



## Personal Responsibility and Participation

Suggestions for enhancing personal responsibility skills are listed below:

- Encourage children to help with clean-up early on. Give students responsibilities for placing napkins or utensils on the table.
- Build routines for children to begin clearing their own plates/placemats, utensils.
- Designate areas and label cubbies and belongings so that students can work toward identifying their own belongings and their own storage areas. Build routines that enhance putting their own things away in the designated areas. All students might not recognize their names or their associated symbols. Photos of the children clearly labeled with their names underneath are helpful for helping them learn to identify their names, belongings, and storage areas.
- Use photos or other visuals to clearly mark and label the areas of the room. Photos that match the items are helpful as are other visuals showing the items. Teach students to match the item to the label so that they can easily help with clean-up.

**Participation** is an important factor of Adaptive behavior and personal responsibility. Below are strategies to provide additional supports for students who have unique needs:

- Use visual schedules and state directions in a “first/then” format so that students are aware of what will be happening. Refer to the visual schedule throughout the day. Familiarity with the routine increases ease of participation.
- Encourage and praise attempts, even if there are mistakes in the child’s performance. Provide visual steps and modeling for new tasks.
- Use time frames and timers so that students know when an activity will end.
- Allow extra time in the routine when introducing new skills.
- Deal with students’ frustrations calmly. Repeat and model the instructions. Reinforce attempts.

**Transitions** have a vital role in teaching students skills such as helping to clean up, remaining with a group or with a task, and following directions. Transitions should be planned as a regular part of the daily routine.

- Use the visual classroom schedule to show and prepare for changes and to make students aware of “what will happen next.”
- Use a timer or “time” statement to prepare for changes in activities:
  - “One more minute”
  - “Two more times”
- Use a transition warning to cue students that activities are about to change:
  - Transition song or rhyme
  - Bell
  - Lights flicked off and on
  - Clapping hands

## **Video modeling**

Video modeling has been found useful for learning a variety of skills such as changing activities, classroom rules, self-care skills (toileting, organizing materials, eating meals and snacks) as well as developing social and communicative skills such as play skills. Use of video modeling can be motivating because the subjects in the videos are either peers that you have filmed or children who are near the age of the students watching. Video modeling can be time and cost effective, portable, and they can allow opportunities for repetition.

There are many videos on YouTube and on some sites which focus on supports for children with autism. However, in using those, caution should be taken to be sure that they are appropriate for the age, development, and needs of the child.

An inexpensive way to provide video modeling is to film students performing a task correctly in the classroom and use it for the entire class or for specific students to view. Children usually enjoy seeing themselves in a video or in a photograph and it can be a good way to point out what the children on the video are doing correctly. Caution should be taken that videos made in the classroom are used in accordance with district guidelines.

## **References and Resources**

Didomenico, Kelli. How to Encourage Self Help Skills in Children, The Children's Workshop, Rhode Island College, Feb. 2015

DiProperzio, Linda. Teaching Your Child Independence. Meredith Corporation, 2010.

Gillard, Jackie. Help Yourself, 8 tips for teaching kids to be more independent, *Today's Parent*, Sept 2016.

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Prekindergarten Program for Children with Disabilities Extended School Year (ESY) Activities \*Home Packet\*

Resources online:

Teaching your child to become independent with daily routines, The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning Vanderbilt University.  
<http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/modules/module3b/handout2.pdf>

[Resources: National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations](#)

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