Imagine swimming for 18 years like this........
Now imagine trying to swim with the life jacket taken away ......
Learning to be Independent doesn’t happen over night

- Learning to do things on your own, like learning to swim, takes time and begins with a single step.
When should I start?

- As early as possible
- Many of these life skills are completed within the home
- Start with simple self-care skills, picking up toys, and so forth.
- It is very important for the family to establish expectations early
- This helps create a sense of responsibility for the completion of everyday activities.
If you don’t start early???

- If we do not establish expectations early, then it becomes more difficult later to teach these skills because the youngster is not used to having to do chores or fulfill responsibilities.

Age Appropriate

• It is important for skills that we teach to be age-appropriate, that is, appropriate to what someone of that age would or should do

• Just ask yourself: "What would I expect any young person of this age to do within the home, regardless of disability?"
Age-Appropriate Chores for Children

Ages 2-3
- Put toys in toy box
- Stack books on shelf
- Place dirty clothes in laundry hamper
- Throw trash away
- Carry firewood
- Fold washcloths
- Set the table
- Fetch diapers & wipes
- Dust baseboards

Ages 4-5
- Feed pets
- Wipe up spills
- Put away toys
- Make the bed
- Straighten bedroom
- Water houseplants
- Sort clean silverware
- Prepare simple snacks
- Use hand-held vacuum
- Clear kitchen table
- Dry and put away dishes
- Disinfect doorknobs

Ages 6-7
- Gather trash
- Fold towels
- Dust mop floors
- Empty dishwasher
- Match clean socks
- Weed garden
- Rake leaves
- Peel potatoes or carrots
- Make salad
- Replace toilet paper roll

Ages 8-9
- Load dishwasher
- Change light bulbs
- Wash laundry
- Hang/fold clean clothes
- Dust furniture
- Spray off patio
- Put groceries away
- Scramble eggs
- Bake cookies
- Walk dogs
- Sweep porches
- Wipe off table

Ages 10-11
- Clean bathrooms
- Vacuum rugs
- Clean countertops
- Deep clean kitchen
- Prepare simple meal
- Mow lawn
- Bring in mail
- Do simple mending (hems, buttons, etc.)
- Sweep out garage

Ages 12 and up
- Mop floors
- Change overhead lights
- Wash/vacuum car
- Trim hedges
- Paint walls
- Shop for groceries w/list
- Cook complete dinner
- Bake bread or cake
- Do simple home repairs
- Wash windows
- Iron clothes
- Watch younger siblings
Another Challenge

• To teach the young person to complete their home living responsibilities with less and less supervision from parents and other family members.

• When children are young, they will need a lot of parent teaching and feedback on the completion of their responsibilities.

• As they age and mature, they should require less family assistance and should start to initiate and complete activities on their own.
Try to avoid this!

PUSH ME!

MOM!

WELL? I'M WAITING!

THE LITTLE ENGINE WHOSE PARENTS DID EVERYTHING FOR HIM
“Teach me and I’ll forget. Show me and I may remember. Involve me and I’ll learn.”

-Benjamin Franklin
How do I do this?????

- Checklists in written and picture form
- Provide opportunities to practice
- “Live out Loud”
- Use naturally occurring opportunities
Checklists in written and picture form

Daily Checklist

Student: ________________________________  Week: ________________________________
Activity: ________________________________

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>What do I need to do?</th>
<th>Monday</th>
<th>Tuesday</th>
<th>Wednesday</th>
<th>Thursday</th>
<th>Friday</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Total completed:

✓ = I did this!!!  × = I did not do this!

Form 7.6. Daily Checklist.

Sample Morning Checklist

☐ Wake Up
☐ Eat breakfast in the kitchen
☐ Clean up breakfast
☐ Take shower
☐ Hang towel
☐ Put on deodorant
☐ Brush teeth
☐ Make bed
☐ Get school bag ready
☐ Catch the bus – off to school!
Brush on Bottom
Brush on Right
Brush on Left
Brush Teeth
Brush on Top
Brush Bottom Right
Brush Top Left
Brush Top Right
Brush Bottom Left

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Let them practice

It may get messy

Use safety
Live out loud

• Talk out loud about the activity you are doing
• Say why you are doing it
• Talk out the steps
Use Naturally Occurring Opportunities

When you are doing the task

As part of a family activity
Naturally Occurring Opportunities

When it has to be done

As part of a routine
Now that you know how, here are what skills to teach......

- **Self-care**
  - Grooming
  - Food preparation & eating
  - Getting Dressed
  - Sleep routines
  - Handling emergencies
  - Housekeeping
  - Personal Safety

- **Interpersonal Skills**
  - Communication
  - Asking for help
  - Time management

- **Community Living**
  - Money skills
  - Transportation
  - Obtaining goods
Self-care

• Imagine your daily routine......

• What tasks do you have to do?
Here are a few things......

• Wake up and get out of bed
• Go to the bathroom
• Wash your hands
• Take a shower or bath
• Comb your hair
• Get dressed- appropriately
• Prepare a meal
• Set the table
• Eat the meal
• Clean the dishes
• Make your bed

• Taking medicine
• Blowing your nose
• Using a Band-Aid
• Brush your teeth
• Get your house ready for you to leave
• Putting on shoes
• Put together what you need to take with you
• Make sure pets are cared for
Then there is.......

- Cleaning
  - Vacuuming
  - Mopping
  - Sweeping
  - Dishes
  - Bathroom
  - Laundry
  - Dusting
  - Emptying trash can
How do you even know how to start???

• Age- appropriate
• Don’t try and teach everything at once
• Choose an activity to focus on
• Put in motivators if necessary
• Break it down and start with single steps
• Be consistent!!!!
You can break down any task

- Watch someone else do the task or you do the task
- Write down the steps
- Read out the steps and have someone else (or you) do the steps *as they have been written!*
- Fix any mistakes and then you are ready to start
Self-care----- Washing hands

• Turn on water
• Get hands wet
• Put soap on hands
• Rub hands together
• Rinse hands under water
• Turn off water
• Dry hands with towel
Interpersonal Skills- Greetings

- Walk up to person you want to talk to
- Stop one arm length away
- Look at their eyes while you count to three
- Say “Hi”
- Smile at the person
Community Living-vending machine

- Count how much money you have to spend
- Walk up to the vending machine and look at the choices
- Make a choice
- Put money into the machine
- Push the appropriate button
- Look for item to be dispensed
- Get your change if needed
- Get your item
- Move away from machine so others can use it.
Why is all of this so important?

• **The Dignity of Risk: A Poem**
• *What if you never got to make a mistake?*
• *What if your money was always kept in an envelope where you couldn’t get it?*
• *What if you were never given a chance to do well at something?*
• *What if you were always treated like a child?*
• *What if your only chance to be with people different from you was with your own family?*
• *What if the job you did was not useful?*
• What if you never got to make a decision?
• What if the only risky thing you could do was to act out?
• What if you took the wrong bus once and now you aren’t allowed to take another one?
• What if you had no privacy?
• What if you could do part of the grocery shopping, but weren’t allowed to do any because you weren’t able to do all the shopping?
• What if you spent three hours of every day just waiting?
• What if you grew old and never knew adulthood?
• What if you never got a chance?

• -Author Unknown
Remember each day brings unlimited chances to learn!!!
Resources

• Transition Assessments

• Free PECS

• Autism Speaks Transition Tool Kit

• Autism Speaks

• Ten ways to build independence from preschool-high-school
Don’t be discouraged!

- What will the new year bring us?
- 365 opportunities