# **Supporting College and University Students With Invisible Disabilities**

College and university students with invisible disabilities face unique challenges that can impact their academic performance and overall well-being. Invisible disabilities are conditions that are not readily apparent to others and may include mental health conditions, chronic illnesses, learning disabilities, and sensory impairments.

Students with invisible disabilities may struggle with a variety of symptoms, such as fatigue, pain, anxiety, depression, difficulty concentrating, and sensory sensitivities. These symptoms can make it difficult for students to attend class, complete assignments, and participate in campus activities.



Supporting College and University Students with Invisible Disabilities: A Guide for Faculty and Staff Working with Students with Autism, AD/HD, Language

... Disorders, Anxiety, and Mental Illness by Christy Oslund

4.7 out of 5

Language : English

File size : 826 KB

Text-to-Speech : Enabled

Enhanced typesetting : Enabled

Word Wise : Enabled

Print length : 160 pages

Screen Reader : Supported



Despite these challenges, students with invisible disabilities are capable of succeeding in college and university. With the right support services and accommodations, these students can overcome the barriers presented by their disabilities and achieve their academic goals.

### **Challenges Faced by Students With Invisible Disabilities**

Students with invisible disabilities face a number of unique challenges, including:

- Lack of understanding and awareness: Many people are not aware
   of invisible disabilities and may not understand the challenges that
   students with these disabilities face. This can lead to stigma and
   discrimination.
- Difficulty disclosing their disability: Students with invisible
  disabilities may be hesitant to disclose their disability to others, fearing
  judgment or discrimination. This can make it difficult for them to get the
  support and accommodations they need.
- Intermittent symptoms: The symptoms of invisible disabilities can
  often be intermittent, which can make it difficult for students to
  demonstrate the impact of their disability. This can make it difficult for
  them to qualify for accommodations.
- Lack of visible signs: Because invisible disabilities are not readily apparent, students with these disabilities may not be perceived as having a disability. This can make it difficult for them to get the support and accommodations they need.

### **Supporting Students With Invisible Disabilities**

There are a number of things that colleges and universities can do to support students with invisible disabilities. These include:

- Providing information and awareness: Colleges and universities should provide information about invisible disabilities to students, faculty, and staff. This can help to increase understanding and awareness of these disabilities and reduce stigma.
- Creating a welcoming and inclusive environment: Colleges and universities should create a welcoming and inclusive environment for students with invisible disabilities. This includes providing support services, accommodations, and resources that meet the needs of these students.
- Providing support services: Colleges and universities should provide a range of support services to students with invisible disabilities. These services may include counseling, academic advising, peer support groups, and assistive technology.
- Providing accommodations: Colleges and universities should provide accommodations to students with invisible disabilities that allow them to fully participate in their education. These accommodations may include extended time on tests, reduced course loads, and note-taking assistance.
- Encouraging self-disclosure: Colleges and universities should encourage students with invisible disabilities to disclose their disability to their instructors and disability services office. This will allow them to get the support and accommodations they need.

#### **Accommodations for Students With Invisible Disabilities**

There are a variety of accommodations that can be provided to students with invisible disabilities. These accommodations may include:

- Extended time on tests: This accommodation allows students with invisible disabilities to have more time to complete tests and exams.
- Reduced course loads: This accommodation allows students with invisible disabilities to take a reduced number of courses each semester.
- Note-taking assistance: This accommodation provides students with invisible disabilities with assistance taking notes in class.
- Assistive technology: This accommodation provides students with invisible disabilities with access to assistive technology, such as screen readers, speech-to-text software, and closed captioning.
- Flexible attendance policies: This accommodation allows students
  with invisible disabilities to miss class for medical appointments or
  other disability-related reasons.

Students with invisible disabilities face unique challenges in college and university. However, with the right support services and accommodations, these students can overcome these challenges and achieve their academic goals. Colleges and universities have a responsibility to provide a welcoming and inclusive environment for students with invisible disabilities. By ng so, they can help these students succeed in college and university and reach their full potential.





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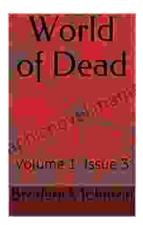
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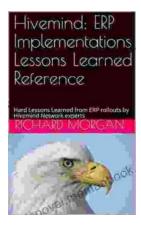


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