



# Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired Outreach Programs

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## **Addressing the ECC: Independent Living Skills**

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**3:00-4:00 PM**

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Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired  
Outreach Programs

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# Independent Living Skills for Visually Impaired Students

Petra Hubbard

February 5, 2015



What do we mean by Independent Living Skills?

Why do we need to teach ILS to children with visually impairments?

Independent Living Skills are part of the Expanded Core Curriculum and as such, it's not just a good idea, it's the law.

## What does the law say?

- Texas Law §30.002 Education for Children With Visual Impairment National Agenda
- Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 §300.1

OK, so Independent Living Skills are Important...

How are we supposed to address all of these skills?

Start with assessment

## The student needs ILS skills, now what?

- It takes a village, a collaborative team.
- Use resources available in the home, the school, and the community.
- How to fit direct instruction in ILS from a TVI.

## What is available for your ILS lessons in the school setting?

- Teacher Lounge
- Life Skills classroom
- Home-Economics class
- Table
- Table with electric plug
- Sink
- Stove and oven

## Adaptive Techniques 1

- General recommendations including contrast and reaching skills.
- Marking items and appliances
- Labeling
- Pouring
- Spreading

## **Adaptive Techniques 2**

- Eating
- Measuring
- Peeling
- Slicing
- Stove safety
- Oven safety

## **Adaptive Techniques 3**

- Using appliances
- Marking Clothes
- Using Sock Tuckers
- Needle threading
- Sewing

## **Adaptive Techniques 4**

- Money Folding
- Coin identification
- Personal care: toothpaste on brush
- Signature

# **Adaptive Independent Living Skills for Persons with Visual Impairments**

Petra Hubbard, TVI, Rehabilitation Teacher of the Blind  
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February 5, 2015

## **Purpose of this webinar:**

The purpose of this webinar is to give Teachers of the Visually Impaired (TVI's) a "starter kit" of ideas on how to assess, teach, and access various resources for teaching independent living skills. There are many excellent books, articles, and web resources available on this topic which can offer more comprehensive information. After the introduction, there are a lot of video clips that demonstrate some of the more specialized adaptive skills.

## **What do we mean by "independent living skills"?**

This area includes cooking and food management, eating skills, housekeeping, clothing management, personal care, communications, personal record keeping, financial management, and home mechanics.

## **Why teach independent living skills?**

To be fully successful in life, everyone needs to know how to prepare food, use proper eating techniques, clean and organize their workspaces and home environment, be able to dress themselves, select coordinated outfits, take care of their clothing (including needle threading and sewing), attend to their personal hygiene and grooming, and manage their money. The TVI is required to assess, provide instruction and/or obtain other resources to facilitate acquisition of skills these areas.

## **Why is teaching children with visual impairments ILS so important?**

People with visual impairments do not have the same opportunity to learn skills through casual observation as fully sighted people. Consider what it would be like to only hear the activities surrounding the frying of an egg, for example. There will be sounds, such as the refrigerator opening, the rattling of pans, the sizzling of the butter, the cracking of an egg, the sizzling of the egg, and so on, but unless a person has direct experience with each of these steps, the sounds may be meaningless. A fully sighted person would be able to see all of the actions associated with making an egg, but a person who has a visual impairment might only know that there is a predictable pattern of sounds.

Knowing how to perform and regularly doing age appropriate independent living skills is so important to a child's self-esteem and sense of self-reliance. It also improves the child's standing within the family as he or she is seen as a fully contributing member of the family. The siblings will think that the division of labor is fair. Doing chores at home helps to develop the work ethic as the child learns to work under the supervision of their first bosses, his parents. Socially, a student who is able to take care of themselves at school will be seen as more of an equal by their peers. Many ILS develop concepts that tie in well to academic subjects. Regularly

performing chores gives a child plenty of practice on how to run a household so they will be better prepared when they have their own household. Our ultimate goal for our students is full employment and independent living.

I would like to refer you to one of your handouts called "Children with Visual Impairment: Do Them a Favor and Give Them Some Chores". This article is addressed to parents of students with visual impairments, and contains some of the many reasons why teaching independent living skills is so important.

### **It's not just a good idea, it's the law!**

What does Texas Law say? Texas Law §30.002 Education for Children With Visual Impairments (c)(4) include methods to ensure that children with visual impairments receiving special education services in school districts receive, before being placed in a classroom setting or within a reasonable time after placement the training in compensatory skills, communicative skills, orientation and mobility, social adjustment skills, and vocational or career counseling, required for those students to succeed in classroom settings and to derive lasting, practical benefits from the education in the school district;

(e) Each eligible blind or visually impaired student is entitled to receive educational programs according to an individualized education program that:

(4) Provides a detailed description of the arrangements made to provide the student with orientation and mobility training, instruction in braille or use of large print, other training to compensate for serious visual loss...

The National Agenda: In addition to all the core curricular areas included in the general educational curriculum, students with a visual impairment need to be assessed and receive instruction in very specific skills that have been demonstrated to be potential problem areas for person with a visual disability. <http://www.tsbvi.edu/agenda/wi-ecc.htm>

The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act 2004 §300.1 The purposes of this part are: To ensure that all children with disabilities have available to them a free appropriate public education that emphasizes special education and related services designed to meet their unique needs and prepare them for further education, employment, and independent living.

### **So, how can we fit these Independent Living Skills into the student's programming?**

Start with assessment : To get the process started, the TVI will need to informally assess the skills that the student has and needs through observation and interviewing parents and other teachers. There are some assessment resources provided in one of the handouts.

The TVI does not need to do all of the instruction of ILS's. It takes a village, a collaborative team, to address the many ILS's. There are many resources available in the home, the school, and the community. On the home front, the TVI can consult with parents on tips, tricks, and equipment that would be useful for particular skills. DARS, Department for Blind Services, has Rehabilitation Teachers that can provide instruction on DLS in the home. They also offer programs and events that incorporate daily living. In the school environment there are many resources. The student may be enrolled home economics or consumer math classes, and the VI can consult with the classroom teacher on adapting equipment and techniques. Some students

are in life-skills classes where ILS instruction is offered. The TVI can meet with the classroom teacher and assist with developing IEP goals to address ILS, and then consult with the teacher regarding appropriate visual accommodations. The American Foundation for the Blind in the Dallas area has a model apartment that people can visit to get ideas about helpful equipment for daily living skills. There may be other agencies that serve people with visual impairments that may have a similar resource. Texas School for the Blind offers summer programs that address daily living skills. Region 10 Education Service Center offers ECC events periodically during the school year, and many of them incorporate daily living skills. Your local school district or ESC may also offer events that address the Expanded Core Curriculum.

The TVI may provide direct instruction to the student. Time before and after school may be considered. There may be a class, study hall, or "office aide" period that the student can be pulled from. It may be appropriate to develop a program of instruction during the summer. This is not ESY, but it is a summer IEP to address skills that there is no time for during the school year.

## **Assessments- Please see the resource list on assessments**

### **Resources in the School Setting**

If the student needs direct instruction in daily living skills from the Teacher of the Visually Impaired, there are many resources that can be used within the school. The home ec room may be available during the Home Economics Teacher's conference period. You will most likely find a sink and several microwave ovens in the teachers' lounge, but definitely ask the principal if it is OK to use this space for instructional purposes. Life Skills/Community Based Instruction classes may also have a kitchen and laundry equipment that may be available at various times of the day, so the TVI may be able to give a direct lesson then.

If you have a table you can work on:

1. Opening containers
  - a. Bags/packets- potato chips, cookies, sugar packets.
  - b. Zip-lock and other sandwich bags. Using twist-ties.
  - c. Boxes- crackers, cereal, raisins, instant pudding
  - d. Jars- applesauce, pickles
  - e. Cans- with pop-top or using can opener- fruit, sardines
  - f. Bottles and Juice boxes
  - g. Plastic containers- cottage cheese, yogurt
2. Sandwich making
  - a. Spreading (tub margarine is softer than stick)
  - b. Tuna salad
3. Measuring dry ingredients and stirring
  - a. Instant tea or chocolate milk.
4. Slicing pre-washed fruits, vegetables, or bread.
5. Wiping off a counter or table

If you have a sink:

1. Getting drink of water from faucet.
2. Pouring drinks from various containers.

3. Washing fruits and vegetables and then slicing them as needed. Salads such as 3-bean salad, coleslaw, green salad, cucumber salad
4. Measuring wet ingredients. Instant pudding.
5. How to wash dishes.

If you have a toaster:

1. Toast bread, English muffins. Make cinnamon toast.
2. Toast Pop-tarts
3. Toast frozen items such as waffles or French toast.

If you have a microwave:

1. TV dinners
2. baked potatoes.
3. vegetables- canned, fresh, or frozen
4. heating canned goods- soup, ravioli, chili
5. instant oatmeal
6. Macaroni and cheese
7. hot dogs
8. jello
9. hot drinks
10. bacon

If you have a stove:

1. heating canned goods
2. boiling hotdogs, potatoes, vegetables, pasta, soups, eggs
3. frying- eggs, pancakes, meat

If you have an oven

1. cookies, cakes.
2. meats- chicken, roasts, meatloaf.
3. casseroles

Do you have a crockpot?

Do you have a blender?

Do you have an electric skillet?

Do you have a toaster oven?

## **General Recommendations**

- Use contrast to make things more visible for the person with low vision.
- Reaching Skills: Put fingers together, at table level, not coming from above.
- Adjust lighting where needed (add lighting or reduce glare).
- Develop the habit of keeping things organized.
- Cabinet and oven doors and drawers should always be kept closed to avoid accidents.
- Doors should be fully open or fully closed for the same reason.
- Remove hazards such as scatter rugs.

## **Food Management**

### **Marking appliances**

Hi-marks is commercially available through catalogs that specialize in products for persons with visual impairments. Tee-shirt decorating paint in tubes is available from craft stores. Dr. Schol's moleskin can be cut up into suitable strips for immediate raised marks. Peel and stick bumps

are available from catalogs that offer products for persons with visual impairments. The key to successfully marking something is cleaning the surface to remove all dirt and oil. Mark only the most important parts of the dial to avoid clutter. For example, just mark 350 and 400 on an oven dial and permanent press and regular on a washing machine. Many appliance manufacturers offer Braille knobs or overlays for their products.

## **Organizing food**

Organize food by category (soups, fruit, vegetables, spices) and then alphabetize.

## **Labeling Food**

Create reusable labels. As labeled items are used, put the label in a box or jar from which a shopping list can be created. For large print, use magic markers to write on index cards and attach with rubber bands. Large print labels can be created using a large print dymolabeller. Braille labels (you can use a dymolabeller) can be hole-punched and attached with a rubber band or you can stick the label on a magnetic strip which will stick to metal cans. Raised letters or tactile symbols can also be used. For labeling frozen food, put a rubber band around the box. Attach a label that is taped to a bread tab (the square plastic thing that holds the bags of loaves of bread closed)

## **Pouring liquids**

Student should work over a sink or tray to contain spills. Rim of cup should be in contact with the container. The level of the drink can be determined by sound, weight, and, if the drink is cold, by placing the index finger in the cup. If a finger is used, it should be dry (it is difficult to feel the difference between wet and wetter) and a different temperature than the liquid. To tactually determine liquid level without touching the liquid, an ice cube or ping-pong ball can be placed in the cup; they will float above the drink. Liquid level indicators are commercially available from catalogs that offer products for persons with visual impairments. When pouring hot liquids, the student should place the cup in a sink and not touch it with their hand while pouring. A finger can then be put slightly over the edge of the cup to feel the steam to judge liquid level. Another technique is to feel the heat on the outside of the cup. Many hot drinks can be made by heating water in the microwave, so pouring hot liquids will not be necessary. Teach your student to pour from a variety of containers.

## **Spreading, sandwich making**

Teaching spreading is easier if you start with frozen or toasted bread so that the bread is less apt to tear. Sometimes it is easier to teach spreading using the back of a spoon rather than with a knife. For soft spreads, you can use a sunray pattern: put the spread in the center and then spread it to the four corners and then the four sides. Any systematic pattern is fine.

## **Eating Skills**

### **Drinking from glass and replace on table without spillage**

The student can hold the place that has just been vacated by the glass by putting their extra hand there. A less conspicuous method is for the student to hold the drinking glass in such a way that the pinky and ring finger are actually below the glass so those fingers can feel whether the place they wish to put to glass down on is available or not.

Salad – Teach student to cut salad with a grid pattern. First if the student is right-handed, have him hold the fork in his left hand and the knife in his right hand. The fork is then placed on the

right side of the salad and the knife is placed on the left side. Cut 3 or 4 horizontal cuts across. Turn the plate a quarter turn (90 degrees) and cut 3 or 4 more horizontal cuts. This will cut the salad in bite-sized pieces.

### **Cutting pancake or meat**

In a restaurant, the server can be asked to cut the food up before it is brought out. To cut meat independently, find the edge of the meat with the back of the fork, and stab the meat about 1 inch from the edge. Use knife to cut a semi-circle around the fork. Do not cut down onto the fork. Use the knife to stabilize the main piece of meat as the bite is dragged away from it.

### **Using a pusher**

A knife or bread can hold the food in position so that it can be picked up with a fork.

### **Clock technique**

- to locate food on plate
- to locate specific items on table

### **Condiments**

Salt and pepper can be poured into the palm or over spread-out fingers to gauge the amount being poured.

### **Measuring**

Graduated measuring cups can be used to measure both dry and liquid ingredients. They can be marked tactually on the underside of the handle. with tee-shirt decorating paint...one dot for one cup, 2 dots for ½ cup, 3 dots for 1/3 cup and so on. Measuring spoons can be marked in a similar way. To measure vanilla extract, for example, without risking losing much to overflow in measuring spoons, one techniques is to use metal measuring spoons, bent at a 90 degree angle. Pour the vanilla into a jar, and dip the spoon into the jar. You may opt to keep the vanilla stored in the jar or use a funnel to replace it in the original bottle.

### **Peeling**

Use a good, sharp peeler. Do not touch the blade of the peeler because this would interfere with its swivel action. Use a systematic pattern. Hold the food in one hand, make a peel, remove it, and turn the food slightly. Feeling the difference between the peeled and unpeeled parts is easier if you rinse the food.

### **Slicing**

Use a sharp knife and a cutting board. The food should be stabilized as much as possible. For round food, this means cutting the food in half and placing the cut side, which is flat, down on the cutting board. The pointer finger or fingernail of the hand stabilizing the food can be used to measure the thickness of the slice to be made. The knife is then placed at the tip of the finger. Once the knife is placed on the food, the pointer finger can be moved away. The slice can then be made.

Another technique is to feel the end of the food with the flat of the knife. The knife can be brought up to the upper edge of the food and then dragged across the food to the desired thickness. The slice can then be made.

Magna Wonder knives and other knives with thickness guides are commercially available. Using a food processor may be considered for larger cutting jobs.

### **Microwave ovens**

These are convenient and offer some nice safety advantages. The best thing about them is that they turn themselves off, even if the cook becomes distracted and forgets about what they are cooking. Dishes can become very hot in the microwave; the cook should use oven mitts. When possible, place the cooking dish, which will get heated by the hot food in it, on a plate, which will not get heated.

### **Orientation to stove and oven**

Some students may have no idea about how the stove and oven are set up. While the stove is cold, help them explore all the burners and the dials that control them. Let them feel the whole inside of the oven, including the 2 racks, the ribs that support the racks, and the burner for baking and the burner for broiling. You can do similar activities with other kitchen appliances.

### **Stove safety**

Orient student to all parts and functions of the stove. Teach student to operate the (marked) stove dials. Teach student how to center a pot on a burner, first on a cold burner, then on a warm burner. A pot can be centered by hand on a cold burner, but on a warm burner, the pot can be tipped slightly in all 4 directions to check for stability, or, preferably, the burner and the pot's relationship to it can be felt with the handle of a wooden spoon, checking at 3, 6, 9, and 12 o'clock positions. Pot handles should be kept at precisely 9 or 3 o'clock positions. During cooking, when everything is hot, pot handles can be found with the handle of a wooden spoon.

### **Boiling**

After the food is cooked, first of all turn off the burner. The food can be removed from the water by using a colander. Many foods can be steamed in a steamer basket instead, and in this case the food can simply be spooned out of the pot.

Lock-lid saucepans and other draining aids are commercially available.

### **Frying, turning**

Practice the turning techniques in a cold pan. A piece of bread is a good practice food. The food can be located and held in place with a fork while the spatula is slid underneath the food. Some foods can be turned with hinged food turners. For other foods, like pancakes, get food on spatula, lift out of pan, move it to one side edge of pan, and in one decisive movement, flip pancake toward center of pan. For pancakes, have just one in the pan at a time, and not too large. Eggs can be fried on the bottom and steamed on the top if you place a small pan lid over it. It may be safer to "fry" certain foods in the oven with the right recipe rather than pan-frying them.

## Oven safety

Orient student to the oven. Use long oven mitts. While oven is cold, practice putting items in and out of oven. The steps are: Step to the side of the door. Open the door. Wait a moment for the blast of heat to pass. Pull the oven rack out. Put food on the rack (or take it off, as the case may be). Push oven rack back in; close door. When food is to be taken out of the hot oven, the student must already have planned where the hot food is going to go.

## Timers

Braille, large print, and talking timers are commercially available. Conventional timers can be marked with hi-marks or tee-shirt decorating material. Access technology may have timers built in, but there is a risk of getting the technology dirty with food residue.

## Judging when food is cooked

Feel the texture and firmness with a metal fork. Learn the “peak smell” for that food. Does the food sound different when it is completely cooked? Use consistent time and stove/oven temperature for that food item so you get to know how long it takes to cook that food at that temperature. Baked goods can be tested with a knitting needle or knife: if it comes out clean it is ready. Tactile meat thermometers are commercially available.

## Recipes

Teach your student to be organized. Get out all the ingredients before beginning to cook. As each ingredient is used, put it on the other side of the work area or simply put it back where it belongs. Braille, tape, and large print cookbooks are commercially available. If you tape a recipe, say “stop” between each of the directions so the person knows when to stop the tape and follow the direction. Recipes are available on line as well. The student may compile a notebook or a folder on their computer filled with favorite recipes. If a computer is used to store recipes, it may be a good idea to reprint or emboss a hard copy to use while cooking to protect the computer from getting dirty.

## Other appliances

The crockpot, food processor, toaster, electric fry pan, and other appliances are convenient, work saving devices that may be more comfortable for your student to operate than the stove or oven. Your student deserves to know about them.

## Housekeeping

### Tables and countertops

Use systematic patterns.

### Washing dishes

Teach student how to determine if dishes have been cleaned enough. Teach student how to stack dishes in drainer or dishwasher.

### Sweeping

Use systematic patterns. You can teach the student to sweep everything to one side of the room or to sweep everything toward a waste can.

## **Vacuuming**

Teach your student the parts and functions of the vacuum cleaner. Teach them how to use a systematic pattern. You can scatter sawdust on the rug so you can easily see where they have and have not vacuumed. It is important to first clear the area of all small objects. This can be done by feel or by using a carpet sweeper (non-electric) first. Keeping track of the electric cord is important, so some of it may be looped several times around a shoulder, and only vacuum an area when you are traveling (covering more area) in the opposite direction of the electrical plug. If the plug is on your left, for example, each successive pass of the vacuum cleaner can be more and more to the right.

## **Making and changing a bed**

A brass safety pin or row of French knots can be used to mark the middle of the top sheet.

## **Bathroom cleaning**

You can teach all the parts that need to be cleaned and the systematic patterns that are needed. Before a lesson, you can put dabs of toothpaste on the items to be cleaned so you can easily tell if your student has cleaned all the needed parts.

## **Clothing Management**

### **Laundry**

Mark the laundry machines. Use marked measuring cups. For separating clothes, find out what system your student's family uses. Sock tuckers can be used to keep socks match throughout the washing and drying process.

### **Color identification**

#### **Organizing clothes**

- by season, by function and by color.

#### **Clothing file**

- to record which clothes go well with which clothes and clothing care instructions

#### **Safety pins**

Small brass safety pins can be put in the clothing tag to indicate the clothing color. You and your student can devise your own color code, using 1, 2, or 3 pins, horizontally, vertically, in a shape, heads up or heads down. You may decide to place a pin or two in a significant part of the item of clothing to indicate its color, such as at the shirt cuff or behind certain buttonholes.

#### **French knots**

Can be sewn in clothes to indicate color. There is not standard symbol system, so you and your student can make up your own system.

#### **Braille labels**

Braille labels are commercially available.

## **Matching shoes**

Teach your student to feel how shoes match. They can be organized to stay matched by using shoe bags, shoe boxes, shoe racks, or simply by clipping matched pairs together with a wash pin.

## **Sewing by hand**

### **Self-threading needle**

Find a bar of soap or something else suitable to stabilize to needle. First, hold the needle by the top, between thumb and forefinger. Place the needle in the soap. Give the soap  $\frac{1}{4}$  turn. This will position the needle well for the next steps. Hold the thread taut between your two hands, using your back fingers to actually hold the thread and your thumbs and pointer fingers to guide the thread. Gently find the bottom of the needle which is in the soap. Gently slide up the needle until you get to the top. The thread should go into the groove on top. Apply slight downward pressure simultaneously on both ends of the thread. Remove thumb and index finger from the top of the needle. Apply more downward pressure until thread pops down into the eye of the needle. Double thread your thread to prevent pulling too far.

### **Loop threader**

Position the needle using the same method described above. Hold loop threader so that just a bit of the tip is sticking out. This makes it easier to feel and control. Guide it up to the area where the eye of the needle is. Gently scrape threader back and forth (toward and away from you). You will hear two clicks each time. To put the threader in the eye, stop after just one click and push it in the eye. Wad up a small ball of thread at the end of the thread (this will make it easier to feel and control). Push this through the loop. Pull the loop out of the eye. Double thread.

### **Hem**

Hem clips are commercially available to aid with measuring.

## **Sewing by machine**

### **Threading the machine**

Machine needle threaders and self-threading machine needles are commercially available. You may get better results simply using a loop threader. The loop threader may need to be squeezed to make the point sharper so it will fit in the small eye. The loop may also need to be bent 90 degrees, depending on the orientation of the needle's eye. Removing the presser foot will make threading easier. Replace the foot before sewing!

### **Marking seam allowance**

Use tactile mark.

### **Adapting a pattern**

Transfer onto heavier paper. Instructions should be presented in appropriate media.

## **Personal Care**

### **Medicine labeling**

You can use the same methods used for food labeling. Develop a file with the prescription numbers and the pharmacy's phone number.

### **Medicine administration**

Pill organizers, eye drop delivery aids, adaptations for using syringes, are all commercially available through blindness catalogs.

### **Hair**

Does your student really know how to wash their own hair, or is the family doing it for them? Shampoo can be distinguished from the bottle of conditioner by simply putting a rubber band around one of them and not the other.

### **Nails**

Teach your student to shorten their nails by using a nail file or emery board. The underneath the nail area should be cleaned routinely with a nailbrush or pointed tool because the blind person is not able to tell how clean their nails are.

### **Shaving**

Use an electric shaver for increased safety. The student should use a systematic pattern and tactually check the results.

### **Cosmetics**

### **Tooth care**

Toothpaste can be placed on the toothbrush by holding the index finger along the long edge of the brush and the thumb on the short edge near the handle.

## **Communications**

- Telephone
- Telephone directory service
- Answering machines or using voice mail
- Taking accurate messages
- Emergency services
- Use of public phone
- Read-out radio
- Descriptive video

### **Personal Record Keeping**

#### **Address Book**

- a. Large print address books commercially available.

- b. For people who use tape recorders, addresses and phone numbers can be recorded on tape. Use voice indexing. Make a master copy and one copy to use. You will need to make new copies from time to time because heavy use stresses and can break the tape.
- c. Address index files can be developed in either Braille or large print.
- d. How to format an index file in Braille: Dividers are labeled upside-down and facing the back so that it is most easily read. When making the address card, the name of the person is placed on the bottom of the card so that when it is placed in the file box, facing away from the front the name is actually now upside down which is the most easily read position.
- e. Personal note-takers, computers, and other access technology can store this information.

## **Calendar**

Braille and large print calendars are commercially available. Appointments can be put on index cards in Braille or print and kept in order.

## **Financial Management**

### **Money identification**

#### **Coins**

Feel the edges; pennies and nickels are smooth; dimes and quarters are rough.

#### **Paper Money**

Organization: Put 2 dividers in wallet. You can use index cards or Braille paper cut to size, or purchase compartmentalized wallets which are available from catalogs on the resource list. Compartment 1 is for 1's and 5's; compartment 2 is for 10's and 20's, and the last compartment is for unfolded bills.

Folding: 1's are flat, 5's in half, 10's in three (like folding a letter to be placed in envelope), and 20's are in half the long way.

When paying with paper money, the student should say, as they are handing the money to the cashier, "here is a \_\_\_ dollar bill"

### **Banking**

#### **Signature**

Students need a consistent signature that will fit on a check

#### **Writing checks**

- Large Print Checks and "Business Checks"
- Raised-line Checks
- Check Writing Guides
- Using a check writing program, such as is found in Quicken, plus screen access program, such as Jaws. Braille-N-Speak also has such a program

#### **Keeping track of accounts**

- Large Print Check Register

Addressing the ECC: Independent Living Skills, Hubbard, P., 2015

- Braille techniques for keeping track of checking account-Ledger sheets or index cards (which can be stapled onto returned canceled checks)
- Some banks provide checking or savings statements in large print or on cassette or computer disk.
- File bank statements in brailled or large print file folders. Braille file labels face away from the reader and are upside down for ease of tactual reading.
- Accessing information from the Internet using a speech-access or screen enlarging software

### **Reading and paying bills**

A student capable of reading a bill visually with a CCTV or magnifier should be taught where to go to find how much they owe. A file can be created (Braille, large print, or on the computer) of account numbers and customer service phone numbers. The customer service number can be called to find out how much is owed. The same information can be gotten on the internet. A reader can be employed several times a month to assist with mail.

## **Recreation**

### **Cards and Games**

Teach parents how to mark games. Provide them a list of commercial sources of adapted games. Teach your student how to play a game which is popular with his peers.

### **Crafts**

This is a great way to keep ones-self occupied and also a way to provide gifts to loved ones.

## **Home Mechanics**

- Thermostat
- Electrical Outlets
- Light Bulbs
- Fire prevention
- Keys
- Hammer
- Screwdriver

## Resources for Independent Living Skills

### Independent Living Skills Assessments

Independent Living: a Curriculum with Adaptations for Students with Visual Impairments. Robin Lounmiet and Nancy Levack. A companion book is Assessment and Ongoing Evaluation Booklet. 1993. Texas State School for the Blind, [www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm)

EVALS- Evaluating Visually Impaired Students Using Alternate Learning Standards Emphasizing the Expanded Core Curriculum. Compiled by teachers at Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. 2007. Includes the assessment booklet from Independent Living (see above). [www.tsbvi.edu/publication/index.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/publication/index.htm)

Assessment Kit: Kit of Informal Tools for Academic Students with Visual Impairments. Debra Sewell. 1997. Texas State School for the Blind. [www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm)

Oregon Project for Visually Impaired and Blind Preschool Children-Skills Inventory. Jackson Education Service District, 101 N. Grape Street., Medford, OR 97501

SPI- Student Performance Indicators- <http://www.tsbvi.edu/attachments/spi.doc>

### Resources with Adaptive Techniques for Independent Living Skills

Independent Living Series: A Curriculum with Adaptations for Students with Visual Impairments. Robin Loumiet and Nancy Levak. 1993. A companion book to this series is Independent Living Activity Routines. 1996. Texas State School for the Blind. [www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm)

Basic Skills for Community Living: A Curriculum for Students with Visual Impairments and Multiple Disabilities. Nancy Levak et al. 1996/1997. A companion book is Basic Skills Activity Routines by Pat Stephenson. Texas State School for the Blind. [www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/publications/index.htm)

Foundations of Rehabilitation Teaching with Persons Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired. Paul E. Ponchillia, Ph.D. and Susan V. Ponchillia, Ed.D. 1996. American Foundation of the Blind. [www.afb.org/store-1-800-232-3044](http://www.afb.org/store-1-800-232-3044).

Let's Eat- Feeding a Child with a Visual Impairment. Jill Brody and Lynne Webber. Blind Children's Center, 4120 Marathon Street, Los Angeles, CA 90029

Making Life More Livable: Simple Adaptations for Living at Home After Vision Loss. 2001. American Foundation of the Blind. [www.afb.org/store-1-800-232-3044](http://www.afb.org/store-1-800-232-3044).

Oregon Project for Visually Impaired and Blind Preschool Children. Fifth Edition. Sharon Anderson et al. Jackson Education Service District. 100 N. Grape Street, Medford, OR, 97501.

VIISA- Resources for Family Centered Intervention for Infants, Toddlers, and Preschoolers Who Are Visually Impaired. SKI\*HI Institute, Utah State University, Department of Communicative

Disorders, Logan, Utah 84322. Second Edition, 1995. Published by HOPE, Inc. 809 North 800 East, Logan, UT 84321.

## **Free Resources with Adaptive Techniques of Independent Living Skills**

Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Division for Blind Services-  
[www.dars.state.tx.us](http://www.dars.state.tx.us) Rehabilitation Teachers are available for DLS instruction in the home.

Beyond TV Dinners: 3 Levels of Recipes for Visually Handicapped Cooks. Patricia Canter. American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. Available in large print or Braille. Free on Federal Quota Funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Clothing Care & Sewing Techniques for Visually Impaired or Totally Blind Students. Carol Woodward. Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Download from <http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/clothing.htm>

Cooking Without Looking: Food Preparation Methods and Techniques for Visually Handicapped Homemakers. Esther Knudson Tipps. Available in large print or Braille. American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. Available free on Federal Quota Funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Fred's Head Database: Sharing Tips and Techniques. American Printing House for the Blind. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Get Out in the Kitchen and Rattle Them Pots and Pans. Kate Moss and Holly Cooper. Texas School for the Blind and Visually Impaired. Outreach Department, SeeHear archives, Summer 2003.

Hadley School for the Blind [www.hadley-school.org](http://www.hadley-school.org) Free correspondence school  
Their Professional Education Program has courses that you, as a blindness professional, can take. Among their offerings are courses in independent living, recreation, and social skills. Families can also take these courses through their Family Education Program. Legally blind student age 14 and up can take Hadley courses themselves.

Help, It's Broken! A Fix-it Bible for the Repair Impaired. Arianne Cohen. American Printing House for the Blind. Available in Braille. Free on federal quota funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Hey! What's Cooking? A Kitchen Curriculum for the Parents of Visually Impaired Children. Franziska Naughton and Sharon Sacks. Free 14-page article at [www.tsbvi.edu/Education/hey-whats-cooking.htm](http://www.tsbvi.edu/Education/hey-whats-cooking.htm)

It Takes a Team to Teach Independent Living Skills. Eva LaVigne and Kate Moss. See/Hear Newsletter, Fall 2006. <http://www.tsbvi.edu/seehear/fall06/team.htm>

Living with Vision Loss. American Foundation for the Blind.  
[www.afb.org/section.asp?SectionID=40](http://www.afb.org/section.asp?SectionID=40) Click on "Everyday Skills" and "Adapting Your Home". Also available in Spanish

Money Handling and Budgeting: A Resource Guide for Use with Adolescents or Young Adults Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired. Venus Elder. 1997. American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. Available in large print or Braille. Free on Federal Quota Funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org)

Addressing the ECC: Independent Living Skills, Hubbard, P., 2015

Preprimer Cookbook: Cooking Techniques for the Blind. Sally Jones. American Printing House for the Blind, Inc. Available in large print. Free on Federal Quota Funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org).

Tips for Living with Blindness or a Visual Impairment. Department of Assistive and Rehabilitative Services, Division for Blind Services. [www.dars.state.tx.us/dbs/resources/index.shtml](http://www.dars.state.tx.us/dbs/resources/index.shtml)

You Can Do the Math: Overcome Your Math Phobia and Make Better Financial Decisions: Ron Lipsman. American Printing House for the Blind. Available in Braille. Free on federal quota funds. [www.aph.org](http://www.aph.org) .

### **Where to Find More Resources with Adaptive Techniques of ILS**

Independent Living Skills Curricula & Resources. Texas School for the Blind.  
<http://www.tsbvi.edu/resources-weblinks/190-ecc-strategies> <http://www.tsbvi.edu/REC2Web/>

The World Wide Web offers so many websites with articles and videos on ILS. You can do a search for "Daily Living Skills for the Blind" or "Independent Living Skills for the Blind" There is a lot on Pinterest and YouTube.



## Texas School for the Blind & Visually Impaired Outreach Programs



Figure 1 TSBVI logo.



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Figure 2 IDEAs that Work logo and disclaimer.