

IMPORTANT INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS TO TEACH YOUR TEEN, NOW



Your teen will be more receptive to learning important living skills from you when they understand the benefits for their future.

They will also be more responsive when they have their own skills check list where they monitor what they have learned so far and what skills to learn, build and strengthen.

Otherwise, crucial skills like learning to do laundry, managing their emotions and money, or cooking can feel like another power play from adults.

The *Independent Living Skills* checklist will give you a balanced view of the variety of skills your teen needs to learn *before* leaving home, so both parents don't end up putting "do homework" as the main (and sometimes only) skill.

With this understanding, it will be easier for you to not accept the excuse, "I can't do it because I have homework".

Even though you could justify that homework teaches responsibility, homework is not a lifelong skill. Therefore, put it in its proper perspective when training your child for adult success.

Elizabeth Crary, author of *Pick Up Your Socks*, is the inspiration for this Independent Life Skills list.

The *Independent Living Skills* list is divided up into seven categories: Personal Care, Personal Safety, Social Skills, Meal Preparation, Allowance and Money Management, Emotional Maturity, and Expression of Anger.

This list is *only a beginning*, so add any other skills you deem important for your teen to learn before they leave the house. Routine practice at home is what will make a skill embedded in their minds and their daily lives.

So, your teen saying, “I know how to do that” without doing it regularly is also not an acceptable excuse.

Personal Care

- Bathes
- Exercises
- Cares for own clothes
- Wakes self up in the morning

Personal Safety

- Knows first aid
- Plays and works safely
- Says “No” to physical or social abuse

Social Skills

- Uses good table manners
- Says please and thank you
- Recognizes other peoples needs and makes room for them.

Meal Preparation

- Shops for food
- Cooks simple meals
- Cleans up after mean

Allowance and money management

- Makes independent purchases
- Maintains a checking account
- Comparison shops

Emotional Maturity

- Recognizes other peoples’ feelings
- Expresses own feelings appropriately
- Able to listen to other people thoughts and feelings without getting angry

Expression of Anger

- Recognizes signs of anger in self before blowing up.
- Knows how to express anger constructively
- Knows ways to calm self

Listen openly to your teen as you share ideas of why these skills are important to learn. Be careful to not act like a know-it-all. It’s

more important to hear your teen's thoughts and suggestions, so focus on *listening*, not talking.

Discuss about living with others & personal/work relationships.

It will be important to first learn how to avoid communication blocks so you can have a respectful dialogue rather than a lecture. Be aware of the tendency to expect your teen to have mastered skills without you teaching them.

In my book, *Ally Parenting: A Non-Adversarial Approach to Transform Conflict Into Cooperation* you will learn how to teach independent Living skills through boundary setting, avoiding communication blocks, collaborative problem solving, understanding and expressing emotions, setting limits, and family meetings.

When you focus on teaching your teen Independent Living Skills, they will feel proud of their accomplishments and you will feel confident in their readiness to leave the nest.

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