

How do I help prepare my child with the skills and knowledge to live as independently as possible?

It is important for your child to develop independent living skills early and to practice them often. This will prepare them for adult life. Some individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will be capable of living on their own and others will require some level of support throughout their lives. Think about the following independent living skills:

- Self-Care: personal hygiene, toileting, dressing, feeding
- Managing Health Needs: scheduling appointments, understanding health conditions, taking medications, and living a healthy lifestyle
- Home-Making Skills: cooking, cleaning, shopping
- Time Management and Organizational Skills: punctuality, prioritizing tasks, daily schedules
- Managing Money and Finances: budgeting, paying bills, making purchases using cash, debit or credit cards
- Community Living Skills: knowledge about services, interactions with others, asking for help, safety
- Employment & Vocation, Social Skills, and Transportation: (Refer to our Tip Sheets on these specific topics)

Think about how you can help your child take one step further towards doing a skill on their own.

1. Consider the thinking skills, physical skills (e.g., strength, coordination), and sensory skills that are required for the task.
2. If possible, help your child learn to do all or part of the task on their own.
 - First, demonstrate the task.
 - Second, have them do part of the task. You might start the task for them and they finish it.
 - Third, have them do the task while you supervise and provide a minimum amount of help.
3. Utilize visual aids and apps to help teach the skill. Schedule chores and tasks in daily calendars. Set auditory and visual reminders.
4. If you receive funding from FSCD or PDD, include independent living skills on the Individual Service Agreement or Plan. An occupational therapist can help you in assessing your child's level of functioning and to develop realistic goals (work/education, self-care, and leisure) and strategies to achieve them. For more information, refer to our "Funding" and "Therapies" Tip Sheets.

RESOURCES

The Resource Centre (a Sinneave Family Foundation initiative) does not endorse or guarantee the exhaustive, complete, accurate or up-to-date nature of information provided and does not assume any risk for the outcome of information or referrals provided.

APPS

First Then Visual Schedule

The First-Then visual schedule application is designed for caregivers to provide positive behavior support

Website: itunes.apple.com/ca/app/first-then-visual-schedule/id355527801?mt=8

The Conover Company: The Functional Planning System

The Functional Planning System is the first fully-customizable, video-based planning and prompting tool and provides a visual approach to daily planning.

Website: conovercompany.com/mobile/apps/fps

Autism Speaks: Autism Safety Project

The Autism Safety Project is designed to provide families affected by autism with tips, information, expert advice and resources so that everyone in the community can stay out of harm's way.

Website: autismspeaks.org/family-services/autism-safety-project

Momentum: Youth Fair Gains

A free workshop for youth ages 16-21. This is a 2-hour money saving workshop twice a month for 9 months. Momentum will match the money you save so you can earn while you learn. Learn money management skills, create a budget and build your savings, build your credit, and more.

Eligibility depends on household income; to see if you qualify, please visit the website.

Phone: 403.272.9323

Address: 1, 2936 Radcliffe Drive SE, Calgary, AB T2A 6M8

Email: info@momentum.org

Website: momentum.org/youth-fair-gains

Money Management: Money Mentors

An Alberta program that offers free online and in-person classes for learning how to budget, manage debt, increase savings, understand credit ratings, etc.

Phone: 1.888.294.0076

Address: Airstate Building, 150, 1200 - 59 Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2H 2M4

Website: moneymentors.ca

Pursuits: Skills for Life program for adults and adolescents with ASD

Pursuits are programs run by the Society for the Treatment of Autism (STA) and they take place at The Ability Hub. They offer various programs: for example, Skills for Life teaches self-care, homemaking, scheduling/making appointments, and other skills. The Post-Secondary Preparation Program includes career planning, independent living, budgeting, and time management skills.

Phone: 403.210.5000

Address: 300, 3820 – 24th Avenue NW, Calgary, AB T3B 2X9

Website: theabilityhub.org/initiatives/pursuits

Stepping into Life Inc.

Teaches L.I.F.E. Skills: address/telephone skills, community awareness, cooking, daily routines, job readiness, laundry, self-care & hygiene, and sports skills.

Phone: 403.399.9525 or 403.295.2010

Address: 59 Beddington Rise NE, Calgary AB T3K 1N1

Email: info@steppingintolife.ca

Website: steppingintolife.ca

The Ability Hub: The Resource Centre

Ambassadors in The Resource Centre have experience in working with clients to improve social communication, manage daily routines/scheduling, reduce prompting and develop independent living skills. They have experience in the use of iPad/iPod/iPhone technology and has investigated a variety of apps that can be tailored to meet individual client needs.

Contact: Ambassadors @ The Resource Centre
Phone: 403.210.5000 or 1.888.733.7976
Email: ambassador@sinneavefoundation.org

The Teenage Survival Guide

An online forum and education site with comics explaining with various topics such as body changes, getting a job, money management, cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. It also offers an interactive 'Ask Andy' component.

Website: teenagesurvival.com

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