

Independent Living

Franklin County DSS

April 2009

7 Essential Life Skills

To ensure success at college, your youngster must know how to manage time, set and stay within a budget, do laundry, and generally get through everyday life on her own.

Here are seven independent living skills students must master before heading off to college:

1. Managing money.
2. Doing laundry.
3. Having good sleep habits - getting enough sleep and being able to wake up on time.

4. Keeping track of appointments and deadlines.
5. Staying on top of academic assignments.
6. Requesting assistance when needed from tutors, counselors, and teachers - and being able to explain which accommodations are needed and why.

7. Using medication appropriately, and getting refills before running out. The first semester or two of college is not a good time to experiment with meds.



Are you ready for independence?

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How Do I Know If I Am Getting Enough Sleep?

Even if you think you're getting enough sleep, you may not be. Here are some of the signs that you may need more sleep:

- difficulty waking up in the morning
- inability to concentrate
- falling asleep during classes
- feelings of

moodiness and even depression

Upcoming Classes:

- Dates and times to come.

May: Picnic
June: College Tours
July: Foodies
August: More College Tours

Dispelling Irrational Thoughts

One way to dispel irrational thoughts is by disputing them. Disputing involves asking oneself challenging questions that poke holes in the illogical reasoning that characterizes irrational beliefs. Check out this example:

A (activating event)—You didn't score well on the ACT or SAT exam.

B (irrational belief)—You think, "How stupid I am. I'll never get into college with this score.

Why can't I ever do anything right? I probably won't do any better if I take it again, so I

might as well just give up and forget about college."

C (emotional consequence)—You feel depressed and disgusted with yourself.

D (dispute)—Challenge your thoughts. Ask yourself: "Just because I didn't do well on this exam, where is the evidence that I'm stupid? Just because I did poorly, it doesn't necessarily mean I can't get into any college. Also, colleges look at other things besides SAT and ACT scores. I didn't do well this time, but where is the evidence that I won't do better

if I take the test again?"

E (new effect)—As a result of the disputing, you have a better perspective on the problem, and you can employ more effective problem-solving skills. You are not as down on yourself. You recognize that one bad score might not have the disastrous consequences you originally assumed when you were reacting irrationally.

Try the A-B-C-D-E model to dispute your irrational thoughts!

How to Schedule Appointments Efficiently

An appointment-crammed schedule can take on a life of its own, gobbling up your workdays like a ravenous beast. Tame your schedule by adopting some of the following simple techniques. The secret to success lies in applying them firmly and consistently.

Step 1: Block out time on your schedule for solitary work. Guard this appointment with yourself fiercely. Make it clear you'll accept no phone calls or pop-in visits. If possible, escape

to a solitary spot during this time. Read 188 Organize Your Workday.

Step 2: Deflect excessive requests for your time from co-workers. Ask those who squander your time to submit written proposals, or schedule meeting times with them far enough out so that they might just solve the issues on their own.

Step 3: Allot blocks of time for making and taking phone calls. Avoid phone tag by suggesting these times to callers. Take a list of calls to make when you have a drive of longer than 10 minutes.

Step 4: Cluster out-of-office meetings geographically.

Traveling to and from appointments uses up vast amounts of time. See 4 Run Errands Efficiently.

Step 5: Communicate clearly how much time you have to meet with people, and then enforce the finish times.

Schedule appointments in your own office back-to-back so the arrival of one person encourages the departure of the other.

Step 6: Keep track of how much of your workweek you devote to appointments. If the amount exceeds 50 percent, evaluate whether other people's agendas are overpowering yours.

Drinking games can kill you!

ER: Finale was Inspired by Real-Life Story

April 2nd, *ER*, the longest-running American primetime medical drama of all time, aired its final episode which saw Gates (John Stamos) dealing with a young teen who is admitted for alcohol poisoning after playing a deadly drinking game with

friends while Dr. Carter (guest star Noah Wyle) opens a new medical facility for the underprivileged in Chicago.

According to executive producer John Wells, the special two-hour episode of

the long-running medical drama was inspired by the tragic real-life story of his ex-niece, 17-year-old Shelby Lyn Allen, who died of alcohol poisoning in December

Tricks of the Goals Game

Here are some good tricks to help you save to meet goals that may take one or more years.

1. Remember to always **pay yourself first**. If you have a job where you make \$50 a week, set aside the first \$10 or \$20 you make and put it into savings before you spend it on other things or give it to other family members.
2. Another good trick to help you save is to cut out a picture of what you plan to buy (or do) and put it in your dresser

drawer or keep it in your wallet or pocket. When you are tempted to spend money on something you know you don't really need, take a look at the picture. Imagine the fun you will have when the item you're saving for is yours.

3. Another good idea—which isn't really a trick—is to keep your savings quiet. The other kids in your foster family or group home (or even your own relatives) may not have developed the discipline to put money aside. If they know you are setting money aside,

they may look to you for loans—the kind of loan that doesn't get repaid.

Don't shortchange your future. Keep your savings for your goals.

College is for You!

Check out these facts.

- **People who graduate from college are much more likely to get a job and stay employed.** Only 2.3 percent of adults (25 and older) with a college education were unemployed during 2005. People with less than a bachelor's degree (some college or an associate's degree) experienced 2.6 percent unemployment. During that

time, 4.7 percent of high school graduates were unemployed, but 7.6 percent of high school dropouts didn't have jobs. Less education equals more unemployment. (Source: U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics. Office of Employment and Unemployment Statistics. Current Population Survey, 2005.)

- **People who graduate**

from college earn more money. In 2005, a person with a bachelor's degree earned 37 percent more than a person with a high school diploma. A master's degree provided even more earning power—almost double the earning power of a high school diploma alone. (Source: U.S. Bureau of the Census, Current Population Survey, 2004 Annual Social & Economic Supplement, March 2005.)



1-2-3-4 Chili

2 lbs. ground beef, browned and drained

4 (8 oz.) cans tomato sauce

3 (15 oz.) cans chili spiced kidney beans

Shredded Cheese

Onions

Combine all ingredients in a

slow cooker.

Cook on low 6 to 8 hours.

Garnish with onion slices and cheese.

Try some corn bread or crackers to compliment your chili.

Franklin County DSS IL
Program
139 E. Court St.
Rocky Mount, VA 24151

Pav067@dss.state.va.us

[Http://www.franklincountyva.gov/ss-independent-living](http://www.franklincountyva.gov/ss-independent-living)

You're growing up and getting older. You're spreading your wings and getting ready to fly. You're reaching your limits. You're figuring out what life means to you. And we're here to help you along your journey to independence and adulthood. Reaching independence gives you rights and responsibilities that you've never had before and both are a lot to deal with. Getting ready for independence can be a lot of work, but it can be fun as well. Are you getting ready to go to college? Let us help you by taking you on a campus tour, assisting with financial aid applications, and applying for college. Are you heading for the workforce? We'll help with the resumes and practice the job interview with you. Come make new friends. Learn more about what's waiting for you in the real world. Pick up some helpful skills before you're on your own.

We Deal in Success!

Indoor Tanning Versus Sunlight

The sun's rays contain two types of ultraviolet radiation that affect your skin: UVA and UVB. UVB radiation burns the upper layers of skin (the epidermis), causing sunburns. UVA radiation penetrates to the lower layers of the epidermis, where it triggers cells called melanocytes (pronounced: **mel**-eh-no-sites) to produce melanin. Melanin is the brown pigment that causes tanning.

Both UVA and UVB rays contribute to skin aging. Both types also can cause potentially cancerous changes in your cells' DNA. And, according to a recent study, radiation from just 10 indoor-tanning sessions in 2 weeks can suppress a person's cancer-fighting immune system.

Although tanning beds use UVA light, the concentration of UVA rays from a tanning bed

is greater than that from the sun. And, despite manufacturer claims, some tanning lamps do also emit UVB light. So if you try indoor tanning, you'll absorb far more rays in the long run, significantly age your skin, and put yourself at even greater risk for skin cancer.