friend cannot afford things that you can afford or where you cannot afford things that others can (such as a restaurant meal or concert ticket)?

**Parent(s):**

Do you have advice to offer based on your lived experiences?

**Your Personal History**

**Student**

Are you able to clearly narrate your personal health history to a medical provider, including any relevant:

- Surgeries?
- Allergies?
- Illnesses?
- Injuries?
- Chronic conditions?
- Disabilities?
- Genetic family health conditions?



**Self-advocacy also means knowing how to get information and ask for help!**

**What is the definition of "adulthood?"**

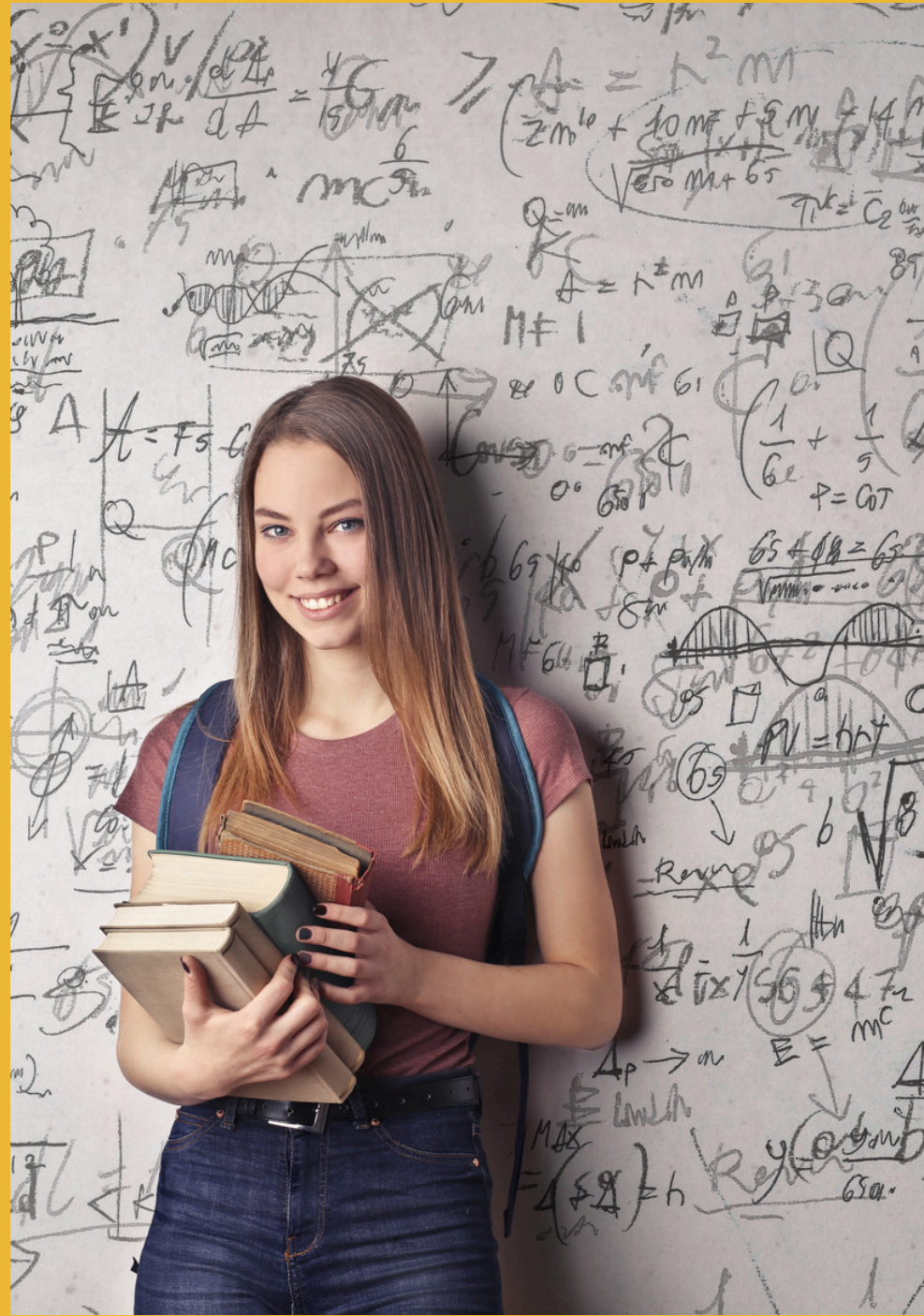






As parents, we should  
be growing our teens  
from the language of:  
"What should I do?"  
to  
"Here's my plan,  
what do you think?"





# BUILDING RESILIENCE

Foster a growth  
mindset by **praising  
the effort** rather  
than the just the  
final success.

## THE POWER OF "YET"



# MY FINAL ADVICE FOR COLLEGE PREP:

- Remember and frequently discuss that the ultimate goal is self-reliance





# Questions?

USE promo code **BUZZ**  
at [TalkingCollege.com](https://TalkingCollege.com) for a discount  
just for GA Tech families!



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