Think, Hear, See, Believe … College: Developing Protocol with Young Advocates to Prepare and Disseminate Accessible and Usable Information

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INTRODUCTION
The Consortium for Postsecondary Education for Individuals with Developmental Disabilities is committed to engaging students with IDD in all inclusive research, training and technical assistance, and dissemination activities. Fulfilling this commitment has meant exploring accessible formats and appropriate content with and for students with IDD so they can actively participate in Think College research, website development, writing, discussions and advocacy.

EMERGING PROTOCOL
As a result of research done by Think College and other researchers, a protocol for promoting student engagement in all aspects of the work is emerging. Recommendations include:
1. Facilitate PAR with digital media tools to promote accessible & inclusive research
2. Use plain, direct, accessible language
3. Create websites with graphics to direct navigation
4. Develop materials that promotes readers to engage in content
5. Integrate student-developed content as much as possible
6. Use short video clips to explain college
7. Lay out work simply
8. Select some key images to use in training materials
9. Identify student advisors for feedback & edits on all student-related content
10. Plan 3-5 meetings with students to prepare presentations, testimonials
11. Give students multiple opportunities to rehearse public presentations
12. Rehearse Q & A opportunities that may follow presentations

RESEARCH QUESTIONS
The following research questions guided three separate research projects with secondary and postsecondary students with IDD:
1. How do students with IDD use digital media tools to engage in research? (Participatory Action Research)
2. Which features of print and web-based resources do students with IDD identify as being the most accessible, engaging and important? (Accessible and Usable Information research)
3. What recommendations do students with IDD have to improve the Think College database? (Usable Database Redesign research)

Think, Hear, See, Believe... College: Getting The Word Out—Together

SPEAKING AT CONFERENCES
Students present at state and local conferences about the impact college is having on their lives

DOING RESEARCH
Student participation in Participatory Action Research for Think College

WRITING

MESSAGING

ADVISING OTHERS
Students advising Think College staff on website as well as contribute their own content

CREATING VIDEOS
Students create videos about college

DESIGNING WEBSITE
Students advise Think College staff on website design

DISCUSS
Students provide testimony to Massachusetts legislators in support of the Inclusive Concurrent Enrollment initiative

DOCUMENT

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College Options for People with Intellectual Disabilities

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