



EMBRACING AUTISM IN HIGHER EDUCATION

with Project **T.R.U.S.T**

· CASE STUDY ·

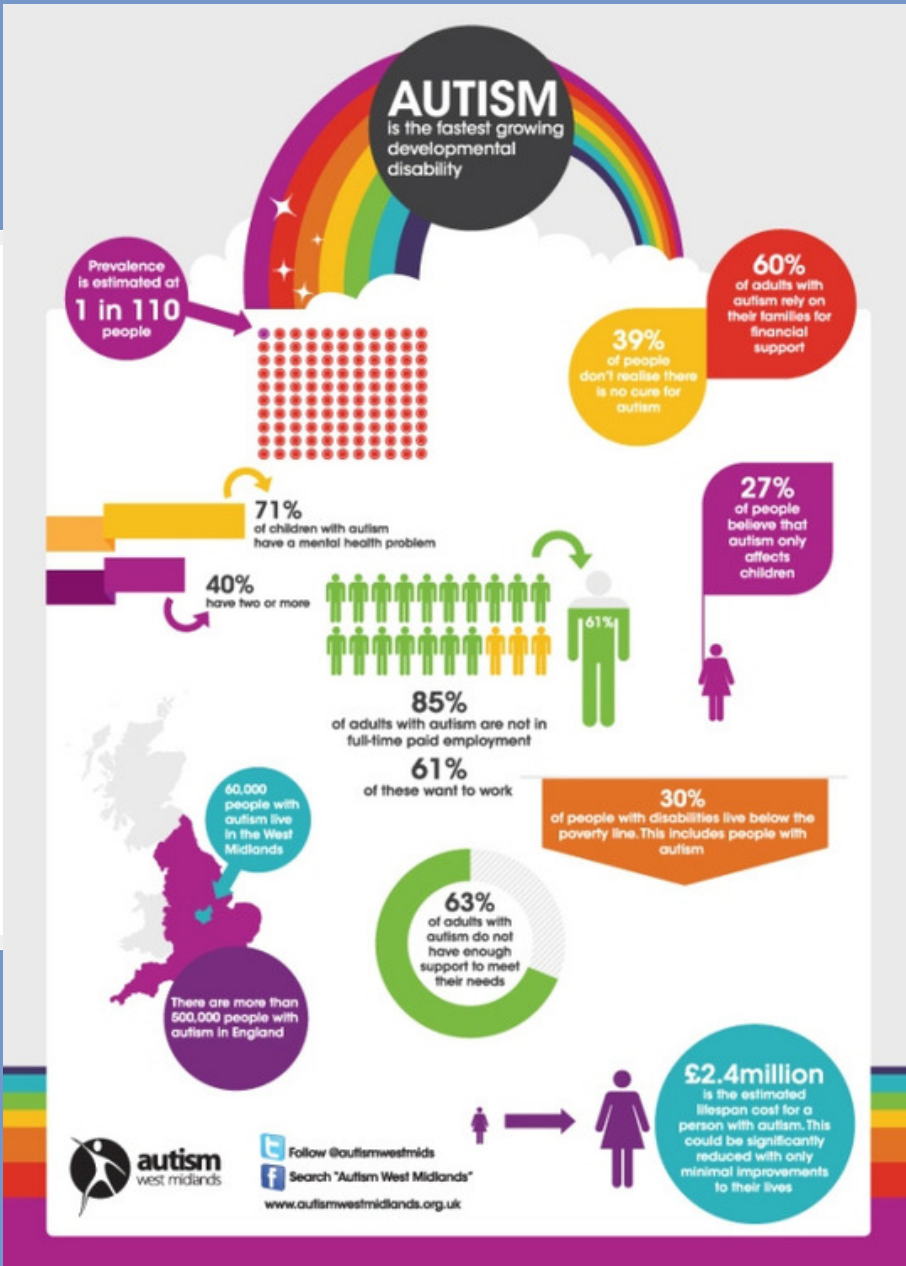


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UNDERSTANDING AUTISM



Students on the Autism Spectrum can have a diverse range of conditions characterized by challenges with social skills, communication and repetitive behaviors.

WHY?





- The Center for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) states that Autism in the United States can be identified 1 in 68 children.
- If we translate that to a college campus example with 10,000 students, this could mean that 148 students could be on the Autism spectrum and currently left unadequately supported by our system.
- We will continue seeing an increase of students on the Autism Spectrum pursuing higher education. Project T.R.U.S.T will bring together resources so students on the Autism Spectrum will continue to pursue higher education and experience success.

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T OVERVIEW

TEACH

Students who identify with being on the autism spectrum across campus will get the opportunity to be learn life lessons that can be used in their everyday life, and in the classroom.

RETAIN

With the proper knowledge attained from Project **T.R.U.S.T** the students will be able to persist in college and apply such skills to their everyday life.

UNDERSTAND

Through first year experience (FYE) courses students will understand college basics, develop skills related to independence, and grow academically.

SHARE

Through peer mentorship students will learn to share their experiences but also share in the social components the college community offers.

TRIUMPH

Students will achieve degree completion, independence, and leave with institutional connection.

MISSION

Project **T.R.U.S.T.** will engage students in a four-year program with other students who identify on the Autism spectrum. The

Project **T.R.U.S.T.** program assists students in obtaining resources for success in the areas of academics, socialization, and personal development. We recognize the diversity of our students through individualized support.

BUDGET PLAN



Project **T.R.U.S.T** is an initiative that can be used on any campus that uses current campus resources to better serve our students on the Autism Spectrum. We will centralize the tools current departments offer to achieve the development of a Disability Services program that provides personal, social, and academic integration.

BUILDING PARTNERSHIPS

To alleviate the cost of Project T.R.U.S.T it is our goal to build relationships with these campus resources and ask for their participation in centralizing resources.

Service	Campus Resource	Costs
Housing	Department of Residence Life	Housing Rate
Professional Development	Career Services	Included in Tuition and Fees
Tutoring	Academic Services	Ask resource to provide 3 tutors for Project T.R.U.S.T
Mentors	Office of Student Engagement	Student Group,Volunteers and Community Members
Advising	Department of Academic Advising	Included in Tuition and Fees

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T PARTNERS

- FACULTY AND STAFF
- DIRECTOR OF DISABILITY SERVICES
- RESIDENCE LIFE
- CAREER SERVICES
- OFFICE OF STUDENT ENGAGEMENT

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T Academic Advising



We will work to improve organizational skills, time management, as well as helping students to reduce anxiety and improve their stress management related to academics.



Provide participants with a specially trained Academic Advisor that they will meet with once a week. This will be a one-on-one format where solutions to issues can be individualized to the students academic needs.



We will work with Disability Services to provide our Academic Advisors with training to better serves the issues our students on the Autism spectrum have entering and persisting in the college environment.

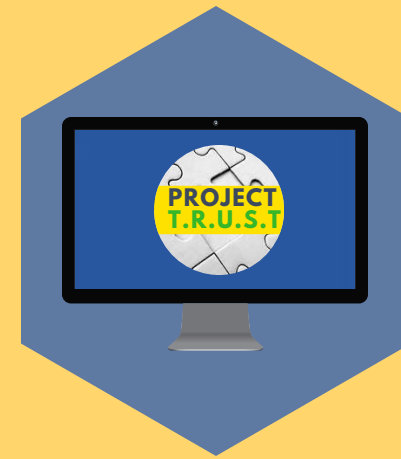
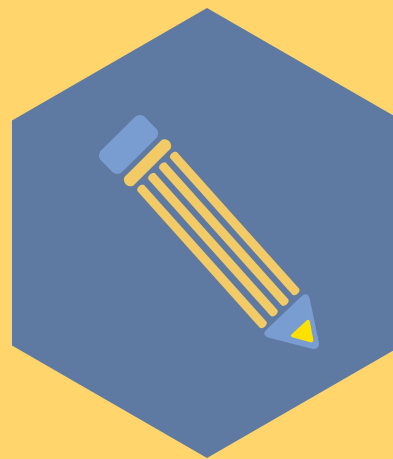
PROJECT T.R.U.S.T

First Year Experience



University 101 course adapted to meet the specific needs of students on the Autism Spectrum. Course Goals: ease the transition to campus, raise level of writing comprehension, and improve interpersonal communication.

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T Tutoring Services



Students will have access to 3 designated tutors that are trained in working specifically with Project T.R.U.S.T. students through the on-campus tutoring services.

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T

FACULTY LEARNING COMMUNITY

In partnership with faculty members we will work to establish a community where faculty will join Disability Services to train our fellow faculty in andragogical approaches informed by Applied Behavioral Analysis Therapy. Faculty in this community will be able develop techniques to help Project T.R.U.S.T student's particular learning style and will develop ways to accommodate their needs within the classroom.

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T SOCIAL EXPANSION

Through partnership with the Office of Student Engagement we will connect our Project T.R.U.S.T students with the campus community by:



Establishing a student organization to support Autism Awareness.



Developing a Project T.R.U.S.T Peer Mentor Program.



Marketing each idea above and Project T.R.U.S.T with a video like the following:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGIWFrA7nNs>

PROJECT

Student Organization

Membership can consist of all students.

Members will host the following:

- Autism Speaks: sponsored walk or event promoting Autism Awareness.
- The National Autistic Society: Project T.R.U.S.T participants will engage in the World Autism Week in a local school to promote autism awareness. They will connect with younger students and show that students on the Autism Spectrum have the same opportunities to attend college.

T.R.U.S.T

Peer Mentors

Upperclassmen college students can volunteer with Project T.R.U.S.T.

Mentors will do the following:

- Receive specialized training from Disability Services on mentoring students on the Autism Spectrum.
- Promote and engage Project T.R.U.S.T students in campus activities.
- Create individualized plan for each student they mentor.

PROJECT T.R.U.S.T

will build a partnership with the Department of Residence Life and Housing to create a unique

Residential Learning Community

for residential students living in on-campus housing.

This is an optional program to live within the

T.R.U.S.T RLC with peer mentors.

Residence Life staff will assist in providing social support, community building, independent living skills and monthly programming applicable to students on the Autism Spectrum.

The logo for Project T.R.U.S.T is contained within a white circle. The word "PROJECT" is written in a bold, dark blue, sans-serif font. Below it, the acronym "T.R.U.S.T" is written in a larger, bold, green, sans-serif font, with each letter separated by a period.

PROJECT
T.R.U.S.T

Career Development

Students in Project **T.R.U.S.T** will receive a variety of specialized career development opportunities through the four-year program. Project **T.R.U.S.T** will help students develop goals and an individualized plan through partnership with the Career Center.

01

First Year Students:

receive career training adapted to weaknesses students on the Autism Spectrum may display. Examples: how to get a on campus job and resume writing.

02

Second Year Students:

learn interview skills and then participate in mock interviews with the Career Center. Project **T.R.U.S.T** will help find on-campus jobs that are the best fit for students on the Autism Spectrum.

03

Third Year Students:

partner with Career Services to hold an annual internship fair for Project **T.R.U.S.T** students. These will include off campus and summer opportunities.

04

Fourth Year Students:

use the skills from the entire program while attending a Career Fair and have the opportunity to use all the skills from the four-year program to obtain a established working position.

RESOURCES & REFERENCES:

Autism Speaks

The National Autistic Society

<http://www.usautism.org/uscap/index.htm>

<http://www.autismwestmidlands.org.uk/>

(Freedman, S. (2010). Developing college skills in students with autism and Asperger's syndrome. London ; Philadelphia: Jessica Kingsley Publishers.)

TheCollegeSteps (2015, March 11). College steps - college support for student with autism Retrieved from [https://www.youtube.com/watch?](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nGIWFrA7nNs)

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