



## ACE Program

### Admissions Criteria

Applicants must meet the following admissions criteria:

- Must be between the ages of 16 and 22
- Primary diagnosis of neurological disability including: autism spectrum disorder, learning disability, mild developmental disability or cognitive impairment
- Must be able to manage behaviors/emotions and recognize safety issues
- Able to express basic self-advocacy skills
- Exhibit basic self-care skills

For more information about Cardinal Cushing Centers, please contact:

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## ACE Program

**Academics   Communication & Social Skills   Employability**

A transition program for young people with learning differences



## What is the ACE Program?

The ACE Transition Program places a great deal of importance on career development and the transition process. The program is designed to develop skills for working and living in the community and to foster personal, social and daily living skills necessary for greater independence.

Our goal is to provide students with academic, employment, social and life experiences to prepare for unique and inclusive transitions towards self-determined adult independence. We utilize evidence based curricula, pragmatic social language development, technology, individualized assessments and community employment designed to support our students in their post-secondary journey.

### Program Objectives:

- Individualized approach to developing tools for self-determination
- Building employment skills for increased independence
- Increase mastery of daily living skills
- Increase self-esteem and self-advocacy
- Understanding and accepting learning differences
- Meaningful opportunities to generalize skills in work, social, and community settings
- Development of safe and functional use of technology
- Enhancement of community skills and opportunities for friendships



## Academics

We offer a dynamic experience based curriculum that integrates prosocial skill development across both school and residential settings. The curriculum teaches functional academics, based on the Massachusetts' Frameworks including written and oral communication, citizenship skills, mathematics (e.g. measurement, money management), and technology (e.g. social media, internet safety). These are taught using a combination of classroom-based instruction and community experiences. Enrichment opportunities are available in music, art, health and physical fitness. Disability awareness and transitional preparation and planning are integral parts of the curriculum.

## Communication & Social Skills

Our success in life is greatly determined by social skills. In the ACE program there is a strong emphasis on facilitating and maintaining relationships in residential, social and work settings. Teaching social pragmatics helps students better understand the nuances of everyday life. These lessons occur in small group settings as well as being embedded in campus living. Students will work on developing positive work habits, interview skills, and understanding ways to interpret both verbal and nonverbal communication.

## Employment

Learning experiences are blended daily into the community, allowing our students the opportunity to feel and experience independence, further motivating their desire to be successful. We believe this is the best way to help our students discover their strengths and self-determine their meaning of full potential. We strive to fully engage each student in achieving success in community employment, pursuing more training or education through developing and maintaining new positive relationships which are the keystone of our program.

## Campus Life Options

*Campus living provides young men and women with a supportive living environment that promotes independence, socialization and preparation for adult life. Students develop skills in curriculum areas such as meal planning, shopping, cooking, leisure skill development, socialization, on-line banking, budgeting, technology development and a variety of home care skills. Campus living extends into the community by accessing resources such as the local Y, library, various stores, local museums, shops and nature trails. Sports teams and nearby social/recreational clubs are available as well. In preparation for transition, teachers and Campus Living Coaches work with students to create a meaningful and personalized vision of the future and develop the skills needed to make it a reality.*

