

Michigan Independent Living Skills Guide Exiting Elementary School

Preface

This checklist has been developed to address the unique needs of children with visual impairments. The checklist is not a curriculum but has been designed as a tool to facilitate a progression of skills for visually impaired children.

Note: Some items in this checklist have come from other books and lists. They are referenced by the following symbols:

- (+) Frey, W., Jakwerth, P., Lynch, L., Purcell, R., & Alonso, L., (1993) Special Education Program Outcomes Guide: Visual Impairment. 2nd ed. Lansing, MI: Disability Research Systems, Inc. Center for Quality Special Education
- (*) Loumiet, R., & Levack, N. (1993). Independent Living a Curriculum with Adaptations for Students with Visual Impairments. 2nd ed. Austin, TX: Texas Schools for the Blind and Visually Impaired.
- (#) Pogrund, R., Healy, G., Jones, K., Levack, N., Martin-Curry, S., Martinez, C., Marz, J., Roberson-Smith, B., & Vrba, A., (1998) Teaching Age-Appropriate Purposeful Skills (TAPS), 2nd ed. Austin, TX: Texas Schools for the Blind and Visually Impaired.

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Dressing Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Lace shoes
- Independently use labeling system
- Independently choose clothing
- Begin to participate with clothing purchases
- Independently put on tights
- Know sizes of own clothing

Prior Skills

- Describe clothing on self (color, stripes, t-neck, jeans vs. dress pants)
- Put on socks, shoes (correct feet, fasten shoes – velcro or buckle)
- Describe belongings (boots, coats, backpack, etc.)
- Identify own belongings (coat, backpack, etc.)
- Tie own shoes (always on correct feet)
- Ensure privacy when dressing and undressing
- Dress self independently (buckles, shoes, socks, etc.)
- Independently manipulate all outer wear (zips coat, boots, hats, mittens, etc)
- Loop belt through belt loops
- Differentiate the front/back of clothes when difficult to tell apart
- Orient articles of clothing (*)

Hygiene: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Dry hair using hair dryer
- Use hair accessories (*)
- Independently run bath/shower
- Care for own nails with minimal assistance (*)
- Apply deodorant
- Begin discussion about menstrual cycle
- Prepare for first menstrual cycle (*)
- Participate in discussions pertaining to maturation

Prior Skills

- Indicate need to use toilet
- Ensure privacy when using toilet/urinal
- Use toilet without accidents
- Ask for assistance to locate toilet in an unfamiliar setting (*)
- Toilet independently in a familiar bathroom
- Wash hands (water on/off, soap)
- Use a variety of towel dispensers/blowers
- Awareness of unsanitary condition in restrooms with supervision
- Wipe toilet seat or use seat protectors to ensure sanitary conditions
- Use a variety of bathroom fixtures (hands free sinks, etc.)
- Use socially acceptable behavior in a bathroom. (*)

- Use tissue to wipe and blow nose
- Apply lotion/sunscreen to self with assistance
- Participate in shampooing own hair
- Towel dry own hair (*)
- Drain tub
- Independently wash and dry all body parts
- Clean and care of own glasses with minimal reminders
- Clean/care for eye prosthesis with assistance
- Independently brush teeth
- Floss teeth
- Comb own hair
- Groom hair with minimal assistance (products, hair accessories, etc.)
- Put on Band-Aid
- Clean outer part of ear with wash cloth (*)

Eating Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Use serrated knife for hard to cut foods (beef, chicken, etc.)
- Demonstrate skills in eating hard to handle or unusual foods (*)
- Demonstrate knowledge of My Plate nutritional guidelines
- Choose foods to eat from each category of the My Plate nutritional guidelines
- Locate items in place setting in unfamiliar environment with minimal assistance
- Read a menu and make a selection (Braille, large print, electronic)
- Follow all procedures at a variety of fast food restaurants with minimal assistance (*)
- Follow procedures at restaurants having waiters or waitresses with minimal assistance (*)
- Follow procedures in commercial cafeteria and buffet lines with minimal assistance (*)
- Use vending machine(s) to obtain food/drink with minimal assistance

Prior Skills

- Use spoon and fork to feed self
- Use correct utensils for eating
- Chew with mouth closed
- Use napkin to wipe mouth and hands
- Drink out of a cup with no lid
- Use a straw to sip liquid
- Peel bananas, oranges and other fruit
- Differentiate food from non-food items (*)
- Take small bites from whole food items (sandwich, cookie, etc.) (*)
- Identify food on plate
- Locate all items at a simple place setting (knife, fork, spoon, plate, cup, etc.) (*)
- Use bread as a pusher
- Use correct posture at the table (move utensil to mouth, not mouth to utensil)
- Independently pour drink
- Independently spread using butter/lettuce knife
- Use butter knife and fork to cut soft food items (bananas, hotdogs, etc.)
- Cut food with side of fork/spoon as appropriate (*)
- Independently pass and serve self from common food dishes

- Independently drink from a drinking fountain
- Identify difference between salt and pepper shakers
- Use salt and pepper shakers
- Eat without being messy (*)
- Use condiments from a variety of containers with assistance (pumps, squeeze bottles, packets, etc.)
- Check for food spills on self with minimal assistance
- Eat hard/difficult foods with minimal assistance (ice cream cone, tacos, spaghetti, etc.)
- Independently open all containers

Cooking/Meals: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Cook using stove/oven with assistance
- Independently use a variety of small appliances (blender, hot shot, etc.)
- Identify spoiled food
- Plan simple meal with assistance
- Prepare simple meal with assistance
- Make grocery list for meal with assistance
- Independently follow a simple recipe
- Label food/drink items with assistance
- Discuss food safety and sanitation guidelines (food bacteria, etc.)
- Identify items within each category of My Plate
- Discuss healthy vs. non-healthy food choices

Prior Skills

- Carry a tray from one location to another
- Get items from kitchen (snacks, juice box from refrigerator)
- Return to correct place after use
- Pick up trash and place in trash can
- Wipe up spills with assistance
- Independently get drink (water from tap, juice box from refrigerator) (*)
- Stir using a variety of utensils/containers
- Name major appliances (refrigerator, stove, oven, etc.)
- Identify functions of major appliances (refrigerator, stove, oven, etc.)
- Orient to stove/oven
- Discuss safety precautions for kitchen appliances
- Name small appliances
- Identify function of small appliances
- Orient to small appliances
- Use common cooking utensils (spatula, measuring cups, etc.)
- Participate with adult in making simple items (slice and bake cookies, etc.)
- Actively participate with adult in cooking (stove/oven, etc.)
- Participate in meal preparation (cutting, measuring, etc.)
- Use kitchen tools with supervision (apple slicer, peeler, etc.)
- Use can opener(s) with supervision
- Discuss kitchen safety (electricity to close to water, dish towels on stove top, etc.)
- Safely plug/unplug small appliances

- Place food items in containers and close (bags, Ziploc, Tupperware, etc.)
- Store food appropriately (correct container, cupboard vs. refrigerator)
- Place food in appropriate locations
- Gather necessary items for a snack (recipe, etc.)
- Independently prepare a simple snack (sandwich, cereal, etc.)
- Use toaster with tongs/microwave with oven mitt to make simple snacks with supervision
- Independently make a sandwich (get supplies, make, put away, clean up, etc.)
- Pack own lunch
- Use adaptive kitchen devices with supervision (cutting board, auto flip spatula etc.)

Household Chores: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Clean stove/microwave/small appliances with assistance
- Clean bathroom with assistance (tub, shower, sink, toilet, counters, mirror)
- Use broom/dust pan/vacuum to clean floor
- Mop floors with assistance
- Dust/ polish furniture
- Operate household appliances with assistance (vacuum, dishwasher, coffee maker, etc.)

Prior Skills

- Pick up/put away own toys
- Clean counter/mirrors/windows
- Open/close cabinet doors
- Hang towel on hook/rack
- Straighten items on shelves
- Turn on/off lights
- Awareness of where items are stored
- Discuss uses of household cleaning products
- Awareness of where items are stored
- Discuss uses of household cleaning products
- Use locks/keys with minimal assistance
- Water plants
- Perform household chores regularly
- Identify recyclable items
- Feed/ water family pets
- Clean own bedroom (toys, clothes, etc.)
- Use broom/dust pan/vacuum with minimal assistance
- Take household trash to trash receptacle
- Independently clean countertop
- Set table for family (plates, silverware, napkin, cup)
- Clear table after meal with assistance
- Place clean silverware in proper place
- Scrape own plates into garbage can/disposal
- Independently stack dishes
- Wash/dry/put away dishes with minimal assistance
- Unload dishwasher and put items away with minimal assistance
- Load dishwasher, add dish soap and turn on

- Check to make sure that dishes are clean before putting away
- Independently wash/dry/put away dishes
- Straighten own bed daily (pull up sheets and blankets)
- Independently remove sheets/bedding
- Independently make bed that has been stripped

Basic Household Repairs: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Exposure to painting room/item (taping, rollers, brushes, etc.)

Prior Skills

- Identify when batteries need to be changed on items they personally use
- Identify different types of batteries
- Know battery size for personal items (electronic devices, toys, etc.)
- Know how to use charger for electronic devices
- Know what common hand tools are used for
- Exposure to home maintenance using simple hand tools
- Perform simple home repairs with minimal assistance (change light bulbs, etc.)

Laundry Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Store jewelry in an organized manner (*)
- Clean closet/dressers, remove clothing that is too small or out of season
- Exposure to using an iron

Prior Skills

- Wash/dry clothing completing all necessary steps with supervision
- Sort laundry
- Determine size/color of load, select settings with assistance
- Measure/add laundry detergent
- Turn on washer
- Remove clothes from washer, place in dryer
- Check lint tray, add fabric softener sheet
- Select proper heat/time settings, start dryer
- Determine if clothes are dry
- Fold, hang up, put away laundry with minimal assistance
- Explain the proper use of common cleaning supplies for clothes
- Label or adapt clothing as needed with assistance (*)
- Name own clothing/shoe size (*)

Organizational Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Continue to develop a personal labeling system (home/school) with assistance
- Help organize kitchen/bathroom cabinets with assistance
- Organize items in tote bag/purse

Prior Skills

- Participate in development of tactile/large print marking system (stove, microwave, washer, dryer etc.)
- Differentiate between different yet similar items by labeling (soft drinks, cereal, etc.)
- Use labeling system for personal items (home/school)
- Assemble materials in a systematic manner (papers, flash drives, books, etc.)
- Keep desk organized
- Keep backpack organized
- Explain the need for keeping items organized
- Use tactile/large print marking system with minimal assistance
- Organize school materials with minimal assistance
- Pack suitcase for overnight stay with minimal assistance
- Locate/put away items in own space (cubbies, locker, desk, etc.)
- Know the correct location of commonly used items
- Retrieve/return commonly used items
- Open/ place items in/close backpack
- Use simple labeling system to identify preferred food items (juice box, cereal, etc.)

Safety/Emergency Procedures: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Make a list of telephone numbers to call in an emergency (police, fire, poison control, grandparents, neighbors, etc.)

Prior Skills

- Demonstrate stop-drop-roll
- Locate entrances/exits in home/classroom
- Follow safety precautions for electrical outlets
- Follow safety precautions around pools, lakes, etc.
- Opportunity to meet/discuss safety personnel (police, fire fighter, etc.)
- Identify emergency personnel or other community people who may be helpful (staff uniforms, badges, etc.)
- Discuss community safety procedures (don't talk to strangers, play with matches, etc.)
- Discuss fire safety procedures (candle, hot stove, matches, etc.)
- Discuss purpose of fire alarm, carbon monoxide, smoke detector
- Practice what to do when alarm(s)/siren(s) go off
- Practice dialogues when calling 9-1-1
- Explain what constitutes an emergency (calling 9-1-1)
- Use a variety of doors/locks in order to exit in an emergency (home, school, etc.)
- Identify different sirens and know what to do if they sound (tornado, etc.)

- Practice exiting building/home when fire alarm, carbon monoxide, smoke detector goes off
- Identify what exit to take in different parts of home in the event of an emergency
- Plan for emergency (meeting place outside, etc.)
- Talk about what to do if a stranger approaches (yell, attract attention, hold on to bike, etc.)
- Monitor sun exposure with supervision
- Discuss medication/vitamin safety (administered by adult, not candy, etc.)
- Know full name, age, birthday
- Know parents' full name
- Describe own parents (hair color, etc.)
- Plan for being separated from parents in community (what to do, who to ask for help, stay put, etc.)
- Participate in swimming skills program
- Describe Orientation and Mobility Instructor or person they are traveling with in the community

Telephone Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Check/record messages
- Call for take-out food with assistance

Prior Skills

- Answer phone (say hello)
- Converse with familiar people on phone
- Leave a message with assistance
- Know/identify own telephone number
- Demonstrate ways to obtain phone numbers (directory assistance, internet search, etc.)
- Make/use own telephone directory/contacts list with assistance
- Independently use phone to call/text friends, relatives, etc.
- Take phone messages
- Dial 9-1-1

Time Concepts: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Set priorities for managing time with assistance
- Set/use alarm clock/phone alarm with minimal assistance (*)

Prior Skills

- Understand calendar concepts (days, weeks, months, etc.)
- Discuss daily schedule
- Understand the difference between day and night
- Demonstrate an understanding of past/future events
- Demonstrate the awareness of the successive order of events (*)
- Use time words (yesterday, last night, tomorrow, etc.)
- Demonstrate awareness of relative length of time (*)

- Name months of the year
- Relate months of year/days of week to a calendar (+)
- Discriminate between weekdays/weekends (*)
- Demonstrate the concept of being late/early, and give examples of what to do in those instances (*)
- Tell day of the week certain activities happen (physical education, music, cub scouts, swimming lessons, etc.)
- Explain school schedule (starting/end time, successive order of classes/activities, etc.)
- Use watch/clock/cell phone to tell time (*)
- Estimate length of time for familiar activities (*)

Money Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Arrange to earn money by performing tasks (*)
- Identify attributes wanted in an item and check for those attributes when purchasing an item (*)
- Schedule enough chores/jobs to earn a specified amount of money (*)
- Return item to store for refund/exchange
- Use gift card/certificate to make a purchase
- Explain differences/similarities between credit card/debit card
- Discuss making on line purchases with supervision

Prior Skills

- Name coins
- Understand money is needed to buy things
- Accompany family to bank/ATM
- Use coin operated machines (vending machine, gumball machine, etc.)
- Accompany family to a variety of different stores (clothing, grocery, hardware, etc.)
- Identify coins by value
- Use techniques/apps to identify paper money
- Demonstrate awareness that items have different monetary values (*)
- Discuss taxable/nontaxable items
- Make small purchase with (dollar store, fast food, etc.)
- Know if change is due when making purchase
- Count change/make sure it is correct
- Give exact amount for purchase
- Estimate amount of purchase
- Determine if you have enough money to make purchase
- Carry/store money in a secure manner (*)
- Identify the kinds of stores that sell certain items
- Name specific stores where common items can be bought
- Discuss services provided by banks/credit unions

Personal Information: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Name friends (first and last name) and where they live
- State full name, age, birthday of parent(s)/guardian(s) and siblings

Prior Skills

- Know full name, age, birthday
- Know complete address (including state and zip code)
- Know parent(s)/guardian(s) full name
- Describe own family (what they do, where they work, etc.)
- Describe parent(s)/guardian(s) vehicle type/color
- Provide physical description of parent(s)/guardian(s)
- Know parent(s)/guardian(s) occupation(s) (what they do, where they work, etc.)
- State parent(s)/guardian(s) work/cell phone number(s)
- Name extended family members (grandparents, aunts, cousins, etc.)
- State where extended family members live (city, state, etc.)

Medical/Health Care: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Identify common emergency situations in which injury or illness may occur
- Demonstrate actions to take in common emergency situations
- Discuss substances that can be harmful for a person's body (*)
- Discuss safety rules associated with medicine (*)
- Discuss the negative effects of the use of tobacco, alcohol, marijuana and other illegal drugs
- Identify people to contact for help with problems or questions about substance abuse (*)
- Demonstrate ways of dealing with peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, or other illegal or non-prescribed drugs (*)
- Use a scale to determine own weight (*)
- Demonstrate how to use items in a first aid kit (*)
- Awareness of positive health habits to maintain a healthy lifestyle/weight

Prior Skills

- Explore common medical equipment (stethoscope, thermometer, etc.)
- Discuss medication/vitamin safety (administered by adult, not candy, etc.)
- Discuss medical care facilities
- Discuss doctors and type of medical care provided (eye doctor, pediatrician, etc.)
- Tell where it hurts
- Know information regarding own health (allergies, medications, etc.)
- Demonstrate good posture and identify what is poor posture (*)
- Swallow hard tablets/capsules (*)
- Describe symptoms of injury/illness to adult (*)
- Identify locations to purchase/receive medications (pharmacy, school, nurse, etc.)
- Explain why adult supervision is required prior to taking medications

Social Skills: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Discuss right/wrong thing to do in different social situations
- Discuss ways to deal with peer pressure (lying, stealing, bullying, etc.)
- Discuss ways to compliment others
- Discuss ways to deal with bullying (in person or through media)
- Initiate friendships (invite over to home, invite to movie, etc.)
- Send texts or use messaging apps to connect with friends

Prior Skills

- Observe/discuss personal space (not appropriate to touch other people without permission)
- Ask to see toy, article of clothing, etc.
- Demonstrate socially appropriate conversational skills (head up, face speaker, etc.)
- Discontinue inappropriate body movements (rocking, eye poking, flapping, etc.)
- Use please/thank you/excuse me
- Cover mouth when coughing/sneezing
- Separate from primary degree caregiver comfortably
- Demonstrate ability to take turns/share with assistance
- Appropriately initiate conversation with adults/peers
- Participate in community activities (Church, Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, sports teams, clubs)
- Describe attributes of a good friend
- Demonstrate attributes among friends (call on telephone, invite over to home, etc.)
- Demonstrate ways to reciprocate to friends
- Participate with peers in a variety of games

Self-Advocacy: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Determine how materials can be adapted
- Describe how simple environmental modifications can be made to increase independence (*)
- Use/care for complex adaptive devices (*)
- Explain the purpose of related services that are being received (*)
- Discuss where various adapted materials/equipment are purchased and participate in obtaining them (*)
- Write own signature (*)
- Demonstrate a thorough understanding of own etiology and visual abilities
- Inform others of own special needs in a variety of situations (*)

Prior Skills

- Inform appropriate person of technology repairs needed
- Request special needs (larger/print, slant board, etc.)
- Phrase request as a question
- Use excuse me to interrupt others

- Ask for assistance when needed
- Tactfully refuse assistance when not needed (*)
- Express appreciation for assistance
- Reciprocate assistance from volunteers (*)
- Discuss appropriate expectations (visual impairment does not warrant special treatment, etc.)
- Handle/report/discourage bullying with assistance
- Take responsibility for own success in school (no excuses, ask for help, knowledge of helpful technology, etc.)
- Describe activities which are difficult due to visual impairment

Orientation & Mobility: Exiting Elementary School

New Skills

- Ask for directions
- Restate/clarify directions
- Follow directions with assistance
- Use maps of familiar locations
- Give directions home from familiar places (school, mall, etc)
- Exposure to public transportation
- Independently use low vision aides

Prior Skills

- Name major cross streets by home
- Independently locate items in common areas (classroom, home, etc.)
- Travel in a group (lines, etc.)
- Independently travel to locations in familiar environments (school, home, church, etc.)
- Independently locate own classroom from entrance of school building
- Independently travel to classes in school (gym, art, music, etc.)
- Exposure to signage (bathrooms, room numbers, etc.)
- Demonstrate directional concepts (on, below, next to, etc.)
- Know right/left directional concepts
- Identify own body parts
- Localize sound
- Move toward sound source
- Engage/disengage own seatbelt
- Independently enter/exit school bus
- Independently/safely open/door vehicle (awareness of environment and safety concepts)
- Independently push chair under table
- Use appropriate gait when walking
- Hold object while walking (tray, cup, toy, etc.) (#)
- Identify familiar environmental sounds (#)
- Follow one-step commands (#)
- Awareness environmental clues/landmarks
- Identify own cane
- Identify/name parts of cane (if cane user)
- Know/use appropriate place to store cane in classroom, home, etc

- Use sighted guide appropriately
- Appropriately accept/refuse assistance
- Walk up/down stairs using alternating feet
- Follow simple verbal directions
- Navigate school lunch line
- Locate dropped objects
- Know location of important places
- Determine appropriate time to cross street in residential area
- Independently cross a residential street
- Identify street names/landmarks along commonly traveled routes
- Demonstrate use of mental maps (if I am here, what is across the room, layout of classroom, etc.)
- Begin pairing cardinal directions to other landmarks/names (east door, etc.)
- Discuss/expose to different intersections
- Discuss/expose to traffic patterns
- Identify different types of curbs (cut-out, blended, etc.)
- Independently use trailing skills
- Independently use protective techniques
- Independently use squaring off technique
- Use environmental sounds as clues when traveling
- Use basic cane techniques (shorelining, appropriate arc, etc.)
- Identify various intersections
- Identify parallel/perpendicular traffic
- Identify differences between landmarks/clues
- Demonstrate an understanding of cardinal directions with assistance
- Exposure to intersections with signal lights (walk/don't walk, traffic patterns, etc.)
- Cross intersections with signal lights with assistance
- Use appropriate cane skills
- Identify location of items in store(s) (produce section, frozen foods, clothing, housewares, etc.)