



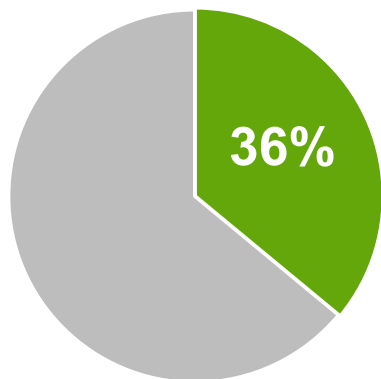
Key Findings from the National Autism Indicators Report: Transition into Young Adulthood

This fact sheet summarizes key findings from the National Autism Indicators Report which can be found here: drex.lu/autismindicators. The Autism Indicators report tracks statistics about issues facing individuals on the autism spectrum. These statistics set the stage to discover whether quality of life for those with autism and their families is improving over time.

The Life Course Outcomes Research Program is building a base of knowledge about the things other than clinical interventions that promote positive outcomes for people on the autism spectrum and their families and communities.



One purpose of special education is to prepare students for further education after high school.



36% of young adults with autism attended any type of postsecondary education.

Postsecondary Education Outcomes of Young Adults on the Autism Spectrum



People in the U.S. who continue their education beyond high school can expect to earn more, be healthier, and live longer lives. About 75% of youth in the general population attend some type of postsecondary education in the first years after high school.¹ About 66% of high school graduates enroll in college.²

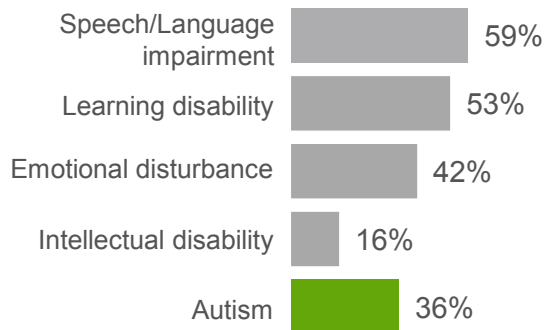
Yet, approximately one-third of young adults on the autism spectrum went on to attend any kind of postsecondary education during their early 20s – a rate far lower than their peers with a learning disability or speech-language impairment. Those who had significantly impaired communication or who were from lower income households had even lower rates of ever attending postsecondary education.

In this report, we examine postsecondary education – meaning vocational/technical schools, 2-year or community college, and 4-year colleges or universities. We used data from the National Longitudinal Transition Study-2 (NLTS2) collected in 2009 when young adults were 21 to 25 years old.

Fewer with autism attended postsecondary education compare to peers.

One-third of those on the autism spectrum ever attended school during their early 20s, while over half of youth with a learning disability or speech-language impairment continued their education after high school. The only disability group with a lower rate of postsecondary education was youth with intellectual disabilities.

Young adults with autism had lower rates of postsecondary education than most of their peers with other types of disabilities.



Percent ever attended postsecondary education during their early 20s

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Many attended 2-year colleges.

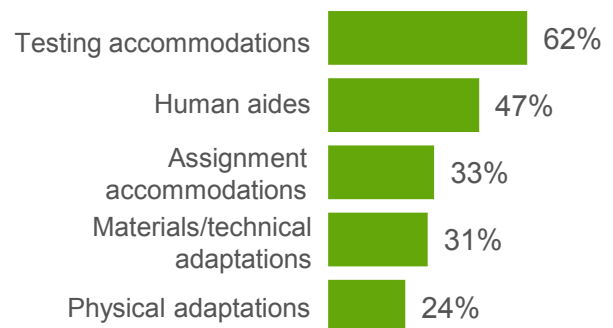
Two-year colleges play an important role for students on the autism spectrum; 70% of those who received postsecondary education attended a 2-year college at some point. Some use 2-year colleges as a stepping stone to a 4-year college. For others, it is their sole college experience.

Approximately 36% of young adults with autism attended additional education after high school.

Fewer than half of those who disclosed their disability received accommodations.

In order to access accommodations in higher education, students must first disclose proof of their disability to their school. Of students who did choose to disclose their disability, 42% received help, accommodations, or services to support their education. Of students with autism who received any type of supports (either based on their disability status or available to all students) in college and vocational/technical settings, 90% felt they received enough help, services or accommodations between their in-school and private supports. However, only 73% of 2-year and 4-year college students with autism, and 66% of vocational/technical students, felt the services and accommodations they received were helpful.

Top 5 accommodations at postsecondary schools



Percentage of autistic youth who received accommodations

Source: National Longitudinal Transition Study-2

Postsecondary Education Factors

We explored factors that may be related to postsecondary education:

Household Income

Nearly 60% of those from upper income households (>\$75K) ever attended postsecondary education compared to 19% of those from the lowest income households (<\$25K).

Race and Ethnicity

More white young adults ever attended postsecondary education during their early 20s (41%) compared to black (23%) and Hispanic young adults (29%).

Conversation Ability

Nearly 50% of young adults with the highest level of conversation skills ever attended postsecondary education, compared to 12% with the lowest level of conversation skills.

Parent Education

More young adults continued their education if their parents had any postsecondary education (44%) compared to young adults whose parents had no postsecondary education (14%).

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Sources:

1. ACT Inc. (2005). Courses count: Preparing students for postsecondary success. ACT Policy Report. www.act.org/research/policy/index.html
2. Bureau of Labor Statistics. (2014). College enrollment and work activity of 2013 high school graduates. U.S. Department of Labor. <http://www.bls.gov/news.release/hsgec.nr0.htm>

