

Increasing Independence

Helping Our Kids Help Themselves

Presented By

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Tonight's Essential Questions



- What skills does my child need to be the most independent he/she can be?
- How do skills build upon each other as my child grows up?
- How do I know what my child can do?
- How can I teach and support new skills?
- How do I know how much help and support to provide?

The Big Picture

As our children learn and grow, we must think about the big picture in developing their independence.

No matter what a child's path will be, there are essential skills that set our children up for success.

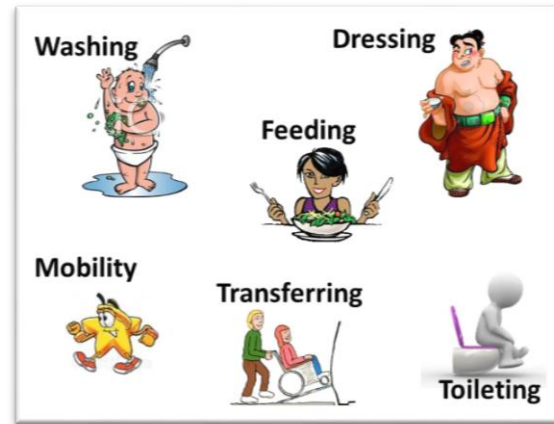


Necessary Skills for Maximum Independence

Activities of Daily Living Skills (ADL)

Self-care tasks that include:

- Personal care
- Household tasks
- Money management
- Food preparation
- Mobility and getting around
- Shopping



Executive Functioning Skills

- Paying attention
- Planning and organizing
- Initiating and completing tasks
- Flexible thinking
- Regulating emotions
- Self-control
- Self-Monitoring



ADL Skills through the Years

Personal Care

Childhood



- Getting dressed
- Bathing
- Brushing hair
- Washing hands
- Brushing teeth

Adolescence



- Dressing for the weather
- Selecting matching clothes
- Showering
- Washing/drying hair
- Brushing and styling hair, shaving

Young Adult

- Dressing for the right occasion
- Caring for clothes
- Showering on a frequent schedule
- Grooming
- Caring for teeth
- Doctors appointments



How do executive functioning skills play a part in these tasks?

ADL Skills through the Years

Food Preparation

Childhood



- Setting the table
- Using cutlery
- Using napkin
- Knowing food groups
- Knowing likes/dislikes

Adolescence



- Recognizing hunger – meal vs. snack
- Reading a recipe
- Using appliances/tools
- Planning a meal
- Preparing basic foods
- Learning kitchen safety

Young Adult

- Reading a recipe
- Gathering ingredients
- Measuring
- Preparing a healthy/balanced meal
- Using appliances
- Cooking/storing food at correct temperature



How do executive functioning skills play a part in these tasks?

ADL Skills through the Years

Time Management

Childhood



- Recognizing day/night
- What tasks are associated with day/night
- Learning to tell time
- Starting and finishing a task

Adolescence



- Planning a task
- Budgeting time
- Managing assignments
- Getting to school/class on time
- Meeting due dates

Young Adult

- Setting an alarm
- Waking up on time
- Identifying a reasonable bed time
- Getting to work on time
- Planning and executing a task
- Setting up a schedule or daily planner
- Negotiating public transportation



How do executive functioning skills play a part in these tasks?

Teaching and Supporting Skill Development

How do we know if we're helping too much or too little?

Primary Question

Can my child do
the task without
help?

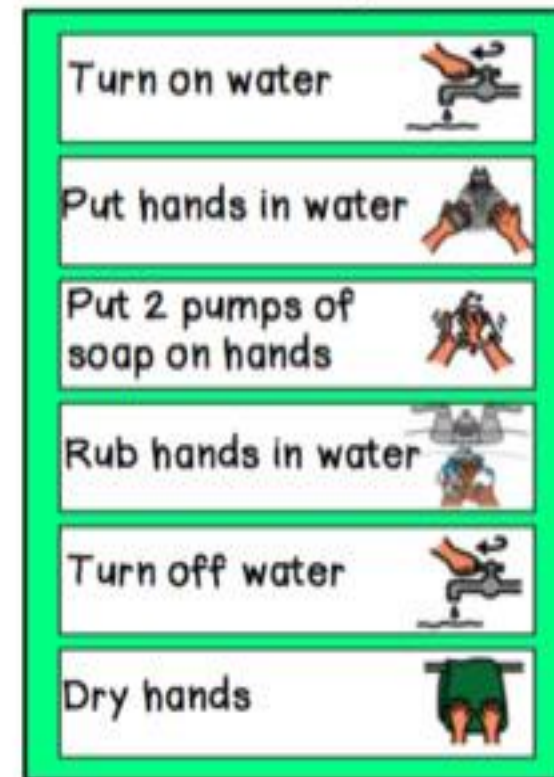


How do you
know?

Task Analyses for Skill Development

- A task analysis is a breakdown of a task into small steps, creating a **chain** of small behaviors
- When looking at the smaller steps of a task, we can see what specific steps a child can do independently and what steps need more support
- Task analyses can be used for a variety of multi-step tasks at home, in school and at a workplace

Handwashing Routine Task Analysis



Creating a Task Analysis

1. Determine what skill you want to develop greater independence (ex. getting dressed, hygiene, homework completion)
2. Breakdown the skill into small steps
3. Make sure the task breakdown is accurate
4. Observe your child doing the task and mark which steps they can do independently
5. Steps that are not independent are those that will need your help to teach



Activity Time!

Practice creating your own task analysis

To Do:

1. Pick a task to breakdown:

- Making a PB & J Sandwich
- Getting dressed
- Setting the table

2. Write down all of the steps

3. Check for accuracy

(we will share with the group)

Skill Development for Independence

What type of help should we give and how?

Prompting

- A prompt is something that is **added** to a situation to help a person learn and use new skills in order to gain independence
- A prompt is used only when a person is not successfully or consistently completing the step on their own
- Prompts provide support to **successfully** initiate or complete a task



Types of Prompts



How are executive functioning skills aided by these prompts?

Physical

- Hand-over-hand
- Light guidance
- Tap

Gestural

- Point
- Head nod
- Looking in a direction

Model

- Demonstrating a skill
- Watching a video

Verbal

- Saying the direction

Visual

- Picture cues
- Timers
- Schedule

Textual

- Written words (ex. stop)
- Lists
- Calendars
- Planners

Prompting Precautions

- **Over-prompting**

- Leads to dependence on prompts or others to initiate or complete a task

- **Under-prompting**

- Leads to frustration due to lack of skill development and unsuccessful attempts



**Use your
task
analysis!**

How do you
know?

Deciding Which Prompts to Use

- You know your child best!
 - Knowing which skills they can/can't do physically will help you decide
- Use the least intrusive prompt that still leads to success
- Once a prompt is added and utilized a few times, begin to take a step back
 - Ex. If you are using hand-over-hand to turn on the water, take a step back and try guiding them to the faucet at the elbow. Then, take a step back and point to the faucet.
 - Continue to take steps back by providing less prompts, such as using verbal directions and visuals

Example of Task Analysis with Prompts



What can the child do independently?

Where can we try taking a step back?

Prompts:

P = Full Physical

V = Full Verbal

M = Model

PP = Partial Physical

PV = Partial Verbal

PM = Partial Model

+ = Correct w/No Prompt

NR = No Response

- = Incorrect

Date:	9/20/27	9/21/27	9/21/27	9/21/27					
Turn on Water	+	+	+	+					
Hands in Water	+	+	+	+					
Pump Soap		P	P	PP					
Rub Hands		P	P	PP					
Rinse Hands		P	P	+					
Turn Off Water		P	P	P					
Get Paper Towel		P	P	PP					
Dry Hands		P	P	P					
Throw Away Paper Towel		P	P	+					
# of Steps Independent	2	2	2	4					
% Correct	22%	22%	22%	44%					

Task Analysis: Sending an Email



What can the child do independently?



What kind of prompts can we provide?

Student Name:	Baseline	
Date:		
Key: I = Independent / P = Prompt Key: . = correct / X = incorrect		
Open Internet Browser	+	
Open Email website		
Sign in username		
Enter password		
Open inbox	+	
Compose new message	+	
Type Letter: greeting	+	
Type Letter: introduction		
Type Letter: body		
Type Letter: closing sentence		
Type Letter: sign name	+	
Send Email	+	
% accuracy		
% independent		
Total % accurate & independent		

Putting it All Together



- Teaching and developing skills at a young age builds a strong foundation
- The stronger the foundation, the more a child can layer their skills and become independent
- To figure out what skills need support, create a task analysis to determine level of independence at each step
- Use prompts to teach skills that need support and then take small steps back as your child demonstrates success
- Being able to perform tasks successfully leads to greater confidence and independence

Resources

Website that provides a magnitude of resources pertaining to learning, attention, executive functioning, supporting independence at school and home, and more!

www.understood.org

Adaptive Living Skills Checklist

<https://www.esc3.net/cms/lib/TX00001506/Centricity/Domain/14/Independent%20Living%20Skills%20Checklist.pdf>

Nighttime Routine Checklists for Younger and Older Children

<https://www.understood.org/en/learning-attention-issues/child-learning-disabilities/executive-functioning-issues/download-bedtime-checklists-for-kids-with-executive-functioning-issues>

Google Search

Google “visual task analysis for _____” to find printable versions

