

Self-Determination Skills for Your Child to Develop

Understanding Needs

Knowledge of Needs

- Answer questions about visual impairment politely.
- Communicate their visual diagnosis in simple terms.
- Name and describe their visual impairment.
- Understand and explain the type and cause of their visual impairment.
- Explain the purpose of related services.
- Share unique needs with unfamiliar adults and peers.
- Clarify personal visual limitations and potential side effects.
- Communicate limitations in specific sports based on medical recommendations.

Need for Assistance or Adaptations

- Ask for assistance when needed.
- Indicate personal needs for adaptations.
- Identify visual needs and accommodations for teachers and staff.
- Ask for assistance when needed.
- Politely request assistance in new settings.
- Ask an appropriate person for assistance.
- Solicit information/assistance from appropriate persons in various settings.

Access Readers

- Obtain readers in public schools.
- Discuss where and how to find readers.
- Discuss the types of materials that need to be read and set goals for them, such as times, amounts per session, media, and what must be in place before the reader arrives.
- Prepare a list of questions needed for interviewing readers.
- Prepare a budget or a list of favors for compensating readers.
- Discuss how long reading sessions should be.
- Compile a list of preferred features in readers.
- Use a reader effectively.

Determine Appropriate Accommodations

- Use various reading devices (e.g., magnifier, video magnifier, etc.) to develop reading flexibility with regular print.
- Develop a method for identifying math notations (including fractions, decimals, percentages, etc.).
- Determine the print size needed for optimal personal efficiency.
- Access different formats used in tests, worksheets, and high-stakes exams (e.g., true/false, multiple choice, columns)

Self-Advocacy

Demonstrate Self-Advocacy Skills

- Communicate that they do not need help.
- Request academic materials or equipment that match personal needs.
- Express preferences for learning materials and formats in different environments (e.g., braille menu, adapted software).
- Communicate when eye fatigue or time limits affect reading activities.
- Request environments with fewer auditory distractions.
- Choose the most appropriate seating for classroom activities based on visual needs.
- Move or request closer view of materials presented at a distance.
- Identify strategies to assist in performing near and distance tasks.
- Use large print texts, tests, and classroom materials.
- Inform teachers or staff when something is unclear.

Problem-Solving Visual Needs

- Identify steps to take if visual problems arise.
- Speak up and ask for assistance when needed.
- Ask a family member/peer for assistance.
- Ask a family member/peer to be a reader.
- Request seating or workspace needs from the classroom teacher.
- Request extended time for assignments/tests.
- Utilize strategies for maximizing visual efficiency to complete classroom tasks (e.g., positioning materials, highlighting, using a line marker, peer reader).
- Express preferences for learning materials and formats.
- Modify the environment to suit specific tasks (e.g., increasing or modifying lighting).
- Select adaptive materials for learning tasks independently.

Responsibility

Responsible Use and Care of Devices

- Properly care for assistive technology (AT) tools.
- Store and retrieve devices when needed.
- Use appropriate tools for each task.

Problem-Solving Related to Assistive Technology

- Solve problems when technology fails (e.g., check connections, reboot, call tech support).
- Recharge devices and change batteries when needed.
- Know when to ask an adult for help.
- Report procedures for acquiring, repairing, and maintaining tools.

Contact Vendors and Material Agencies

- Identify resources for adapted materials.
- Maintain a list of vendors and procedures for obtaining adapted books, magazines, and newspapers.

- Keep a file on vendors for purchasing/repairing materials and equipment.
- Know more than one agency that supplies adapted materials and explain acquisition procedures.
- List the names of agencies that are personally helpful.
- Register with the Library for the Blind and Physically Handicapped.
- Register with the state library.
- Order book titles independently from libraries or accessible platforms.
- Receive and return books and media.
- Complete projects by analyzing tasks, organizing them, acquiring materials, and requesting materials within a reasonable time.
- Download open-source books from the internet.
- Complete a search for books on the Louis database at the aph.org website.

Contact Service Agencies

- Clearly articulate personal goals.
- Communicate regularly with transition caseworkers.
- Identify Supplemental Security Income (SSI) benefits and drawbacks.
- Research community organizations and develop a list in the appropriate media.
- Seek clarification from agencies when needed.