Independent Living Research Utilization

We create opportunities for independence for people with disabilities through research, education, and consultation

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Independent Living Skills Training for Transition to the Community

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What You Will Learn

• How IL philosophy and CIL staff support a successful transition process by reinforcing the peer-to-peer approach.
• Skills and services most often needed by individuals who are transitioning out of an institution and into the community.
• The process for assessing an individual’s training needs prior to and after the transition.
• How to assist individuals to develop a personalized independent living skills training plan to ensure their successful transition and integration into community living.
Our Focus: Identify, Learn (or Relearn) Independent Living Skills

• This is *one piece* of the entire transition process – not a global training on the entire transition from institution to community process.
Our Focus

• Not only do we assist the person getting out of the institution, but by building independent living skills, we can help get the institution out of the person.

• Everyone has the right to the dignity of risk.
Peer-to-Peer Approach

• Peer-to-Peer – Non-Hierarchical

• Start to rid the person of the hierarchy that was imposed since day one in the institution.

• Empowerment – Listen to the individual’s experience as a peer and mentor.
Assessment – Working Together to Identify IL Skills Needed

• Identify Independent Living Skills together for best success in the community.
• Start (re)building skills while in facility.
• Remember – Some of these much needed Independent Living Skills were not taught or were lost in the facility.
Assessment –
A Non-Judgmental Approach

• A non-judgmental approach is critical to success.
• People who feel that disclosing information will prevent them from transitioning will not share critical information.
• Empathy creates understanding.
• Consider when consumers are assessing your needs rather than their own.
Assessment—Get Curious

• Get to know the person in a “curious sense” not clinical.
• Questions to ask—
  • What were your interests before entering the facility?
  • What hobbies/activities have you kept up while in the facility?
  • What are your passions/dreams?
Assessment – Questions to Ask

• If the person had a disability prior to entering the facility, did she or he enter the facility not knowing important independent living skills?

• If so, it may be important as the transition facilitator to teach these essential skills or to support the person in finding the right resources.
Assessment – Questions to Ask, cont’d.

• Did the person go into the facility because of acquiring a disability?

• If the individual did not have experience living in the community with a disability, peer support and modeling are critical to a successful transition back into the community.
Assessment – Getting Back into the Community

• Plan an outing. The trip will utilize multiple skills such as planning the trip, travel skills, money management, communication skills, establishing a comfort level of being in the community and offer you a chance to support the individual and assess what skills need to be taught.

• Meet with a home health agency and ask the individual to identify and talk about his or her precise daily needs over a 24-hour period.
Teaching Independent Living Skills

Utilize situations that arise organically as much as possible.

- Prioritize with the individual which skills she or he would like to learn first. Utilize open-ended questions and formalized checklists.

- Acknowledge that the skills you want to teach may not match up to what the person wants to learn.

- Teach in the moment when you don’t have the luxury to prioritize.
  - As the needed skills become obvious, take the time to teach or re-teach the skills.
Use What Services your Center is Already Offering

- IL Skills Classes
- Peer Groups
- Individual Peer Mentoring
Peer to Peer Support/Mentoring

- Overcoming Learned Helplessness
- Empathy
- Excellent Listening Skills
- Problem Solving Together
Approaches to IL Skills

• One-on-One
• Modeling/doing it together
• Bring a class to the facility
• Work with the facility
Questions & Answers
IL Skills Commonly Useful for Community Living

- Self-Advocacy
- Mobility/Travel Training
- Money Management
- Socialization
- Interpersonal Skills (Re)Building
Useful Skills, cont’d.

• Attendant Management

• Organization and management of priorities and schedule.

• Safety and survival

• Household Management
Self-Advocacy

- Put a voice to one’s needs.
- Keep asking “What do you need here?”
- Identify medical needs, housing, and benefits.
- Identify durable medical equipment, assistive technology, and accessibility needs in the community.
- Support the individual in self-health education.
Self-Advocacy, cont’d.

- Provide support in making their own phone calls, writing emails, etc. for resolving personal situations. Use application processes and snafus with benefits, housing applications, etc. as teachable moments.
- Support them in arranging their own transportation.
- Encourage the person to register to vote.
- Introduce them to ADAPT.
- Offer advocacy classes at the Center.
Mobility/Travel Training

- Travel together, or meet in the community.

- Make a stop at the facility and bring a person along from there.

- Teach or refer for vehicle transfer skills.
Money Management

- Teach skills in putting together a budget.
- Support the person in opening a bank account.
- Teach skills in online banking, autopay and more!
Socialization

- Offer a Peer Support Group for individuals wanting to transition out and those who have left facilities.
- Invite facility residents to Center for home cooked meal.
- Hold classes and parties at your Center.
- Match up with individual peer mentor, someone who transitioned out or has a similar disability.
- Seek out churches, old friends, or community classes.
- Share volunteer opportunities.
- Once moved, support person in meeting the neighbors.
Interpersonal Skills (Re)Building

• Acknowledge grief of leaving facility.

• When relevant, refer for substance abuse/support groups before leaving facility.

• Suggest person invite friends from facility to new home.

• Talk about the adjustment of living alone.

• Discuss family integration or lack of integration issues.
Attendant Management

• Offer the person a real life opportunity to learn and take control of attendant management before the transition.

• Offer skill building in how to:
  • Communicate needs in a way that’s respectful to self and caregivers.
  • Set appropriate boundaries.
  • Identify the difference between assertiveness vs. aggression.
Organization and Management of Priorities and Schedule

• Offer skill building in how to:
  • Order and pick up prescription medications.
  • Keep appointments or call if consumer can’t make appointment.
  • Maintain a calendar for medical appointments and attendant care.
Community Resources

• Share information and resources on:
  • Practical Resources: Social Security office, bank, food banks.
  • Community Engagement Resources: churches, library, clubs.
Skills for Safety and Survival

- Offer skill building in how to:
  - Obtain weather and disaster alerts.
  - Create an evacuation plan.
  - Create an emergency list.
  - Communicate with first responders.
  - Identify and access disaster shelters.
Household Management—Safety Routines

• Maintain smoke and carbon monoxide alarms.
• Keep a fire extinguisher easily accessible.
• Store knives in a block or sheaths.
• Keep clutter to a minimum.
• Unplug appliances that are not in use.
• Turn on burners only after pots or pans are in place, etc.
• Secure online banking and other cyber accounts.
Household Management

- Offer skill building in how to:
  - Cook and organize a kitchen
    - Organize the pantry and refrigerator.
    - Store food properly in containers or plastic wrap.
    - Clean vegetables, fruits, fish, and meat before eating or cooking.
  - How to find and follow recipes.
  - How to use the stove, oven, microwave, or similar tools to prepare food
- Do laundry.
Household Management, cont’d.

• Get rid of trash – Where do the garbage and recycling go?
• Take care of floors. (sweeping, mopping, vacuuming, and shampooing rugs as needed)
• Take care of furniture. (dusting and polishing as needed)
• Clean the bathroom. (scrubbing bathtub or shower stall, disinfecting toilet bowl, cleaning sink and counter space)
• Manage general tasks. (organizing and storing household goods and cleaning supplies)
Starting Anew

• Not only assisting the person to get out of the institution, but also *getting the institution out of the person.*
What If?

• How do I do all this if our Center is not doing a lot of transition?
  • Develop a peer support group and invite people from the institutional facility.
  • Ask facility social workers for referrals to your IL skills program.
  • Offer to do a group at the local facility.
  • Ask your local ombudsperson program for referrals.
Questions & Answers
Final Questions & Answers and Evaluation

Any final questions?

Please click the link below to complete the evaluation survey:

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