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## **Disclosing ADHD during the College Admissions Process**

Many students and their parents are worried about disclosing ADHD when applying for college. However, doing so can be useful if any aspect of a student’s academic record is not competitive and was affected by a disability. The decision whether to disclose your ADHD during the admissions process is yours to make.

Disclosing one’s disability and how it may have had an impact on the student’s grades or coursework might allow admissions counselors to view less competitive information differently once they understand the impact of ADHD. If the student is denied admission because that college is not “ADHD-friendly,” then it may be better in the long run that the student not attend that college.

The Common App does not provide any information on the process of disclosing a disability during the admissions because colleges are not allowed to require students to share this information during the admissions process. However, many colleges choose to invite disclosure and have a special admissions process to do so. This information can only be acquired by either visiting a college’s Admissions Website or calling their admissions office.

Some colleges list documentation to include during the application process. If this is not obvious on the admissions website, call the office to find out if a process exists and what documentation is needed. Typically, students may be invited to share the following:

- a letter disclosing the disability and clarifying current academic impact
- psychological evaluations diagnosing a disability and the date of diagnosis
- a current IEP/504 plan and records from high school documenting any accommodations and services received

Another creative option for many students is to use a required essay on the Common App to weave in information about their disability and how they have learned to overcome adversity. Some prompts ask about personal challenges or defining experiences that have helped form a student’s character.

If documentation of ADHD is provided, be sure to ask who reviews the documentation, what their credentials are and what happens to the documentation after it has been reviewed. Some colleges have a time limit on documentation, so it may be easier to get an updated evaluation at home rather than wait and find a new evaluator in a new city. Once students are accepted to a college, additional documentation may need to be submitted to the disability office to receive accommodations since admission and qualifying for accommodations are typically two separate procedures.

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For further information, please contact:  
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