

Handout 2—Campus visit tips

This handout offers tips for when teens/young adults with high-functioning autism (HFA) or Asperger syndrome (AS) visit a college campus. The tips provide recommendations and things to keep in mind and/or do while you are on the visit. Remember, these are only suggestions to help you make the most of your time during your campus visit.

Tips

- Pay attention to your comfort level when you are on campus. Do you feel comfortable there? Does the campus overwhelm you? Write down your impressions of how comfortable you feel while you are visiting.
- Sign up to take a tour of the campus. Most likely, you can coordinate a tour through the Admissions office. Call the college or visit its Web site to find out how you can participate in a tour.
- When you schedule your campus visit, ask the Admissions office or Disabilities Support Services personnel if they could schedule a time for you to meet with a couple of current college students. In this way, you can ask these students any questions you may have about the college. You may want to ask what they like about the college, what they don't like, and what they think the benefits of the college are. Take a few notes on what they say, and then thank them for their time.
- Schedule a meeting with someone at the Disabilities Support Services center on the campus. You probably will need to call ahead and make an appointment in order to meet with someone in person. Bring a list of questions. The most important thing is to see what types of services and accommodations they offer to students with HFA/AS, what programs they may have, and what requirements they have to receive services.
- Ask your tour guide if you can visit the dorms. See what a typical dorm room looks like. Ask about the different types of living accommodations the college provides.
- After your tour, visit the community and area around the college. Is the college in a large city? Are the areas surrounding the college welcoming? Are there restaurants or other forms of entertainment? Is the college in a safe area?
- Take pictures on your tour. This will help you to remember different areas of the college. You can then print these pictures out and include them in your file on the college.
- If you are interested, you could sit in on a class during your visit. You will need to coordinate this through the Admissions office. You can then see what a typical Freshman-level class would look and feel like.

Things to Bring on Your Visit

- Campus map
- Schedule of days activities/goals of visit
- Camera
- Notebook/paper
- Pen
- Comfortable shoes
- Questions
- Contact information for Admissions counselor/Disabilities Support Services person (if you have scheduled meetings)

Potential Questions to Ask or Think About During the Visit

- Do I feel comfortable on campus?
- What do other students like and dislike about the college?
- What Disabilities Support Services are offered?
- How do I receive these services?
- What types of extracurricular activities are available?
- What are the dorms/living areas like?
- What is the area surrounding campus like?
- What is the average class size?
- Will I need to bring my own computer?
- What is the food like? Where would I eat?
- What are the most well-known programs at the college?
- Are students taught by full-time professors, graduate assistants, or both?