Attending College While in a Program

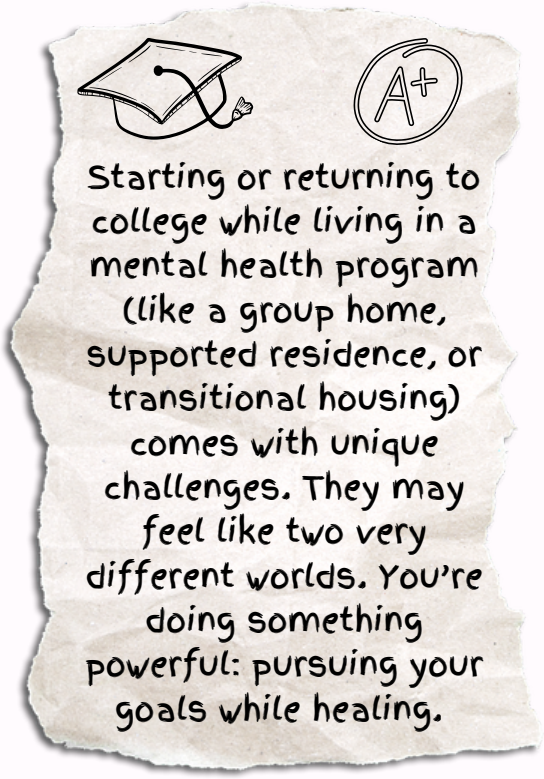
YOUTH MOVE MASSACHUSETTS

Balancing Recovery and School

You're doing two hard things at once: healing and higher education. That takes strength. Give yourself credit for showing up to both.

Communicate with your team:
Ensure they are aware of your class schedule and other important dates or information, if that feels helpful.

Don't overbook yourself:
If possible, start with a manageable course load (perhaps 1–2 classes) until you understand how it aligns with your mental health, healing, and program expectations.



Academic Success with Support

Use college disability services:
You might be eligible for accommodations such as extra time on tests, extended deadlines, flexible attendance, note-taking help, etc.

Ask for help early:
Professors and other faculty are used to students needing support. Attend office hours, send an email, or reach out before problems pile up.

Build a routine:
Programs often have structure. Use that to your advantage! Set study and homework times, schedule your classes and breaks, and incorporate self-care within that structure. Plan your day!

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Stay Connected

- Find one trusted staff member or peer to check in with about how school is going.
- Stay in touch with your supporters.
- Joining clubs on campus may offer a sense of belonging outside of your program.
- Consider connecting with a peer mentor.

It's okay if it takes longer.

Healing and school don't always move on the same timeline. Take breaks if you feel the need to. This does not mean you have failed.



You're allowed to dream.

Being in a program may feel limiting and hopeless, but you can accomplish more than you think. You're laying the groundwork for what's to come in the future.



Celebrate each step.

Going to school while living in a program is particularly challenging. Each class, assignment, or day you show up is a win.



Advocating for Yourself

You have a right to go to college.

Being in a program doesn't mean you can't pursue your education.

Don't let shame stop you.

You're not "behind" or "different," you're building your future.

Include education in your treatment goals.

Your team may be able to help with transportation, study space, or scheduling if they know your goals.

Remember: Communicate your needs. If you're feeling burned out, depressed, or overwhelmed, let your staff or therapist know. They're there to help you adjust.

PPAL
Parent/Professional Advocacy League, Inc.
www.ppal.net

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