Facilitating Future Success Now: What Parents Can Do From an Insider’s Perspective

Zosia Zaks, M.Ed., C.R.C.
Certified Rehabilitation Counselor (CRC)
Visiting Instructor, College of Health Professions, Towson University
Manager of Programs and Education, Hussman Center for Adults with Autism
Diagnosed at age 31
Author, advocate, and speaker

What are your hopes?
What are your fears?

Section One: Learning from Self-Advocates

But those advocates aren't like my kid!
You can talk? Then I'm not listening!

• Adults across the autism spectrum can inform our understanding.

Advocates Far & Near (1)

Dr. Grandin: TED Talk – All Kinds of Minds
http://www.ted.com/talks/temple_grandin_all_kinds_of_minds

Carly Fleischmann: Autism Through My Eyes
YouTube: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vNZVV4Ciccg

Dr. Stephen Shore: Discussing the Diagnosis with Your Child
http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5EnkU0AT2A8

Daniel Tammet: TED talk – Different Ways of Knowing
http://www.ted.com/talks/daniel_tammet_different_ways_of_knowing
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LaVonnya Gardner: YouTube Channel
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tx4IzZzH8XA
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NbLU0xEdzq4

Katie Miller: Testimony
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=kLQWnYqomY

Wolf Dunoway: Conference
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hY4Hu3W5vBs

Advocates Far & Near (2)

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Loud Hands Project:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=4iVektXsNRI

Wretches and Jabberers movie:
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FlIyJJRc0E

NYU/NYC District 75 Self-Advocates Project:
http://www.projectkeepitreal.com

More Advocacy Resources

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The Importance of Self-advocacy
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**Section Two: The Adult System**

- The adult system is a self-advocacy system
- Eligibility based services – what does this mean?
- ADA v. IDEA
- Reasonable Accommodations & 504

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**The Transition IEP**

- Goals must prepare the student for adult life.
- Goals must be based on the student’s interests, strengths, and dreams.
- Goals must be measurable.

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**Tips for Entering the Adult System**

- Recent diagnosis – 5 year rule
- Disability education and vocabulary
- Communication system
- Emergency training – Personal Emergency Card
- Paperwork home base
- Plan for IEP participation
My name is Beatrice Jones. I live at 233 Elm Street, Wallingford, Connecticut. In case of emergency, please call my roommate Sue Smith at (203) 599-6287. I am autistic. I need extra time to answer questions. Also, I wear sunglasses because my eyes are very sensitive—please don’t take them off. If you need more information about autism please ask me. I am on Zoloft 50 mg daily. My doctor’s name is Dr. Max and his number is (203) 599-6288.

Sample Emergency Card

Realities of Being an Adult

Section Three: Skills for Adulthood

- The bushes story
- The “What’s up, dude?” story
- The Midnight Restaurant Cowboy story
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What Do Adults Need to Know How to Do?

- Lie, sneak, pretend sometimes
- Fit into a group
- Avoid certain people: Enemy skills
- Reduce personal vulnerability
- Manage one's personal presentation

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Teaching Real World Skills

- Give social data: What is age typical?
- Place value on variety and quantity of learning opportunities
- Discuss and teach about public image and personal signals
- Have a loneliness reduction plan ready
- Exposure is important even if success is less than 100%

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What Is the Risk of Not Trying?

Dr. Gerhardt
- http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U5SDOF6qAu
Behavior Challenges in Adulthood: From An Insider’s Perspective

- Video game heaven: What is a true choice?
- Green straws: Respecting the person’s individuality & personality
- Food service: The Civil Right to Fail
- Oreo cookies: It’s not always the autism

Providing Behavior Support for Adults

- Get rid of the stickers
- Start explaining abstractions now
- Bad behavior is poor self-advocacy
- Adulthood is a self-advocacy system
- Self-determination is federal policy
Social Life

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Social Life As An Autistic Adult: Cornerstone Skills

- Self-regulation is an absolute requirement for high quality of life
- Judging your behavior is also a crucial skill for being able to take care of yourself
- Tolerating other people is necessary every single day

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Self-Regulation Tools (1)
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Self-Regulation Tools (2)

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5 Point Scales Can Be Personalized

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Tips for Strengthening Social Competence

- Model self-reflection
- Provide opportunities for personal growth
- Enemy skills: Demonstrate how to deal with less preferred people
- Also model how to cope with social rejection

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Socializing Successfully

- Loneliness Reduction Plan
- Safe Activities List
- Sexuality education for everyone that takes into account unique learning profile of autism
- GLBTQ issues on the spectrum
- Vocabulary
- Trusting your feelings

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Loneliness Reduction Plan

- Clubs
- Volunteer work
- Hobbies
- Religious groups
- Sports
- Exercise
- Classes
- Interest groups
- Arts & crafts
- Personal projects

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Safe Activities List: Social Narrative
Concluding Thoughts

If I Had Known
- Give language to talk about the disability and about personal experiences
- Make sure everyone has some strong social connections
- Work is vital – everyone needs a job to do
- Assume nothing!
- Explain EVERYTHING!

Adults on the Autism Spectrum
- are the experts on themselves.
- need to communicate.
- must be able to self-advocate.
- have the right to grow up and try to have a good life.
- may struggle and learn from mistakes just like anyone.
- can make choices, learn, and live in the community.
- are more like you than not.
**Resources for Youth & Adults**

- Winner, M. G. (2011). *Social Thinking At Work: Why Should I Care?*

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**Q & A**

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**Thank You!**

My email: zzaks@autismability.com