

Development of the Postsecondary Resilience Education Program (PREP): A Web-Based College Readiness & Resilience Skills Building Program for Students with Autism Spectrum Disorder



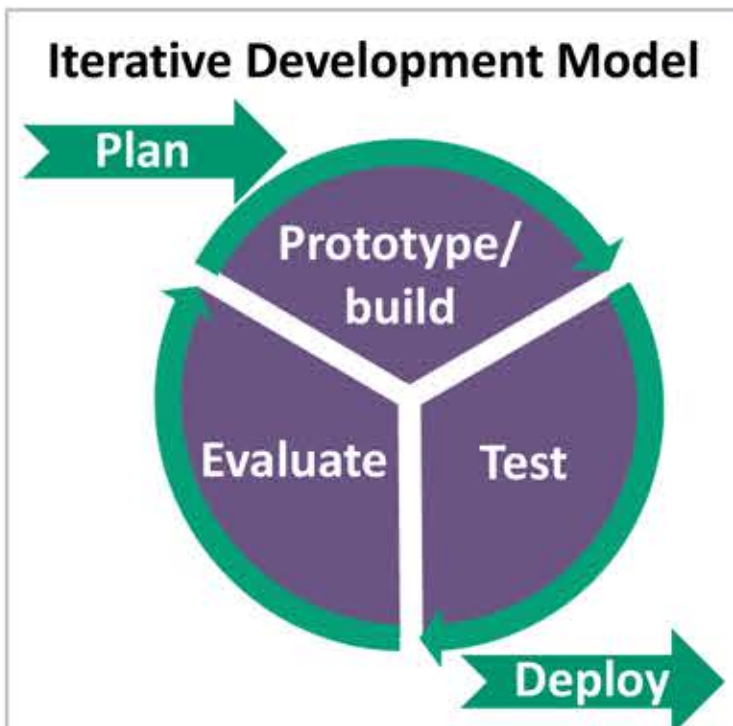
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Introduction

- Despite cognitive strengths, 24% of individuals with high functioning autism (HFA) report no education or employment after high school¹
- Students who pursue college tend to drop out prematurely²
- A growing literature underscores the crucial role of resilience strategies for academic and social-emotional adjustment in postsecondary education³

Objectives

To iteratively develop and conduct preliminary testing of a dynamic, web-based resilience and transitioning program.



Methods

After reviewing the course for two weeks, stakeholders provided qualitative and quantitative data via feedback sessions and online surveys. Data on the usability and feasibility of the program, online delivery platform, and student understanding of issues related to the transition process was collected to guide further development.

Participants

	Students and Parents	Educators
Gender	Male: n=11 Female: n=2	Male: n=2 Female: n=23
Ethnicity	Black/African American: 8% White: 84% More than 1 Race: 8%	Black/African American: 12% White: 84% More than 1 Race: 4%
Education	11 th grade: n=6 12 th grade: n=7	Exceptional children teacher: n=10 Related service providers: n=15

PREP Course

Didactic Video Instruction

Games

Interactive Activities

Printable Activities & Binder

Education Beyond Graduation

Resilience

Using Disability Services

Dealing with Stressors

Building Social Connections

Maintaining Social Connections

Self-Advocacy

Accessing Resources

Organization

Caring for Yourself

Setting and Achieving Goals

Planning the Transition

Results

Likert ratings (1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree)	Student (n=13) Mean (SD)	Likert ratings (1-Strongly Disagree to 5-Strongly Agree)	Parent (n=13) Mean (SD)	Educator (n=25) Mean (SD)
PREP is likely to enhance the transition and preparation skills of students who are transitioning to postsecondary education.	4.27 (.65)	PREP fills a need for helping high school students with ASD transitioning to postsecondary education.	4.82 (.40)	4.53 (.61)
PREP would be useful in facilitating the transition from high school to PSE for students with ASD.	4.17 (.83)	PREP would be useful in facilitating the transition from high school to PSE for students with ASD.	4.64 (.50)	4.47 (.61)
The interactive exercises were relevant to real life transitioning situations.	4.33 (.78)	The interactive exercises were relevant to real life transitioning issues.	4.72 (.47)	4.32 (.58)
PREP did not require too much time to use.	4.08 (.79)	The PREP content was appropriate for students with ASD transitioning to postsecondary education.	4.80 (.42)	4.26 (.65)
Recommend continued development of PREP.	4.5 (.80)	The overall PREP experience was positive.	4.91 (.30)	4.32 (.48)

Stakeholder Comments

- The interactive format [that PREP] uses made you feel more involved in the lessons. -Student
- PREP assured me that it is not impossible to succeed in college with a learning disability. -Student
- Something like this would be immensely helpful. It is an interface they like rather than listening to mom. -Parent
- It's cool that someone is trying to make something to help [her] learn what to do or say before college. This was on point. I think it is going to be an amazing tool. -Parent
- This program allows teachers to build a curriculum based on the needs of the student. The language is consistent and reinforced frequently. It allows students to discover information on their own and to become the "expert" before engaging with teacher or peers on the topic. -Educator

Conclusions

These data provide preliminary evidence for the usefulness and need of the PREP program for students with HFA considering postsecondary education. Stakeholders noted PREP was comprehensive, relevant, engaging, and useful for students with HFA. Stakeholders provided suggestions for improving the PREP course. After incorporating suggestions and feedback from earlier testing, a subsequent pilot study of PREP was conducted and data analyses are underway.

Contact

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References

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