



OKLAHOMA AUTISM NETWORK

The University of Oklahoma Health Sciences Center

ON A ROAD TO... SOMEWHERE? ANYWHERE?
AND HOW ON EARTH DO WE GET THERE??

CREATING A ROAD OF POSSIBILITIES IN THE MIDDLE CHILDHOOD YEARS

BECOMING CONTRIBUTORS TEACHING CHORES AND HOUSEHOLD TASKS WEBINAR WORKSHEET

About this Webinar:

Chores and household tasks, the regular tasks that are done to help your household run smoothly, can be valuable learning opportunities that help pave the path toward independent living for all children – including children with ASD. In this webinar, we will cover the benefits of teaching chores as well as specific strategies to help you teach these important skills. Vacuuming, laundry, dishes, simple snack prep, watering plants and feeding pets will be covered.

Purpose of this Worksheet:

This worksheet is a tool you can use during the webinar to take notes about how you can apply the information you learn. There is also a resource guide for parents and professionals to refer to when creating an intentional plan to practice personal care skills.

The content included is general information and is not specific medical or behavioral advice. The information provided may not work for every child with autism or their family. We recommend working closely with your child's doctor(s), therapist(s), and/or educator to discuss how the ideas shared may be individualized to meet your child's needs. If you have an urgent concern or emergency, call 911 or go to the nearest emergency room right away.

Middle Childhood Household Chores

WEBINAR HIGHLIGHTS

Chores and household tasks are the everyday activities you do to take care of yourself and your home. In this webinar, we focus on the following chores and household tasks:

- Vacuuming
- Laundry
- Dishes
- Simple Snack Prep
- Watering Plants
- Feeding Pets

Learning skills related to household chores and tasks does not happen overnight! Here are some of the reasons that my child with ASD might struggle with learning how to do household tasks. (Please think about your child and write down specific examples/concerns).

Communication	Social Interaction	Sensory Processing
Motor Skills (Fine, Gross, Oral-Motor)	Executive Function (thinking and processing skills needed for everyday activities)	

--- from *Autism Across the Lifespan: A Comprehensive Occupational Therapy Approach, 4th edition (2018)*

The good news is that being intentional and using supports will help us teach these important everyday skills. Examples of different ways we can support our loved ones with ASD while learning personal care skills include:

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow time to explore sensory preferences, especially when first teaching the skill 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you practice, try to keep things the same - time of day, order of tasks, supplies
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Break skill down into steps, focus on one task at a time 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Teach by modeling – Live (in-person) or video modeling
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use visual activity schedule or written checklist 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use prompts (and plan to fade)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide choices 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remember to keep it light, positive, and fun!

Picking Strategies and Tips that Fit

This webinar includes tips and strategies from both professionals and parents. These are the tips I think would be the most helpful for my child.

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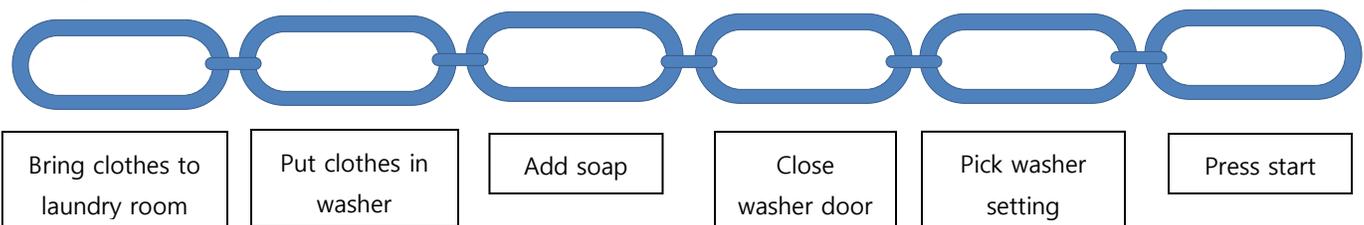
PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

Steps to Teaching Chores and Household Tasks in Daily Routines and Activities

1. Identify the skill you want your child to learn. Take some time to think about your child's "Why?" when picking a skill to focus on.
 - Is there a skill your child is showing a natural interest in right now?
 - Which skill would make the most positive impact on your child's or your family's day?
 - Which skill could help your child become more independent?
2. Think about natural, everyday opportunities to learn skills related to chores. This will make it easier for you to build in times to practice during your day.
 - Is this a skill that will be used frequently?
 - Is there a natural time in your daily routines when you and your child can consistently practice?
3. Break down the skill into an order of small, manageable steps. Think about which step you are going to start teaching first. Small successes can lead to big wins. (See the diagram below for an example.)
 - Which step is the most likely to be a positive experience?
 - Is there a step that matches your child's personal preferences?
 - Is there a step I know my child can already do?
4. Think about how you will provide support as your child learns the skills and builds confidence.
 - Will you use visual supports? Visual activity schedule? Video model?
 - Would it help to have a written checklist?
 - Will you model all of the steps of the task at once or will you model each step individually?
 - Would your child prefer to do as much by him/herself as the child can?
 - Would your child prefer that you begin as partners and you slowly fade yourself out?
5. Remember to provide positive feedback when your child tries to use the new skill.
 - How will you recognize your child's effort and/or completion of the task?
 - Is there a natural reinforcer that is produced by doing the task?
6. Take time to reflect.
 - What went well?
 - What was hard? What could you do differently to better support your child's learning?

Simplified Washing the Laundry Example -- Breaking a Skill into Smaller, More Manageable Steps

**please note this is a simplified version - order may change based on detergent and machine, not all single steps included*



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Practice Plan Example –

<p style="text-align: center;">Picking a Skill to Teach</p> <p><i>What is my child's "Why?" How will this skill help my child? Can I build on this skill as my child grows? Does this skill match my child's interests? Is this a skill that could open opportunities in other places (school, community activities, future employment?) How do I teach my child "why" this is important to learn?</i></p>	<p>Oscar is 7 years old and loves being in the laundry room when the washing machine is running. He loves to put his face up to the door and watch the clothes spin in the machine. My older children have chores to do around the house, and I think Oscar should start learning about chores, too. I would like to find a chore that is a good fit for Oscar. He enjoys watching the laundry spin. I think washing the clothes will be a good chore for him because it lines up with one of his interests. We can expand washing the clothes to drying, folding, and putting away. He could use the lessons from chores as a pathway to an entry-level job and this could open doors to more advanced jobs as he gets older.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Routine/Activity</p> <p><i>When could we practice this skill? Is this a skill we can practice every day so that my child can get enough repetition?</i></p>	<p>We can practice this skill when I typically wash the clothes, which is usually 5-6 loads per week. I can be more intentional about when I do the laundry. We can wash clothes on Monday, Wednesday, and Friday afternoons after school as well as Saturday and Sunday.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Breaking the Skill Down Into Steps</p> <p><i>What are the individual steps for this skill? Are there step(s) my child can already do? Are there steps that match my child's interests or preferences?</i></p>	<p>I will need to make a list of the steps I follow to wash the clothes. I can do a load of laundry and write down each step as I'm doing it. I want Oscar to learn one step at a time. Because he likes watching the machine run, I think he might like to independently press the start button to make it go. I will teach him this last step in the sequence and work backwards (backward chaining).</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Supports for Learning</p> <p><i>What kind of visuals could help my child learn to do this skill? Am I going to model the entire skill or each step by itself? Would my child be more likely to start learning the skill if we started as work partners?</i></p>	<p>Oscar can struggle with imitation so I think he would prefer more of a "we-do," partner approach – especially in the beginning. He seems to learn better through pictures versus spoken language. I can make a visual schedule that he can use. I will guide Oscar through each step and need to remember to use simple spoken words. If needed, I can gently guide his hand to press the button and phase out this help as his independence grows.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Reinforcement</p> <p><i>How will I show/tell my child I see how hard my child is working to learn this new skill? Is there a natural reinforcer that is gained by doing the skill?</i></p>	<p>Oscar loves side arm hugs and I think he really likes to see the clothes spinning. I think the result of pressing the button – the start of the spin cycle in the washing machine – could serve as a reinforcer that naturally happens as a result of pushing the button. I can also provide verbal praise and a sidearm hug.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;">Reflect and Adjust</p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	<p>Oscar was not super pumped at first – lots of whining and pulling me away from the machine. I brought him in at the very start of the sequence and had to look for the laundry soap. I wonder if, in his mind, the beginning steps were taking too long? I will see if having the supplies ready and keeping the steps simple and short helps Oscar next time.</p>



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Practice Plan

<p style="text-align: center;">Skill to Teach</p> <p><i>How will this skill help my child? Can I build on this skill as my child grows? Does this skill match my child's interests? Is this a skill that could open opportunities in other places (school, community activities, future employment?) How will I teach my child his/her "why" this is important to learn?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Routine/Activity</p> <p><i>When could we practice this skill? Is this a skill we can practice every day so that my child can get the practice he/she will need to learn the task?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Breaking the Skill Down into Steps</p> <p><i>What are the individual steps for this skill? Are there step(s) my child can already do? Are there steps that match my child's interests or preferences?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Supports for Learning</p> <p><i>What kind of visuals could help my child learn to do this skill? Am I going to model the entire skill or each step by itself? Would my child be more likely to start learning the skill if we started as work partners?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Positive Reinforcement</p> <p><i>How will I show/tell my child I see how hard my child is working to learn this new skill? Is there a natural reinforcer that is gained by doing the skill?</i></p>	
<p style="text-align: center;">Reflect and Adjust</p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	



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RESOURCES

Activity Schedules for Children with Autism, Second Edition: Teaching Independent Behavior

By Lynn McClannahan and Patricia Krantz

This book was written for parents and service providers to help them learn how to use activity schedules to help children and adults become more independent. The book contains information on how to start by making a simple activity schedule, as well as how to progress and make more sophisticated schedules. The books also covers how activity schedules can be used to help a wide variety of learners increase engagement, complete tasks, make choices, and engage in meaningful activities. Available on Amazon and Woodbine House.

Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM), <https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/selecting-ebp>

National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice, <https://ncaep.fpg.unc.edu/>

Chores and household tasks are often taught using a combination of strategies. Task analysis can be used in combination with prompting, reinforcement, modeling, visual supports, and/or time delay practices to teach skills related to chores. The AFIRM modules and the National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice contain a wealth of information on these strategies and many other evidence-based practices. The content is free.

Accessible Chef, <https://accessiblechef.com/>

Accessible Chef is a collection of free visual recipes and other resources to help teach cooking skills to individuals with disabilities at home or in the special education classroom. There are over 300 visual recipes available to print for FREE. The website also contains valuable information on adaptive cooking tools, basic cooking information, and activities to strengthen pre-cooking skills. There are also tools that website visitors can use such as a Recipe Creator and Image Bank.

Life Skills Resource, Strategies for Chores by the Centre for Autism Middletown, Northern Ireland.

<https://life-skills.middletownautism.com/strategies/work/household-chores/strategies-for-chores/#q9>

This online resource contains instructions, video models, visuals, and strategies for teaching 15 different chores. Setting the table, taking out the trash, vacuuming, grocery shopping, meal preparation, laundry and more are covered.

Life Skill Activities at Home by Therapeutic Links PC **YouTube Channel**

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCZZBwC2BZPhiZoRhJnNyFYg>

These brief, 2-5 minute videos were created by a private, pediatric occupational therapy clinic located in Graylake, Illinois. The videos provide information, resources and video models of a variety of daily living skills. Household chores, food preparation, outdoor chores and other life skills are covered.

Penquis Autism Community Services Video Modeling Tools for ADL Development

Available on YouTube at https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCB2o08nCiDOC8OtSq_Z_rw/featured

This collection of videos includes activities such as folding clothes, changing sheets, and washing dishes. They offer the videos with text instructions, voice instruction, or text and voice instruction. This channel also has several personal care video modeling tools. You can view these videos for free on the Penquis Autism Community Services YouTube Channel.

The Oklahoma Autism Network strongly encourages families and providers to review these materials for goodness of fit before sharing them with the individuals they support.



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