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## INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS

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**TOPIC #1:** Developing Independence

**TIME PERIOD:** 2-3 days

**CORE STANDARD #1:** Individual: The students will examine the principles of personal development related to self-awareness and relationships.

**OBJECTIVE:** Students will identify the skills necessary for becoming independent and methods for attaining those skills.

**INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS (COMPETENCIES):**

- |              |                                                                                  |
|--------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 20.0001-0101 | Explore ways to handle crisis situations independently.                          |
| 20.0001-0102 | Identify methods to manage when alone.                                           |
| 20.0001-0103 | Identify the advantages and disadvantages of developing skills for independence. |
| 20.0001-0104 | Define the term <i>independence</i> .                                            |
| 20.0001-0115 | List the five steps of problem solving.                                          |

**LIFE SKILLS:**

- \* Lifelong Learning
- \* Complex Thinking
- Effective Communication
- Collaboration
- \* Responsible Citizenship
- \* Employability

**RELATED CAREERS:**

All

**OCCUPATIONAL CLUSTERS:**

All

**LIST OF STUDENT ACTIVITIES:****SUPPLIES REQUIRED:**

- |                                                                                      |                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
|--------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| 1. Independent Thinking Practice (Motivator)<br>OR<br>You Are the Expert (Motivator) | List of situations (1.3-1.4)<br><br>OR<br>List of situations (1.3-1.4)<br>3 x 5 cards or small pieces of paper for each student<br>Small box or basket                                             |
| ▶ 2. Definition of "Independence"                                                    | Small poster or overhead transparency with "Independence" definition (1.13)                                                                                                                        |
| ▶ 3. Five Steps of Problem Solving                                                   | "Five Steps of Problem Solving" bulletin board (1.17 - 1.24)<br>Copies of student activity guides (1.14-1.16)<br>OR<br>Copies of student activity guide from Counseling curriculum (pages 113-114) |
| 4. Positive vs. Negative Aspects                                                     | Overhead transparencies (1.27-1.28)<br>Overhead projector<br>Copies of student activity guide (1.25-1.26)                                                                                          |
| 5. Independence and Careers                                                          | Some career posters from this curriculum<br>OR<br>Copies of student activity guide from Counseling curriculum (pages 96-100)                                                                       |
| 6. "Independent Ideas" Handbook                                                      | Copies of "Independent Ideas" Handbook for each student<br>(Refer to pages 1.29-1.30 for content selections)                                                                                       |



## PROCEDURE

**CONCEPT:** Most people must learn independence at some time in their life. It is important to know some procedures and guidelines when you are in charge of a situation. There are some positive and some negative aspects of developing independence.

### **INTRODUCTION TO ACTIVITY #1:**

As the teacher introduces this activity, some concepts to include are:

- An important part of developing independence is learning how to be in control when difficult and/or emergency situations occur.
- Thinking about possible situations prior to an actual experience helps one be prepared and handle such a situation more responsibly.
- Knowing that you are able to handle difficult situations if they should occur helps to eliminate your fears about such situations occurring and builds your self-confidence.
- Being prepared to handle difficult situations is the best way to prevent poor decisions that could increase the problem and/or cause more problems.
- Decision making is a basic part of being independent.

### **1. INDEPENDENT THINKING PRACTICE (MOTIVATOR)**

Have some students come to the front of the classroom. As the teacher reads the following situations one by one, the first student to raise his/her hand will explain how he/she would handle the situation. When that student has completed his/her response, he/she may return to his/her seat. Encourage the students to think quickly. Additional ways or ideas for handling the situation can be discussed as the class moves through the list. (Refer to page 1.40 for guidelines of things to remember when home alone.)

- A. You're walking home from the store and the grocery bags break, spilling groceries everywhere.
- B. You're leaving a store with a friend when he/she takes a magazine from his/her backpack. You know he/she didn't pay for it.
- C. You're at a party without parental supervision. Some people show up with alcohol.
- D. You're walking down the hall and find a \$20 bill.

*TOPIC #1: Developing Independence**Teacher Information*

- E. There is a group assignment due in three days. The others in your group are not doing their part.
- F. Your dance group/sport group/scout troop is traveling out of state at the same time you're favorite aunt is getting married.
- G. You put some clothes in the dryer. When you remove them you realize a pen has bled ink through the clothes and onto the dryer.
- H. You go to a sibling's room to borrow a shirt and find some drugs in the drawer.
- I. You plan on running for a student office and so does your best friend.
- J. You go to a school dance wearing shorts and discover it's a dress up affair.
- K. Your parents are gone for the evening. You promised you would stay home and watch your little brother. Then your friend calls and invites you to go see a movie you've been dying to see.

***ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY OPTION: YOU ARE THE EXPERT!***

- A. Have students write about an uncomfortable or difficult situation they have experienced while alone on a 3 x 5 card (or a small piece of paper). **DO NOT HAVE THE STUDENTS PUT THEIR NAMES ON THE CARDS.** Have the students fold the cards in half and place them in a box or basket. Mix up the cards.
- B. Have each student draw a card from the box, read the situation described, and offer a suggestion on how to handle that situation. Encourage additional class participation.

**➤ 2. DEFINITION OF INDEPENDENCE**

Discuss the definition of the term *independence* with the students.

**INDEPENDENCE: READINESS TO TAKE ON MORE RESPONSIBILITIES  
ALONG WITH MORE FREEDOMS**

All of the situations used in the motivators require the students to use independent thinking skills. Many students may spend a great deal of time alone or in charge of younger children. It is important to learn to be responsible and independent.



### ➤ 3. **FIVE STEPS OF PROBLEM SOLVING**

One of the major aspects of becoming independent is having the ability to solve problems quickly and effectively. There are five major steps in problem solving and knowing these steps helps one to work through problems more easily. The five steps can be introduced graphically, by using the posters provided in the resource section of this topic, and problematically, by using the situations from Activity #1: Independent Thinking Practice. The teacher needs to help the students through some of these cases step by step so they can see the application process. The five steps of problem solving are:

STEP #1: IDENTIFY THE PROBLEM

STEP #2: BRAINSTORM POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS  
(List ways to solve the problem; keep all ideas at this time.)

STEP #3: EXPLORE AND EVALUATE POSSIBLE SOLUTIONS  
(What will happen if I choose this solution?)

STEP #4: MAKE A DECISION AND ACT ON IT  
(Is it the decision that will solve the problem?)

STEP #5: LOOK BACK AND EVALUATE  
(Did the decision work? If the decision did not work, repeat the steps for further problem solving.)

It is important for the students to learn these five steps and how to work through problem-solving situations. Problem solving is a skill that most people use numerous times each day, both on the job and in their personal life. The students will have a number of problem-solving experiences throughout this curriculum to reinforce the development of this skill.

For individual practice, have the students complete the student activity guide PROBLEM-SOLVING PRACTICE (pages 1.15-1.16). When the students are finished, review the answers with them to assist in their personal problem-solving skill development.

#### ***ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY OPTION***

Use the case study provided on pages 113 and 114 of the T-L-C Guidance curriculum. Assist the students in working through the steps.



#### 4. **POSITIVE VS. NEGATIVE ASPECTS OF INDEPENDENCE**

Divide the class into small working groups (each table of 4-6 could be a group). Give each group a copy of the INDEPENDENT BEHAVIORS student activity guide and have the students identify some "positive" and "negative" aspects of the independent behaviors listed.

To help the students get started, discuss with the students the concept that becoming independent is a matter of making choices and that with certain choices, one may have to give up something one likes or enjoys. The first example is "Having the ability to say "NO." This is an example of an independent behavior, and the positive aspect of it is that it could help keep a person from getting into trouble, but the negative aspect could be that you might lose a friend or some of your popularity with your peer group.

It is important that the teacher help the students understand that the negative aspects are not necessarily opposites of the positive aspects but rather the difficult part of the decision or choice they face.

After the students have completed their student activity guides, the teacher should go through and review their ideas with the class using an overhead transparency of the student activity guide. (Some possible positive and negative aspects are provided for teacher reference on pages 1.28-1.29.) The teacher also needs to identify ways some of the negative aspects could be viewed as positive aspects.

ALTERNATE METHOD: This activity could be done as a class allowing the students to brainstorm together under the direction of the teacher. The independent behaviors and positive and negative aspects items could be written on the board (or a large sheet of butcher paper) as the activity progresses.

#### 5. **INDEPENDENCE AND CAREERS**

The teacher should help the students to understand:

- The relationship of independence to preparing for a career and maintaining a job and working at a career.
- All careers and/or jobs require employees to be responsible and to think and act independently.
- Right now the students' "job" is school and part of their job at school is to learn how to think and act more independently.
- Learning to be more independent now will help students prepare for doing better at whatever job they will have or career they will choose.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY OPTION**

Invite an employer to be a guest speaker and ask them to emphasize the attributes employers look for and expect from employees.

**ADDITIONAL ACTIVITY OPTION**

Use the materials, WORK RELATIONSHIPS, Activity 12, from the T-L-C Guidance curriculum (pages 96-100).

**6. "INDEPENDENT IDEAS" HANDBOOK**

The teacher should explain to the students that the purpose of Family and Consumer Sciences is to teach quality independent living skills. Every topic in this course will teach some different independent living skills. Therefore, each student will be responsible for maintaining their personal "Independent Ideas" Handbook to use as a reference as they grow to be more independent.

Explain that they will be starting their handbooks now at the beginning of the course and they will be adding helpful ideas and information to their handbooks throughout the course. (A list of items that could be included can be found on pages 1.29-1.30.) Begin by having student complete the following activity guide.

1. Telephone Numbers (page 1.32)
2. Emergency Information (page 1.33)
3. Dos and Don'ts of My House (page 1.35)
4. Safety Tips (page 1.36)
5. My "Responsibilities" at Home (page 1.37)
6. Foods I Can Prepare Myself (page 1.38)
7. Things to Do When There's Nothing to Do (page 1.39-1.40)
8. Ten Important Things to Remember When You're Alone (page 1.44)

Allow the students to work in pairs or small groups to complete as much of the information as possible. Encourage the students to complete the rest of the information at home with parental assistance. If the teacher prefers, this activity could be broken into two parts: 1) required items, and 2) extra credit items. Some of the student activities could be optional and the students could choose the ones they want to include for extra credit.

The teacher can have the students turn in their "Independent Ideas" handbooks periodically and/or at the end of the course as part of the course grade.

ALTERNATE METHOD: If the teacher prefers to do an abbreviated version, the ON MY OWN student activity guide (page 1.43) can be used.



**TOPIC SUMMARY:** "Independence" means you are ready to take on more responsibilities along with more freedoms. Independence is a natural part of growing up. It is important to learn to be responsible and independent.

**TEACHER RESOURCES:**

North Dakota Junior High Home Economics Curriculum Guide, pages 62-75.

Bransford, C. and Stein, B., The Ideal Problem Solver, 1984, New York: W. H. Freeman and Co.

Krulik, S. F. and Rudnick, J. A., Problem Solving: A Handbook for Teachers, 1980, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

Krulik, S. F. and Rudnick, J. A., Problem Solving: A Sourcebook for Teachers, 1984, Boston: Allyn and Bacon, Inc.

American Red Cross, Standard First Aid Book

Utah State Office of Education, T-L-C CORE Guidance and Counseling Curriculum, pp. 96-100, 113-114.





**CORE TEST QUESTION BANK****UNIT: INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS****TOPIC: DEVELOPING INDEPENDENCE****20.0001-0101 Explore ways to handle crisis situations independently.**

1. One cold winter day when you arrive home from school you realize you have lost your house key. It will be at least two more hours before your parent(s) get home from work. A good thing to do would be to:
  - a. Try to break the lock on the door to get in
  - b.\* Go to a neighbor's house and obtain help
  - c. Try to build a fire on the porch to keep warm
  - d. Lie down where it's dry and take a nap
  
2. Knowing the best thing to do when you are in charge of a situation helps you to:
  - a.\* Make better decisions
  - b. Be a bossy person
  - c. Have lots of power
  - d. Give commands better
  
3. The telephone rings and when you answer the person on the other end of the line says obscene things to you. You should:
  - a. Tell them what a bad person they are
  - b.\* Hang up the telephone immediately and then leave the telephone off the hook for a while
  - c. Tell them to call back when your parents are home
  - d. Tell them you're going to call the police
  
- 4A. You are alone and the doorbell rings. The best thing for you to do is:
  - a. Answer the door as quickly as possible
  - b. Ask who it is and explain that you are there alone, but keep the door closed
  - c.\* Look out the window or through the peephole to see who it is
  
- 4B. If the person at the door is a stranger to you, the best thing for you to do is:
  - a. Answer the door and find out who they are
  - b.\* Not answer the door at all
  - c. Look the stranger over carefully and if he/she looks pretty nice, let him/her in

**TEST QUESTIONS**

- 5A. You are home by yourself and decide to bake some pizza in the oven. Suddenly you realize the grease from the pizza has caught fire and there are big flames in the oven. The **FIRST** thing you should do is:
- Open the oven and remove the pizza from the oven as fast as possible
  - Get a pan of water to throw on the fire
  - \* Leave the oven door closed and turn off the oven
  - Run to the neighbor's house and call the fire department
- 5B. The **SECOND** thing you should do is:
- \* Get the baking soda and put it on the fire
  - Get a pan of water ready to throw on the fire
  - Try to get the pizza out of the oven and take it outside to finish burning
  - Run to the neighbor's house and call the fire department
- 5C. The **THIRD** thing you need to do is:
- Leave the house
  - Check to see if the stove still works
  - Call the fire department
  - \* Open some windows or doors to get the smoke out of the house
- 5D. **AFTER** the fire has completely stopped, you should:
- Pour water in the oven to be sure the fire is out
  - \* Remove the burned pizza from the oven when it has cooled
  - Call the fire department
  - Sit down and cry
- 5E. **NOW** would be a good time to:
- Call the fire department
  - \* Notify your parent(s) or a neighbor about what has happened
  - Go take a nap while everything cools off
  - Call your friends and tell them what has happened
- 5F. **AFTER** the burned pizza and the oven are completely cooled, you should:
- \* Throw the pizza in the garbage and clean the pan
  - Put the pizza in the refrigerator and watch some television
  - Throw the pizza in the garbage and watch some television
  - Put the pizza in the refrigerator and begin cleaning the oven and stove

**TEST QUESTIONS**

6. You come home from school and find that someone has broken into your house. The first thing you should do is:
- Go inside to see if anyone is still there
  - Go inside and try to figure out what's missing so you can tell the police
  - Scream real loud to let the intruder know you're home
  - \* Leave as quickly as possible, go to a neighbor's house and have an adult help you contact the police, and then call your parents
7. When you are home alone, a good safety precaution would be:
- Always keep the doors locked
  - Don't answer the door to strangers
  - Don't tell a phone caller you are alone
  - Stay inside the house after dark
  - \* All of the above

*20.0001-0102 Identify methods to manage when alone.*

1. Some things you could do when you are alone and bored are listed below. Put an "R" on the blank by the four (4) items that are responsible behaviors.
- \_\_\_ a. Go through the drawers in your parents' bedroom
- \_\_\_ b. Watch all the television programs or videos your parents' don't like you to watch
- R   c. Clean your room or space and get it organized
- R   d. Read a good book or the newspaper
- R   e. Work on projects for merit badges
- R   f. Write a letter to someone who lives far away
2. An "Independent Ideas" Handbook is useful because:
- It can help me remember some ways to use my time
  - It would have emergency telephone numbers listed and be easy to use
  - It could have basic rules written down for me to check
  - \* All of the above
3. Some healthy snacks I could eat are listed below. Put an "H" on the blank by four (4) items that are healthy snacks.
- H   a. Celery filled with peanut butter or cheese
- H   b. Canned or fresh fruit
- \_\_\_ c. Marshmallows dipped in melted chocolate
- \_\_\_ d. Candy bars and soda pop
- H   e. Crackers and cheese
- H   f. Milk shake or frozen yogurt

**TEST QUESTIONS**

**20.0001-0103** *Identify the advantages and disadvantages of developing skills for independence.*

1. There are some positive aspects as well as some negative aspects about being independent. Some of these aspects are listed below. Put a "P" on the blank by the four (4) items that are positive aspects.
  - a. You might not know how to act in an emergency
  - P b. You have a chance to learn to do things on your own
  - P c. You have a chance to build your own self-concept
  - P d. You may learn to use your time better
  - e. You might feel rejected by your friends
  - P f. You can learn to make decisions on your own

**20.0001-0104** *Define the term independence.*

1. The term *independence* means:
  - a. You are free to do anything you want to do
  - b. You can only do what your parents tell you to do
  - c.\* You are ready to take on more responsibilities along with more freedoms
  - d. You don't have to do what your parents ask you to

**20.0001-0115** *List the five steps of problem solving.*

1. There are five steps in problem solving. They are listed below but not in order. Put them in order by placing the numbers from 1 to 5 in front of each one.
  - 2 Brainstorm possible solutions
  - 5 Look back and evaluate
  - 1 Identify the problem
  - 4 Make a decision and act on it
  - 3 Explore and evaluate possible solutions
2. Deciding on a career is a problem-solving experience.
  - a.\* True
  - b. False
3. Problem solving is a basic skill used:
  - a. Every day by a few people
  - b. Once a week by everyone
  - c. Once in a while by everyone
  - d.\* Every day by almost everyone