

## ***How do I help prepare my child with the skills and knowledge to live as independently as possible?***

It is important for your child to develop independent living skills early and to practice them often. This will prepare them for adult life. Some individuals with autism spectrum disorder (ASD) will be capable of living on their own and others will require some level of support throughout their lives. Think about the following independent living skills:

- **Self-Care:** personal hygiene, toileting, dressing, and feeding.
- **Managing Health Needs:** scheduling appointments, understanding health conditions, taking medications, and living a healthy lifestyle.
- **Home-Making Skills:** cooking, cleaning, and shopping.
- **Time Management and Organizational Skills:** punctuality, prioritizing tasks, and daily schedules.
- **Managing Money and Finances:** budgeting, paying bills, and making purchases using cash, debit or credit cards.
- **Community Living Skills:** knowledge about services, interactions with others, asking for help, and safety.
- **Employment & Vocation, Social Skills, and Transportation:** (Refer to our Tip Sheets on these specific topics)

Think about how you can help your child take one step further toward becoming more independent.

1. Consider the thinking skills, physical skills (e.g., strength, coordination), and sensory skills that are required for the task.
2. If possible, help your child learn to do all or part of the task on their own.
  - First, demonstrate the task.
  - Second, have them do part of the task. You might start the task for them and they finish it.
  - Third, have them do the task while you supervise and provide a minimum amount of help.
3. Utilize visual aids and apps to help teach the skill. Schedule chores and tasks in daily calendars. Set auditory and visual reminders.
4. If you receive funding from FSCD or PDD, include independent living skills on the Individual Service Agreement or Plan. An occupational therapist can help you in assessing your child's level of functioning and to develop realistic goals (work/education, self-care, and leisure) and the necessary strategies to achieve them. For more information, refer to our "Funding" and "Therapies" Tip Sheets.

## RESOURCES

The Resource Centre (a Sinneave Family Foundation initiative) does not endorse or guarantee the exhaustive, complete, accurate or up-to-date nature of information provided and does not assume any risk for the outcome of information or referrals provided.

### APPS

First-Then Visual Schedule

The First-Then application is designed for caregivers to provide proactive visual support to help individuals understand expectations.

**Website:** [itunes.apple.com/ca/app/first-then-visual-schedule/id355527801?mt=8](https://itunes.apple.com/ca/app/first-then-visual-schedule/id355527801?mt=8)

## **Autism Speaks: Autism Safety Project**

The Autism Safety Project is designed to provide families affected by autism with tips, information, expert advice, and resources so that everyone in the community can stay out of harm's way.

**Website:** [autismspeaks.org/autism-safety-project](http://autismspeaks.org/autism-safety-project)

## **The Conover Company**

The Conover Company was founded in 1980 with a focus on developing training programs for industry. Over the 35+ years they have been in the software development business and have created many assessment and training programs which include comprehensive management systems to track user progress and results. They have expanded their services to include the educational marketplace, and they have developed many research-based and technology-driven assessment and training packages for both the educational and corporate settings.

**Website:** [conovercompany.com/about/](http://conovercompany.com/about/)

## **Momentum: Youth Fair Gains**

A free workshop for youth ages 16-21. This is a 2-hour workshop that occurs twice a month, for 9 months. Momentum will match the money you save so you can earn while you learn. Learn money management skills, create a budget and build your savings, build your credit, and more.

Eligibility depends on household income; to see if you qualify, please visit the website.

**Phone:** 403.272.9323

**Address:** 1, 2936 Radcliffe Drive SE, Calgary, AB T2A 6M8

**Email:** [info@momentum.org](mailto:info@momentum.org)

**Website:** [momentum.org/2017/11/14/youth-fair-gains/](http://momentum.org/2017/11/14/youth-fair-gains/)

## **Money Management: Money Mentors**

An Alberta program that offers free online and in-person classes for learning how to budget, manage debt, increase savings, understand credit ratings, etc.

**Phone:** 1.888.294.0076

**Address:** Airstate Building, 150, 1200 - 59 Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2H 2M4

**Website:** [moneymentors.ca](http://moneymentors.ca)

## **Society for the Treatment of Autism Adolescent and Adult Services**

Skill building programs for adolescents and adults with ASD.

- Skills for Life
- Work Skills Exploration
- Employment Preparation
- Post-Secondary Preparation
- Work Experience Placements

**Phone:** 403.991.7823

**Address:** 404-94<sup>th</sup> Avenue SE, Calgary, AB T2J 0E8

**Website:** [sta-ab.com/adolescent-and-adult-services/](http://sta-ab.com/adolescent-and-adult-services/)

## **Stepping into Life Inc.**

Teaches L.I.F.E. Skills: address/telephone skills, community awareness, cooking, daily routines, job readiness, laundry, self-care and hygiene, and sports skills.

**Phone:** 403.399.9525 or 403.295.2010  
**Address:** 59 Beddington Rise NE, Calgary AB T3K 1N1  
**Email:** [info@steppingintolife.ca](mailto:info@steppingintolife.ca)  
**Website:** [steppingintolife.ca](http://steppingintolife.ca)

## **The Teenage Survival Guide**

An online forum and education site with comics explaining with various topics such as body changes, getting a job, money management, cigarettes, drugs, and alcohol. It also offers an interactive 'Ask Andy' component.

**Website:** [teenagesurvival.com](http://teenagesurvival.com)

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