



## **Students with Mental Illnesses: Tell Us Your Story!**

Education can be intrinsically meaningful and essential to achieving career and employment goals. Disruptions in one's academic career can be personally and professionally devastating.

The University of Pennsylvania Collaborative on Community Integration ([www.upennrrtc.org](http://www.upennrrtc.org)) is seeking stories from individuals asked to take a leave of absence or withdraw from a college, university or other educational program because of a mental illness. Individuals who are or were undergraduate and graduate students from colleges or universities, vocational or other trade programs can submit their stories. This information will be useful to us in developing training, policy and research initiatives to increase opportunities for students with mental illnesses to successfully achieve their academic goals.

### We are looking for stories that include the following information:

1. A brief description of your mental health history before and during your attendance of college or other educational program.
2. The name of the college, university or other institution you were attending at the time of the leave of absence or withdrawal.
3. The incident that led to your voluntary or involuntary leave of absence or withdrawal and a detailed description of the process, as well as the outcome (e.g., ended up staying, took the leave, withdrew).

4. A description of the process by which you sought re-admittance. If you did not seek re-admittance, please explain why.
5. The years in which the events took place.
6. Advice for other students in similar situations and suggestions for colleges, universities and other educational institutions regarding their policies for supporting students with mental illnesses.

The information that you submit will be confidential, if you so stipulate. Providing your contact information will enable us to contact you to learn more about your experience and ideas.

By submitting your story you give us permission to use it in part or in whole in trainings, presentations, and/or policy briefs. No identifying information about you will be included in any use of your story.

Please contact Lindsay Wick at [lwick@mail.med.upenn.edu](mailto:lwick@mail.med.upenn.edu) or at 215-349-8487 if you have a story and ideas that you would like to share with us that may eventually benefit policy makers and other parents with mental illnesses.

We look forward to hearing from you - thank you in advance for your contribution!

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The UPenn Collaborative on Community Integration is A Rehabilitation Research & Training Center Promoting Community Integration of Individuals with Psychiatric Disabilities, funded by the National Institute on Disability and Rehabilitation Research (NIDRR). For more information, please visit us at [www.upennrrtc.org](http://www.upennrrtc.org).

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