



The Road to Independence

Robin Miller, CSISD
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Where do we begin?

- *Safety: Protecting Your Young Adult from Abuse and Neglect*
- *The Safety Net: Building a Supportive Community*
- *Consider Age Norms: Are There Any Skill Areas You've Overlooked?*
- *What Are Their Goals?*
- *Soft Skills: What Are You Nagging Them About or Doing for Them?*

Abuse and Neglect

- Individuals who require support within their daily functional routines are at risk for abuse and neglect.
- Is your child or teen resisting any self-care routines?
- Does he fight having his teeth brushed? Does she avoid showering or washing her hair? Is he frightened of any self-care routines like haircuts or shaving?
- Does your child or teen ask for help or clarification when needed?
- Is she too passive?
- Hint: Begin with the routines that you find most tiring or frustrating.

Approaches

- *Desensitization: Gradual exposure to an aversive activity, paired with positive experiences, to gradually reduce the person's anxiety.*
- <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=baKodWU-ls0>
- *Visual Schedules with Silent Prompting*
- *Pivotal Response: Provide a script for asking for help or clarification, and then set your child up to want or need something. Don't anticipate their needs. Wait for them to use the script to ask.*

Create a Reference at Your Child's Reading Level: Who Can You Call For...

- Emergencies
- A Ride
- Small Home Repairs
- Help with Medications/Dr. Visits
- Companionship
- Outings
- Money Management
- Advice for Resolving Conflicts at Work
- Relationship Advice
- Help with Groceries or Shopping
- Solving Practical Problems
- Embarrassing Questions
- Accessing or Managing Services

Tips:

- Give them multiple people for each item.
- If needed, set limits for how often they can call each person.
- Set up multiple ways to contact people, if possible.
- Build capacity beyond the family, and make sure you don't just include your friends. They need support from age-peers, too!
- Practice now. Gradually transfer ownership of each item.
- Remember, a key part of growing up is not turning to Mom or Dad every time you need help!

Eating:

- Feeding themselves
- Setting/clearing the table
- Making snacks
- Making simple meals
- Washing dishes by hand
- Loading/unloading the dishwasher
- Heating food in the microwave
- Heating food on the stovetop
- Using the oven
- Following package directions
- Following simple recipes
- Making shopping lists
- Grocery shopping

Grooming and Dressing:

- Taking clothes off
- Putting clothes on
- Choosing clothes that match and are appropriate for the season/occasion
- Putting clothes in the laundry
- Washing clothes and putting them away
- Buying clothes
- Brushing teeth
- Brushing hair
- Bathing/showering
- Washing hair
- Shaving
- Using deodorant
- Trimming nails
- Buying toiletries

Toileting

- *Completing the toileting routine independently and in private*
- *Washing hands and keeping nails clean*
- *Managing menstrual needs*
- *Cleaning the bathroom and emptying the trash*
- *Using public restrooms safely*
- *Buying toilet paper, menstrual supplies, etc.*

Other Household Routines

- Making the bed
- Cleaning the bedroom
- Vacuuming
- Sweeping and mopping
- Dusting
- Emptying the trash
- Taking the trash to the curb
- Setting an alarm
- Cleaning up after yourself in common areas
- Using the phone
- Yard work
- Budgeting and paying bills
- Safety procedures
- Managing medication and first aid
- Transportation

Techniques

- Labeling drawers, cabinets, etc.
- Organization systems in drawers, cabinets, etc. with labels or jigs.
- Photo album schedules
- Jigs
- Making housework more visible
- Task lists
- Chore charts
- Calendars
- Calendars, apps, and alarms on phones
- Adaptive equipment
- Pre-measured recipes and buildable recipes
- Video models (YouTube!)
- Apps

Setting Priorities

Their Goals

- Where does your child see herself in 5 or 10 years?
- What is most important to his quality of life?
- What does she really need access to in order to be happy?

Soft Skills

- For one day, track everything you do for your child, and everything you nag about.
- Keep track of awkward moments for a week.
- Are there any places or situations that your family avoids? Why?