

Promoting Independent Living While Still in School



There are many aspects of independence for a young person with a disability and family members to consider. Independence can be defined as the ability to decide how a person wants to live, participate, and access community resources as well as the level of supports that a person may need to be successful.

As early as 14 years of age, youth and families are encouraged to look at programs available at the school. Such programs include courses, activities at the school, and related services for which the student is entitled.

The following are examples of activities to consider with your son/daughter.



Activities in the School

- Participate in school activities such as clubs, sports, and community volunteering
- Take courses such as food preparation, child care/family planning, technology, and money management
- Participate in Transition Fairs that highlight independent living resources and access to needed resources
- Explore community travel training possibilities
- Explore assistive technology devices that promote inclusion
- Connect with community agency service providers (i.e., OVR, OMH/ID*)
- Explore social skills training



Activities in the Home

- Complete chores such as cleaning, meal preparation, and laundry
- Access social media responsibly to keep informed and connected to others
- Discuss how and when to use 911 and other emergency services
- Maintain a personal budget
- Learn about medical conditions you may have, medication you may currently be taking, and connect with healthcare providers
- Encourage activities that foster independence such as maintain a schedule and choosing foods, clothes, and leisure activities
- Encourage self-advocacy and speak up for your own needs in various situations



Activities in the Community

- Explore community transportation options
- Access citizenship activities such as voter registration and/or apply for a driver's license if able
- Open a bank account through a local financial institution
- Explore community agency service providers (i.e., OVR, OMH/ID*)
- Become certified in First Aid and Safety
- Locate hospitals, pharmacies, and emergency medical facilities within the community
- Attend local government meetings or town hall meetings

Resources (Websites): Promoting Independent Living While Still in School

The ARC of Pennsylvania – http://www.thearcpa.org	PYLN Secondary Transition toolkit - http://tinyurl.com/q7b2p9h
PA Secondary Transition – http://www.secondarytransition.org	Whole Life Planning - http://rtc.umn.edu/docs/pcpmanual1.pdf
Pennsylvania Centers for Independent Living - http://tinyurl.com/jqzx6zo	Zarrow Center for Learning - http://tinyurl.com/zy9mvjy
Planning for the Future Checklist - http://tinyurl.com/njzgumm	(Note*: OVR – Office of Vocational Rehabilitation; OMH/DS/ID – Office of Mental Health/Intellectual Disabilities)