

# Encouraging Independence and Self-Reliance



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**YOUNG MAN WITH A DISABILITY**

# Lets look at the ability not the disability

- Just because there is a disability does not mean:
  - Lack of ability
  - Excuse to not do something
  - Not needing to inform
  - That something is to hard



"I have not been handicapped by my condition. I am physically challenged and differently able." -**Janet Barnes**

# As we grow expectations change

- "Having no expectations shows pity, which shows sadness, sorrow & regret. A child with a disability needs support. Stand behind him, champion and back him! Believe in him and have expectations! They inspire hope, excitement, eagerness and success! Which would you want others to give you?" - **Joan Scanlon-Dise**

# Where do we begin

- At a young age we encourage independence
  - Getting dressed
  - Climbing
  - Feeding themselves
  - Talking
  - Playing by themselves



# As we grow....

We expect more and more

Everyday is an opportunity to do more

- Texting/phone calls/ emailing
- Ordering food
- Helping around the house
- Making choices
- Expressing wants and needs
- Responsibilities

We, the one's who are challenged, need to be heard. To be seen not as a disability, but as a person who has, and will continue to bloom. To be seen not only as a handicap, but as a well intact human being." -

**By Robert M. Hensel**



# It's a process!

Start as a collaborative effort

Teach skills step by step, breaking them down to parts if need be

Add more steps to the task after mastering previous parts

Make sure tasks are age appropriate

Being able to help with a part of something, is better than not doing anything at all!

When you encourage others, you in the process are encouraged because you're making a commitment and difference in that person's life.

Encouragement really does make a difference.

**Zig Ziglar**

# Work in progress

## Do this with me, not for me

- @ Work together, to help build them up
- @ Be supportive when working toward the goals
- @ Learn limits
- @ Not everything is done the same way
- @ Prepare for the unexpected



"Disability is a matter of perception. If you can do just one thing well, you're needed by someone."

-- Martina Navratilova



Everyone should have tasks at home!

This makes you feel like part of the family and that you belong!

For me, I never ever felt the ownership or any identity with any community of disabilities. I didn't grow up being told that I was a disabled child.

**Aimee Mullins**

# My tasks at home!

Get the mail

Yard Work

Water Plants

Meal Prep

Garbage

Help with Siblings

Animal Care

Dishes

Cleaning

Medications

Laundry

Do homework

Picking up Toys

Help with Bills

Empty Dishwasher



# Community

Refilling medications  
Scheduling appointments  
Using a calendar  
Looking up information ( addresses, phone numbers)  
Attending Appointments independently  
Attending Social functions  
Joining leagues, groups, activities  
Having friends over  
Going to restaurants  
Volunteering  
Faith Based Groups  
Connecting with Service organization/service providers  
Recreational activities- walking, biking, games, playing cards

I'm definitely a people person. I love socializing and being around people and having a good conversation.

Emily Deschanel

# You need to eat

Kitchen Safety

Learn about cooking Utensils

Meal preparation

Setting the table

Finding recipes

Following recipes

Making grocery lists

Going grocery shopping

Meal planning

Making a complete meal

Price comparing when shopping

Simple vs complex meals



Cooking with kids is not just about ingredients, recipes, and cooking. It's about harnessing imagination, empowerment, and creativity.

Guy Fieri

# Look Good Feel Good

What we as parents think looks good is not always the case

- Go shopping together
- Encourage as much independence as possible when dressing, showering and shopping
- Help explain safety reasons of why to not dress certain ways
- Help teach why hygiene is important
- Dress for the occasion
- Make visual cues to help with the process
  - Showering
  - Getting dressed
  - Doing Laundry



“I want everyone to wear what they want and mix it in their own way. That, to me, is what is modern.”

— [Karl Lagerfeld](#)

# Relationships

**People with autism, disability or brain injury face the same issues as other people when it comes to relationships.** Friendship is important. And the desire to love and be loved, whether as a friend or an intimate companion, is a drive that defines a person in a way that no disability ever can. People with a disability need to gain the skills and rules that help to form relationships as this has such a positive impact on our lives.

- Be open and honest
- Talk about friendship, versus dating
- If not comfortable talking about it, find someone who is
- Knowledge may be needed to keep people safe
- Even if you don't think they are thinking about it, they probably are!
- Where and when appropriate to talk about relationships
- Social/Physical Cues
- Respecting Peoples Space and Privacy

# Money, Money, Money

- Teach about checkbooks, checkcards, and check registers
- Go over household bills
- Have child help you pay bills
- Put 1 bill in child's name ( helps to build credit as well) or make up a bill that they can pay you for ( their share of a cell phone)
- Teach about credit cards
- Help with setting a monthly budget
- Go over how to use a bank statement or credit card bill
- Talk about credit card safety and interest rates
- Give them so much money a month, and work with them on budgeting it ( gas, food, entertainment) when money is out, don't give more!
- Make a calendar of when bills are due, and when they should be paid
- Practice with cash and making change

My cell phone bill and my cable gets cut off all the time. Not because I don't have the money, but because I just forget to pay my bills.

Erin Cummings

# Getting around

- If possible take drivers training while under 18, as it is not required once a person is over 18
- Look into specialized driver evaluations
- Research transportation options in the area, including cab services, and volunteer driver programs
- Have child request rides ahead of time to learn how to schedule
- Look into car pooling options
- Look into personalized bus training if there is a bus in your community
- Talk about safe routes for walking and biking



# Rules and Expectations

Freedom without rules doesn't work. And communities do not work unless they are regulated by etiquette.

## Judith Martin

In the home and community rules are necessary.

Provide curfews, to learn how to keep track of time and for Safety

Have deadlines for task completion to earn activities

Limit phone usage and look at text messages randomly

Limit computer time and teach about computer safety, look at what sites they have been on if need be

Teach responsibilities in the community, how you treat others

Teach not to share passwords and look at privacy setting on social media

Accountability to demonstrate age/ ability appropriate behavior

Consequences are needed as well

Make consequence relate to the broken rule

Be consistent if following through on what you said

\*\*There is a fine line of invasion of privacy and keeping them safe\*\*

*Helps with job skills*

# While at school

## Disability awareness

Student should know that they have a disability

Student should be able to talk about their disability

As student grows they should be able to identify and ask for accommodations as needed

Attend IEP meeting starting about middle school

Student lead IEP as they get older

Look at academic classes that

Interest them

Will help with gaining independence

If going to tech or college, are required for eligibility

Ask about school to work transition classes

Join clubs or sports for socialization and skill building

Ask about assistive technology that may be useful for student, explore different options



Make sure teachers know about all disabilities: This may include seizures, wearing glasses, wearing hearing aids, ADD & anxiety, among others.

# Work, it's more than just somewhere we go

- Many of the skills discussed are pre work skills
- Volunteering will help build skills ( can be with a group, or individually)
- Learn about community resources to help with finding employment
- On the job experiences during the summer or while in school
- Expectations of working, does not need to be full time!
- Career exploration- on the job shadows, or worksite tours
- Can interests lead to a career
- Business creation
- Provides socialization opportunities as well
- It's not always about the money

## Agencies that can help

- Workforce Resource
- Division of Vocational Rehabilitation
- Employment staffing services ( temp agencies)
- Job coaches
- Job placement vendors
- Work experience job sites

# Assistive Technology

Explore assistive technology for:

In the home

In the community

At work

Helping with school work

Recreation

"I have had this desire my whole life to prove people wrong, to show them I could do things they didn't think I could do." - David A.

Paterson

# Leaving Home

The plan: Grow up and move out! This is desired by most.

Moving out does not always mean living alone

Roommates

Apartment in basement of house

Group Homes

Service providers that come into the home

Supportive Homecare

Home healthcare

State programs to assist with costs

Family Care

IRIS or Managed Care

Must be 18, have Medicaid , have a disability determination and qualify through a functional screen

Representative Payee Services

Guardianship

It's a process, explore the options, partial move out own home during the day, family home at night, and move towards full time at own place

**I`m a teenager, but I`m independent - I have my own apartment, I have my own life. And I think I have learned more than any of those teenagers have in school. I learned to be responsible, leaving my family and coming here alone" - Adriana Lima**

*“A true friend knows your weaknesses but shows you your strengths; feels your fears but fortifies your faith; sees your anxieties but frees your spirit; recognizes your disabilities but emphasizes your possibilities.”*

*William Arthur Ward  
(American dedicated scholar, author, editor, pastor and teacher)*

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