



**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

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### ADAPTIVE SKILLS FOR EVERYDAY LIFE WEBINAR WORKSHEET

#### **About this Webinar:**

Adaptive skills, the skills we need to meet the demands of our day, are an essential part of the journey to adulthood and greater independence. The earlier these skills can be introduced, the more time can be given to practicing and mastering these important skills. In this session, participants will be introduced to a selection of adaptive skills that can be targeted during the middle childhood years (6 – 12 years of age). Personal self-care, chores and household tasks, and puberty-related hygiene skills will be highlighted.

#### **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 adaptive skills related specifically to personal care and household care.

*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.*

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# Middle Childhood Adaptive Skills for Everyday Life

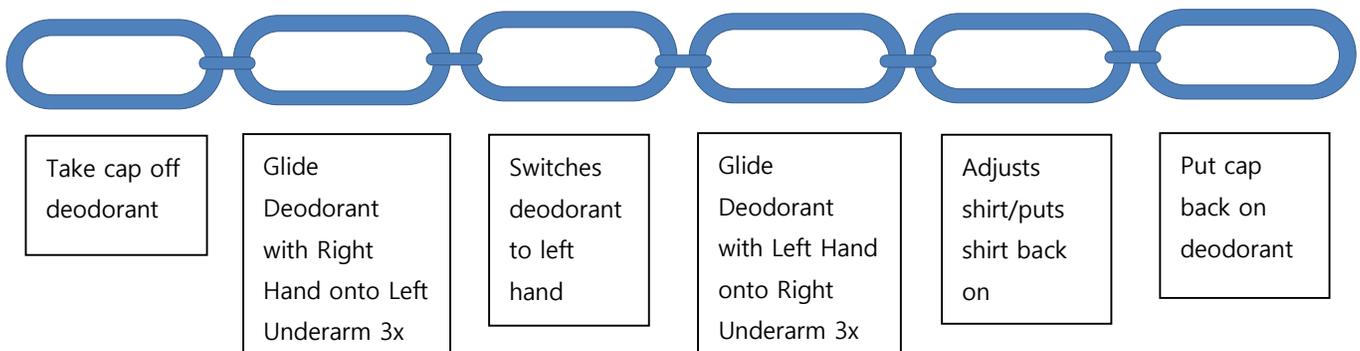
## PUTTING IT INTO PRACTICE

### Steps to Teaching Adaptive Skills in Daily Routines and Activities

1. Identify the skill(s) you want your child to learn. Which skill would make the most positive impact on your child's day? Which skill could you keep building on as your child matures? Take some time to think about your child's "Why?" or the reason(s) you are motivated to teach this skill.
2. Think about naturally occurring opportunities in your child's day to teach the skills. This will help you be intentional about a time of day to practice and the child will get more opportunities for practice.
3. Break down the skill you want your child to learn into a sequence of small, manageable steps. Which step is the most likely to be a positive experience for your child? Which step matches your child's personal interests and preferences? You may want to start by teaching that step. Small steps of success can lead to big wins.
4. Think about how you can adjust the activity/routine to create opportunities to practice as well as build your child's competence and confidence. Will you use visual supports? Could you make 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 that you begin as work partners and you slowly fade yourself out, or would your child prefer to do as much by him/herself as the child can?
5. Remember to provide positive reinforcement when your child makes their best attempt at using the new skill. Is there a natural reinforcer that is produced by doing the task? How will you recognize your child's work and/or completion of the task?
6. Take time to reflect. What could you adjust to better support your child in achieving success?

### Simplified Deodorant Example -- Breaking a Skill into Smaller, More Manageable Steps

*\*please note this is a simplified version and does not include all of the single steps necessary to put on deodorant*



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## Practice Plan Example – Putting on Deodorant

<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Skill to Teach</b></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 do I teach my child his/her "why" this is important to learn?</i></p>	<p>My child is 9 years old and starting to smell - Hello Puberty! Putting on deodorant will help my child manage his body odor. Eddie likes to sit with classmates at lunch and play baseball on his Miracle League baseball team. I can talk to Eddie or even write a social narrative about how he is getting older and needs to put on deodorant to make sure he smells clean when he's around his classmates and his baseball teammates.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Routine/Activity</b></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>We can practice this skill every day in the morning when Eddie gets ready for the day. We can do this in the bathroom after he brushes his teeth.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Breaking the Skill Down Into Steps</b></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>Steps include taking off the cap, lifting an arm, rolling deodorant on, switching arms, doing it again and putting the cap back on. Eddie can already take the cap off and lift his arms. He may need help lifting his shirt while putting on the deodorant at the same time.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Supports for Learning</b></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>Eddie is more comfortable when I give him a little space. He seems to learn better through pictures than spoken words. When I have Eddie's attention, he can imitate me. I can use pictures that outline the steps to give him a preview of the entire sequence. When he practices, I can model for him one step at a time so he can see each step by itself.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Positive Reinforcement</b></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>Eddie likes verbal praise. I can use a phrase such as, "Great job putting on your deodorant!" He also likes smiles and a quick squeeze on the shoulder. We usually watch his favorite show for a few minutes after brushing his teeth. We could watch his favorite show for a few minutes after he puts his deodorant on as something to look forward to doing.</p>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Reflect and Adjust</b></p> <p><i>What went well? Is there something I can change to help my child be more successful?</i></p>	<p>I was a bit nervous but Eddie did great! Eddie's face wrinkled up when he smelled the deodorant – not sure he liked the smell?? May need to try other kinds to make sure Eddie is using something he likes.</p>



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## Practice Plan

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## RESOURCES

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### ***Healthy Bodies Toolkit by the Vanderbilt Kennedy Center*** <https://vkc.vumc.org/HealthyBodies/>

Provides information for boys and girls with disabilities as they approach puberty and adolescence. There is a Boys Toolkit and a Girls Toolkit. Each toolkit has an appendix that contains storyboards and visuals you can use when teaching about puberty and personal care skills. Available in English and Spanish. Free.

### ***The Boys Guide to Growing Up: Choices and Changes During Puberty***

Terri Couwenhoven, MS, CSE <http://terrificouwenhoven.com/>

This guide for boys with developmental and intellectual disabilities presents the facts boys will need as they navigate puberty. It is written at a third-grade reading level for pre-teens or teens to read by themselves or with a parent. It contains simplified text, realistic illustrations, and learning activities to help boys better understand the physical and emotional changes that occur during puberty. Recommended ages 9 – 16. Available on Amazon or Woodbine House.

### ***The Girls Guide to Growing Up: Choices and Changes During the Tween Years***

Terri Couwenhoven, MS, CSE <http://terrificouwenhoven.com/>

This guide for girls with developmental and intellectual disabilities gives an introduction to the physical and emotional changes they'll encounter during puberty. Written at a third-grade reading level for preteens or young teenaged girls to read by themselves or with a parent, it's filled with age-appropriate facts, realistic illustrations and photos, icons, and a Q&A. Recommended ages 8-14. Available on Amazon or Woodbine House.

### ***Video Modeling/Prompting Dr. Ryan Kellems, YouTube Channel***

<https://www.youtube.com/channel/UC0QLbauMmf8Xph4wfTGTtHQ/videos>

This channel is a collection of videos created to help individuals with disabilities learn how to complete social, occupational, and daily living skills. Many of the videos have a link to a task analysis / data collection sheet for each activity in the comments.

### ***Life Skills Resource, Strategies for Teaching Household Chores***

Centre for Autism Middletown (Northern Ireland)

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

This website contains strategies for teaching how to do household chores such as using the dishwasher, laundry, making the bed, going grocery shopping, taking out the trash, and others. Examples of strategies include visual instructions, social narratives, and video modeling.

\*\*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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## RESOURCES

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### ***Adulthood Begins in Preschool* by Peter F. Gerhardt, Ed.D.**

**Video recorded presentation for the 2019 Yale Child Study Center Annual Autism Conference**

<https://medicine.yale.edu/lab/chawarska/autismcenter/conference/2019/> (Video near bottom of page)

Peter Gerhardt, EdD, has over 35 years of experience supporting adolescents and adults with autism spectrum disorders. During this online presentation, "Understanding Transition to Adulthood Using Reverse Engineering," Dr. Gerhardt reviews the wide variety of factors that come into play during the transition into adulthood, and he discusses his personal list of 10 critical life skills.

### ***Parent's Guide to Puberty and Adolescence for Children with Autism, Autism Speaks ATN/AIR-P***

**Available for download at** <https://www.autismspeaks.org/tool-kit/atnair-p-puberty-and-adolescence-resource>

This toolkit was created in response to parent requests for information about puberty for their child with ASD. It was written by a team of parents and professionals located both in the United States and Canada. The toolkit covers topics and strategies for teaching about body changes, self-care and hygiene, menstruation, public vs private behaviors, and personal safety.

### ***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. Mouth care, household chores, food preparation, outdoor chores and other life skills are covered.

### ***2020 Evidence-Based Practices for Children, Youth, and Young Adults with Autism***

The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, Frank Porter Graham Child Development Institute, National Clearinghouse on Autism Evidence and Practice Review Team

Available for download at <https://ncaep.fpg.unc.edu/research-resources>

The purpose of this report is to describe a set of practices that have clear evidence of positive effects with autistic children and youth. The report is the latest update of previous systematic reviews focused on intervention literature.

### ***Autism Focused Intervention Resources and Modules (AFIRM)***

<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/>

This resource contains access to online modules and resources for 27 evidence-based practices identified by the National Clearing House on Autism Evidence & Practice. These eLearning modules describe EBP procedures, steps for implementing practices, case examples, interactive assessments, fidelity checklists and more. Professional development options available.

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