# TRANSITIONING TO COLLEGE:
# A ROADMAP FOR ACCOMMODATIONS

**SPED*NET Wilton**
**Webinar**
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# STUDENTS WITH ADHD/LD ARE EXTREMELY BRIGHT STUDENTS

## They Have Talents & High Potential

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# ADHD/LD STUDENTS ARE AT-RISK

- 3 times more likely to be held back compared to those without ADHD.
- Twice as likely to drop out of high school compared to those without ADHD.
- 7 times less likely to graduate college in 4yrs than those without ADHD.
- 3 times more likely to get suspended compared to those without ADHD.

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# OVERVIEW

- Nature of  ADHD/LD & Their Relationship
- Impact of ADHD/LD on Transitions
- Social Impact of ADHD/LD on Transition to College
- Legal Impact of ADHD/LD on Transition to College
- Roadmap to Accommodations: Practical Strategies to Proactively Address Transition Issues

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# WHAT IS ADHD?

- ADHD is **Neuro-Biological Disorder** affecting the Pre-Frontal Cortex of the brain which is responsible for **EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING**

- Neuro-Transmitter Dysfunction
  - Dopamine
  - Serotonin
  - Norepinephrine

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# EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING

- Organization
- Prioritization
- Time Perception
- Impulse Control
- Self Regulation
- Attention Regulation
- Short Term Memory

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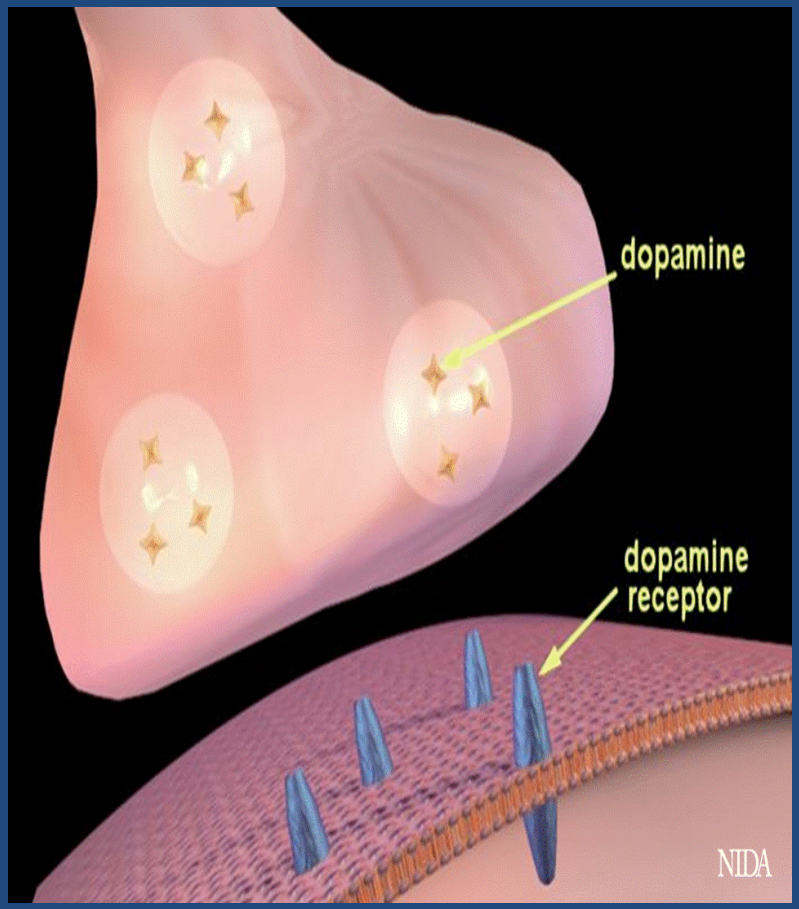
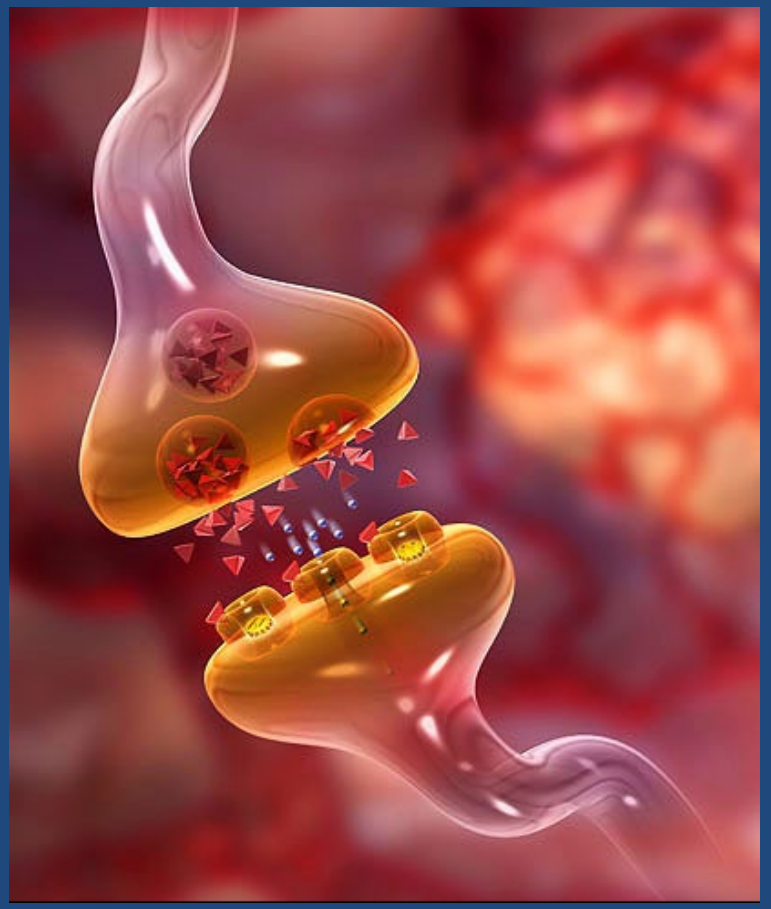
# NEUROTRANSMITTERS



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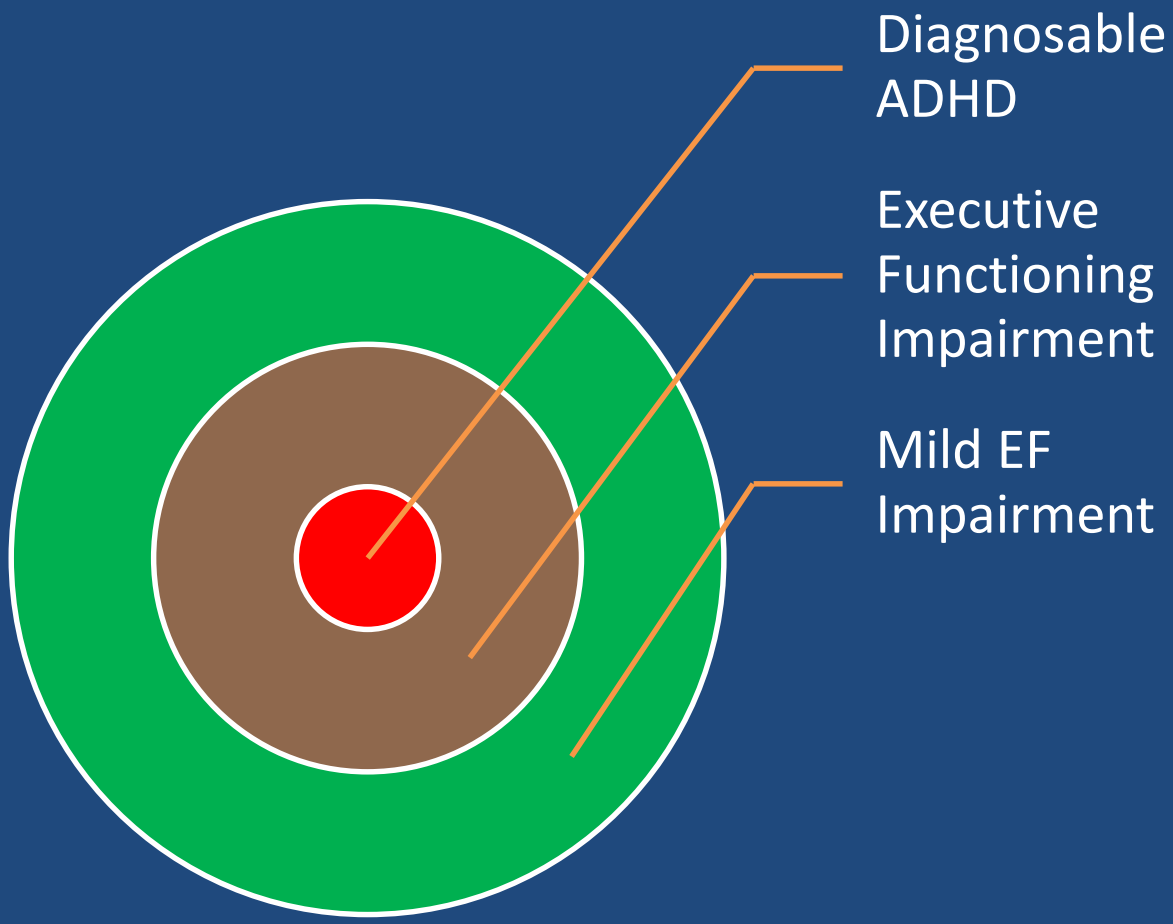
# EF IMPAIRMENT v. ADHD

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YOU ARE CLEAR TO DO WHATEVER...

# LEARNING DISABILITIES (LD)

- LD – neurologically based processing problems that can interfere with learning basic skills.
- Examples of Learning Disabilities
  - Dyslexia – Reading Word Recognition
  - Dysgraphia - Handwriting
  - Dyspraxia – Motor Skills
  - Phonemic Awareness – Phonetics & Written Word
  - Dyscalcula – Math

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# LEARNING DISABILITIES (LD)

- Can interfere with specific processes and also with higher level skills such as Executive Functioning
  - Organization,
  - Time planning,
  - Abstract reasoning,
  - Long or short term memory
  - Attention

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# ADHD/LD

***"ADHD Rarely Walks Alone"***

- 65 – 70% of cases, ADHD is present with a Learning Disability or other Co-Occurring Condition
- Co-Occurrence can magnify the symptoms of both significantly, ***BUT***
- ADHD/LD are ***PERFORMANCE DEFICITS NOT INTELLIGENCE DEFICITS***

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# EXECUTIVE FUNCTIONING IMPAIRMENT & TRANSITIONS

- 3rd to 4th Grade
- Elementary to Middle School
- Middle School to High School
- High School to College**
- College to Workforce

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# K-12

*"It's Not that the work is harder. It's that there are so many more things I need to remember this year"*

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# TRANSITION FROM HIGH SCHOOL TO COLLEGE

- Difficult for Any Student
- Complete Lack of Structure, Support and Accountability
- Being away from home
- Lack of Feedback
- Medication Management/Diversion

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# Difficult Transition

- Factual & Social Challenges
  - Magnified by Disability
- Significant Changes in the Law
  - Legal Changes for ALL Students
  - Significant Impact on Students with Disabilities
- ***BOTH NEED TO BE ADDRESSED PROACTIVELY***

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# Transition Issues are Magnified by ADHD/LD & Co-Occurring Conditions

- Lack of Structure, Support & Accountability
- Inability & Unwillingness to Advocate for themselves
- Absence of Feedback
- No Daily Support from Parents
- Laws that Protect Students with ADHD Change Drastically

- **ALL Equal A Recipe for Disaster for Students with ADHD Unless They Are Addressed PROACTIVELY**

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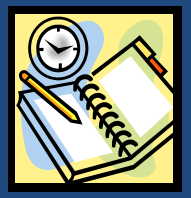
# POST SECONDARY



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# CHANGES IN THE LAW

## Services & Accommodations

- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA)
- Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act (504)
- Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)

## School Records

- Family Education Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA)

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# A NOTE ABOUT THE LAW

A DIAGNOSIS OF ADHD/LD DO **NOT** GUARANTEE SERVICES or ACCOMMODATIONS UNDER THE LAW

Parents and Students **MUST** Show That ADHD "***SUBSTANTIALLY IMPACTS A MAJOR LIFE ACTIVITY***"

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# SERVICES & ACCOMMODATIONS

## IDEA, 504 & ADA K-12

- **Child Find** – Prior to High School Graduation, School Districts Have Burden to
  - IDENTIFY
  - EVALUATE
  - PROVIDE SERVICES AND SUPPORT

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# SERVICES & ACCOMMODATIONS

## IDEA, 504 & ADA – Post Secondary

- IDEA – Gone
- 504 & ADA – Burden Shifts to the Student
  - Must Self Report Disability
  - Must Document Disability
  - Must Ask for Services and Support

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# TRANSITION UNDER THE LAW

- IDEA – Requires a Transition Plan
  - Between 14 & 16 Required
  - INVOLVE YOUR CHILD ACTIVELY
  - Convert IEP into Services and/or Accommodations
- Section 504 & ADA
  - College not bound by High School Accommodations
  - No 504 Plan after graduation, BUT you have accommodations that have worked

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# STUDENTS ARE RELUCTANT TO REPORT

- Parents have done all of the Advocacy up until now
- Students Just Want to Fit In When They Go To College
- Students Don’t Understand Their Needs
- Students re Not Able to Articulate Their Needs
- Students are reluctant to label themselves

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# FAMILY EDUCATION RIGHTS & PRIVACY ACT (FERPA)

- **Generally Protects Parents & Students K-12**
  - Exclusive Unrestricted Access to School Records
- **Only Protects Students Post Secondary**
  - Parents are Out of the Loop
  - Can't Advocate for Students
  - Even if They Pay the Tuition

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# ADDRESSING TRANSITION PROACTIVELY

- TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN
- Understand the Social & Legal Challenges they face in transition
- Address these challenges ***PROACTIVELY***

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# BE PROACTIVE

- Have That Conversation With Your Child
- Speak to the DSS Office at the College Ahead of Time
- Have Your Child Sign a Waiver Ahead of Time If You Are To Stay in the Loop
- If Not, At Least You Know Ahead of Time

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# BE PROACTIVE

## Medication Management

- Medication is NOT a Magic Bullet
- Importance of a Medication Plan
- If a Change is Necessary – Then Change the Plan Together
- Have Resources Available Locally

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# BE PROACTIVE

## Diversion

- Diverting ADHD Medication to Others Without a Prescription
- Stimulant Medication is a Schedule II Controlled Substance - GIVING IS SELLING
  - Prosecution
  - Expulsion
  - Feeding Social Stigmas

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# What Can Students Do

- Safeguard Your Medication
- Take it According to a Plan – If You Change, Change the Plan
- Do Not Give or Share Meds EVER
- Parents Need to Educate Their Children
- Report Changes in Medication Effects to Your Doctor

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# ADDRESSING TRANSITION PROACTIVELY

## Coaching – Empowering Students to Succeed

- Partnership Between Student & Coach
- Student Driven & Talent Based
- Student Sets Goals – Their Own Goals
- Coach & Student Together Plot a Course to Achieve Those Goals
- Helps Students Develop Structure, Support & Accountability for Themselves
- Along the Way – Student & Coach Hold Student Accountable to What They (Student) Have Committed To
- Encourage Self Advocacy

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# OTHER PROACTIVE STRATEGIES

- Exercise
- Developing Coping Strategies
- Developing a plan
  - Medication Management
  - Accommodations
  - FERPA
  - Self Advocacy

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# PROACTIVELY ADDRESSING LEGAL CHALLENGES

- IDEA – Transition Planning
  - Use the Plan to Set the Stage for College
  - Have your child participate ***ACTIVELY***

- 504 & ADA – Accommodations & Services
  - Meet with Disability Office When Looking at Colleges
  - Go over the 504 Plan with them Even if They Are Not Bound By it
  - Find Out What is Available at Their School

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# HIGH STAKES TESTING ACCOMMODATIONS

## SAT & ACT

- Accommodations in High School Don't Guarantee Accommodations on Test
- Bad Press Has Made it Much More Difficult
- Advantage Mindset v. Leveling the Playing Field

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# BE PROACTIVE

## Testing Accommodations

- **Update Evaluations**
- **Understand & Articulate Specific Deficits**
- **Get Help from the School**
- **DO NOT GIVE UP IF REJECTED**
  - **Most of These are Won on Appeal**

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# PRACTICAL PITFALLS

- Reluctance of students to seek help
- Advocacy has 2 sides
  - Getting services & Accommodations
  - Vigilance that they are accurate and being provided
- Problems with follow through
  - Student side (Executive Functioning)
  - Disconnect between Disability Office & Faculty

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# SUMMING UP

- Students With ADHD/LD Have a High Potential
- Students With ADHD/LD are AT-RISK
- If transition challenges are addressed PROACTIVELY, they will not only survive in College, they will THRIVE there
- Being Proactive and Addressing Transition Issues Can Turn High Risk Into High Potential

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# Q&A

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