



Building Independence In Your Child

February 22, 2022

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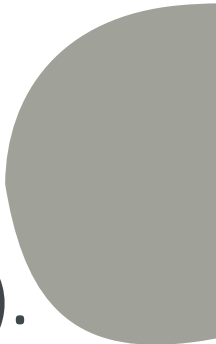
Defining Independence

“It’s essential we educate our children for the life they will lead as adults. For safety, wellbeing and the ability to control their direction in life. Independence will be a sliding scale for many children but we need to enhance this wherever possible. Independence skills is a key area where parent/teacher partnership is essential.”



Source: [InclusiveTeach.com](https://www.inclusiveteach.com)

Ten Ways to Build Independence

1. Strengthen Communication
 2. Introduce a Visual Schedule
 3. Work on Self-Care Skills
 4. Teach child to ask for a break.
 5. Work on household Chores (school routines).
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Ten Ways to Build Independence cont...

6. Practice Money Skills

7. Teach Community Safety Skills

8. Build Leisure Skills

9. Teach Self-Care during Adolescence

10. Work on Vocational Skills

1. Strengthen Communication

- Develop systems for functional communication (Functional in this context means, that it is understood by others and it helps the child communicate effectively).
- When your child is working on homework (avoid sitting next to them) provide some support and step away.
- If your child is non-verbal you can provide him/her with visuals (pictures) of items they can request.
- When your child is attempting to communicate with other, provide support in a seamless way and fade the support as quickly as possible (**least to most intrusive prompting**)

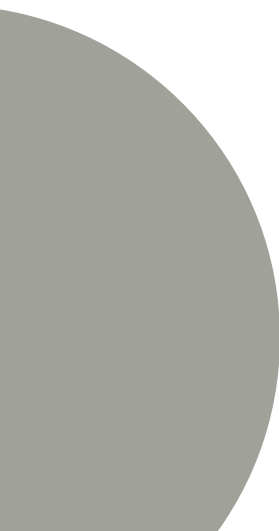
Prompting

- ❖ Additional help given to a child to ensure a correct response.
- ❖ Assistance with using specific skills

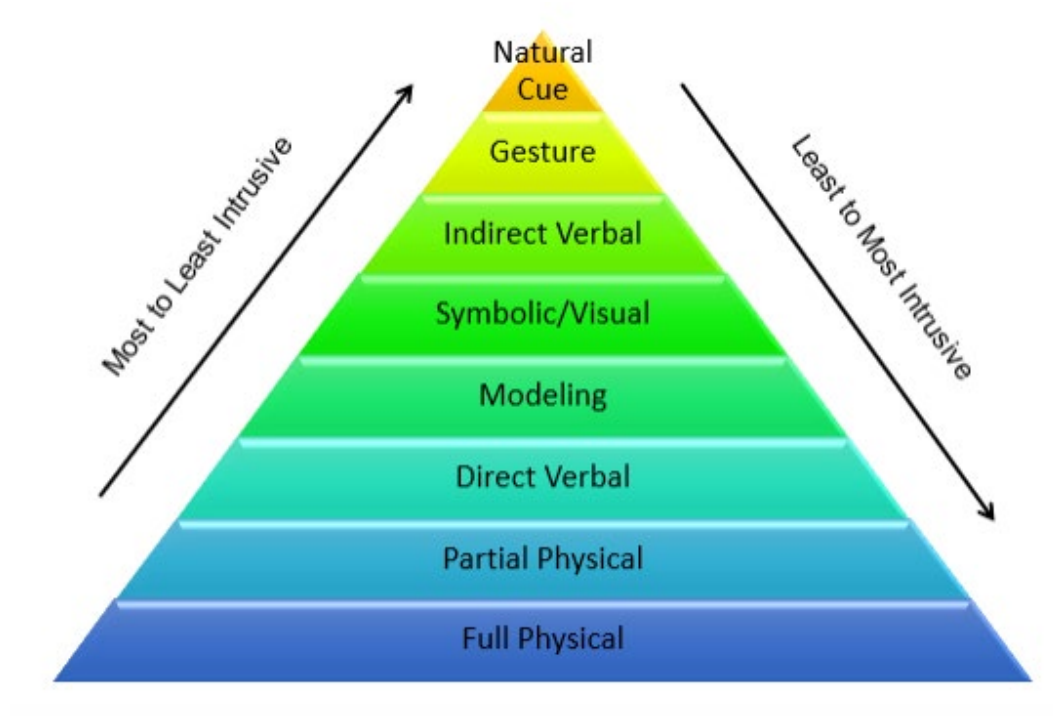


● Why Use Prompting?

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- Assists children who have difficulties learning social, communicative, adaptive, and cognitive skills.
 - Children with ASD may struggle to acquire skills through imitation only.
 - Helps children begin to utilize skills independently.
 - Helps a child feel good about a response because they get it RIGHT!
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- A large, solid grey circle is located on the left side of the slide, partially cut off by the edge.

Prompting Hierarchy



PROMPT HIERARCHY

Prompt Hierarchy (link)

2. Introduce A Visual Schedule

- Visual schedules help build independence, as it requires less verbal prompting from adults.
- The child can be reminded to check what their morning or afternoon routine looks like and what they are responsible for.
- Overtime, the child will rely less and less on their visual scheduled and will be able to independently complete routines and increase independence.



3. Work On Self - Care Skills

- ❑ Introduce self - care skills such as brushing teeth, combing hair, toileting, eating, dressing etc into your child's daily routine to build independence.
- ❑ Make sure to include these things in your child's schedule so they get used to having them as part of a daily routine.
- ❑ You can teach the skills by role playing, having them observe others or using **task analysis**.

Task Analysis

Process of defining ALL of the steps necessary for an individual child to learn a specific task.

- ❖ When you do a Task Analysis, you're looking at the *process* and not just the final *product*
- ❖ Breaking down a skill or behavior into a series of SEQUENTIALLY ORDERED STEPS OR TASKS
- ❖ Useful when working on self-help skills
- ❖ Must be individualized according to AGE, SKILL LEVEL, AND PRIOR EXPERIENCE of the person in question.

Task Analysis

Brushing Teeth

EXAMPLE: Play

Brush Teeth



Get toothbrush,
toothpaste, and floss



Wet toothbrush



Put toothpaste on brush



Brush teeth



Brush front of teeth



Brush back of teeth



Brush tongue



Spit in sink



Floss teeth



Throw away floss



4. Teach Children to Ask for a Break

“The most important area of development for children is that of self determinant. Research has show than children with disabilities who have developed skills of self determination are more successful in college and/or in the working world, no matter how significant their disability and their limited skills in other areas”

Indicators of success: Self-Determination

- Know when they need help and can ask for help from adults or peers (self-advocacy)
- Teach children to plan and pace themselves. Requesting a break can help child refocus.
- Learning to request a break when they feel overwhelmed helps with choice and decision making.

5. Work on Household/School Chores

- ❑ Household chores and responsibilities can be approached similar to teaching self-care skills.
- ❑ Get them involved in family routines and impart useful skills to take with them as they get older.
- ❑ If they have difficulty understanding how to complete a chore, consider using a task analysis to breakdown the task.

Visuals to Chores Around the House



setting the table



Put place mat on the table.



Place the napkin on the place mat at the left.



Put the fork on the napkin.



Put the plate in the centre of the place mat.



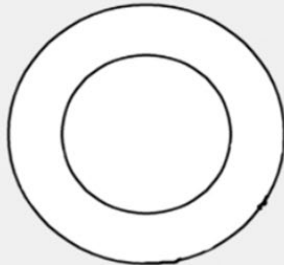
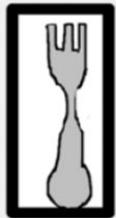
Put the knife on the right of the place mat.



Place the spoon to the right of the knife.



Place a glass on the placemat just above the spoon.



Wash the dishes



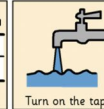
start



Make sure the plates are clear of excess food.



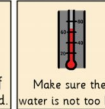
put dishes in sink



Turn on the tap.



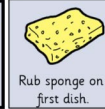
Add two dots of washing up liquid.



Make sure the water is not too hot.



task



Rub sponge on first dish.



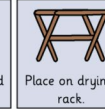
Scrub until dish is clean.



Remember to do the whole dish.



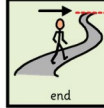
Rinse dish in cold water.



Place on drying rack.



Repeat for each dish.



end



Dry dishes.



Put dishes away.

6. Practice Money Skills

- ★ Learning how to use money is a very important skill in building independence.
- ★ There are many different ways your child can learn to use money skills at home and at school.
- ★ Discuss and teach them about the exchange that has to occur at stores.
- ★ IEP goals such dollar up, identifying coins etc.
- ★ Behavior strategies - earn money to purchase desired items.

7. Teach Community Safety Skills

- Explain to your child how community helpers can be identified.
 - They have a badge
 - They wear uniforms
- Teach your child about their personal safety-zone when interacting with others.
 - Give specific examples: “When someone unfamiliar offers a ride, what do you say?”
Child response: “No”
- Teach your child the community signs and what they represent.



Role-playing to Teach and Practice Skills

- ❖ CREATE opportunities for the individual to practice the target behavior
- ❖ Re-create a scenario for a situation that tends to trigger the behavior involved (ex. Scenarios that tend to trigger frustration)
- ❖ Keep your feedback positive and non-punitive (without discouraging the individual from trying again)



Role - Playing to Teach and Practice Skills

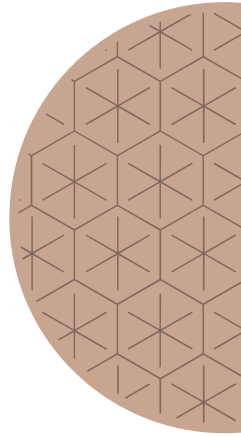
- ❖ Utilize prompts (direct, indirect, modeling), as needed (ex. “How does that make you feel?” “What can you do/say to solve the problem?”)
- ❖ Continue to practice - one-on one or in small groups
- ❖ REINFORCE all attempts of the skill - both prompted responses and independent responses
- ❖ Test the skill in realistic scenarios

Decrease Proximity

“Research shows that the closer an adult is to a child in the class, halls, lunchroom, park, etc. the more dependent and socially isolated a child becomes.”

- **The child becomes more separated from peers**
- **The child becomes more dependent on adults**
- **Peers are less likely to initiate interactions**
- **child may feel less control of his/her learning**

So what do we do? How can we support learning?




8. Build Leisure Skills

- ❑ Discover what your child's special interests are and build upon those.
- ❑ Being able to engage in independent leisure and recreation is something that will serve your child well throughout his or her life.
- ❑ Special interests can help to translate those interests into age appropriate recreational activities, community involvement, team sports and more.
- ❑ Autism Speaks Leading the Way: Autism-Friendly Youth Organizations guide.
- ❑ <https://theautismhelper.com/dont-forget-the-leisure-skills/>

9. Teach self - care during adolescence

- Create a visual for students to get ready in the morning and/or before bedtime.
- Teach your student to keep things organized in one place

Daily Hygiene Checklist <input checked="" type="checkbox"/>					
	Shower 	Put on deodorant 	Brush teeth 	Brush hair 	Shave face (if needed) 
Monday					
Tuesday					
Wednesday					
Thursday					
Friday					
Saturday					
Sunday					



10. Work on Vocational Skills

“Successfully completing chores can lead to greater success in vocational settings, especially with regard to taking responsibility and learning to respect authority.” Have your child complete chores at home:

1) Laundry

- a) The child can learn to categorize (separating whites from color)
- b) Following directions (put the soap in the designated area, set water to cold, etc.)
- c) Literacy (reading words on care tags)
- d) Math skills (measuring the detergent)
- e) Problem - Solving (what happens when you add too much soap?)

2) Setting the table

- a) Following directions
- b) Problem-Solving (Will you need spoons or forks for this meal?)
- c) Sequencing (First put the plates down, then napkins, then silverware)

Q & A

Thank you!

