

Helping Your Teen to Independence

"The more independent our students are, even in small ways, the better care they will get." Tom Neary, Special Education Program Specialist

The job of all parents is to help their child become as independent as possible. Your teen with special needs will need to learn many self help skills for the adult world. Not all of the skills we have listed will be something that every child can achieve. These worksheets are meant as general guidelines for you in helping your teen make the transition to adulthood. Use them to give yourself a better idea of skills your teen currently has or needs to work on. If your child needs help to perform a skill, please describe the help needed.

Insurance			
<i>Skill</i>	<i>Can Do Independently</i>	<i>Can Do W/ Help Describe</i>	<i>Needs Someone To Do This</i>
Knows insurance plan name, address, case manager contact information and is responsible for insurance ID card			
Providers			
Knows names of primary care providers (dentist, specialists) and how to contact			
Knows how to make medical appointments			
Knows how to order medications from pharmacy, equipment from providers, etc.			
Keeps summary medical file			
Has an adult (non-pediatric) doctor			

Medical Care/Health Skills

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Can Do Independently</i>	<i>Can Do W/ Help Describe</i>	<i>Needs Someone To Do This</i>
Describes his/her medical condition(s)			
Understands how his/her special need affects daily life			
Can prepare and ask questions of health care providers			
Knows: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. The medications he/she takes 2. When to take them 3. What they are for 4. How to refill them 			
Can perform own treatments, therapy or exercises			
Can manage own diet			
Can call or go on-line to make appointments for medical or dental care			
Can recognize signs & symptoms which require a doctor or dentist visit, such as infection, breathing problems, skin breakdown, urinary tract infection, high fever, allergic reaction, toothache			
Can recognize signs & symptoms of medical emergency and can activate EMS (Emergency Medical System)			
Knows what equipment he/she uses, what is does and who to contact for repairs			
Understands basic sexuality concepts <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Physical changes 2. Menstruation 3. Acne 4. Sexuality 5. Pregnancy 6. STDs 			
Knows about alcohol, tobacco, and drugs			
Has someone to talk to when feels sad			

Independent Living/Self-Advocacy

<i>Skill</i>	<i>Can Do Independently</i>	<i>Can Do W/ Help Describe</i>	<i>Needs Someone To Do This</i>
Can interview, hire, instruct, evaluate, terminate attendant			
Has appropriate social skills			
Understands about inappropriate touching or actions and who to tell if it happens			
Has driver's license or state ID card			
Able to pay for item(s) in store or restaurant			
Able to use public transportation			
Has safe, affordable housing			
Can budget money and pay bills			
Self Care			
Use toilet (clean, intermittent catheterization or bowel program)			
Shower or bathe			
Brush teeth			
Brush hair			
Inspect skin for breakdown			
Mobility			
Ambulate independently			
Ambulate with use of aids			
Use wheelchair independently			
Transfer			

Eating			
<i>Skill</i>	<i>Can Do Independently</i>	<i>Can Do W/ Help</i>	<i>Needs Someone To Do This</i>
Feed self			
Shop for food			
Cook food			
Dressing			
Dress independently			
Chooses appropriate clothing for occasion and weather			
Household Chores			
Launders clothes			
Washes dishes			
Makes bed			
Uses telephone			
Jobs & Post-Secondary Education & Training			
Can use a computer, search the internet, word process			
Can advocate for self regarding accommodations needed in school, work, community or home			
Has a resume			
Can complete a job application and can interview for a job			
Has obtained vocational training or performed volunteer service			
Has developed the interpersonal skills necessary to maintain employment			
Knows how to apply and register for college			
Knows how to access disability support and counseling services			
Recreation & Leisure			
Has developed a variety of recreation & leisure skills			
Has spectator or audience member skills			
Can identify affordable recreation & leisure activities			
Can arrange social activities			
Has identified social supports through family, peer group, mentors, community resources			