

# INDEPENDENT LIVING READINESS TRAINING

## Course Outline

### UNIT I

#### A. **Adult Reflections on Becoming Independent**

Objective: To utilize the personal experience of participants in emphasizing that an individual's readiness to achieve independence evolves from a series of self-confidence-building events.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Describe the systems, individuals, and resources which facilitate the achievements of independence.
2. Explain how trustworthy relationships and resources contribute to an individual's readiness to become independent.

#### B. **The Meaning of Functional Independence**

Objective: To clarify the differences and similarities between independence, dependence, and interdependence.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Define interdependence as it relates to preparing adolescents for independent living.
2. Distinguish qualities of independence from seemingly dependent behaviors.
3. Clarify personal values relative to independent living.

#### C. **Examining Roadblocks to Functional Independence**

Objective: To examine two sets of barriers hampering functional independence: management, the division of labor, and the need for teamwork; and daily practices which can undermine established service goals.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Identify roadblocks which interfere with adolescents achieving functional independence.
2. Clarify their role in assisting the primary caregiver to develop independence in adolescents.
3. Outline conditions which promote dependency in their own placement settings.
4. List conditions which promote interdependence.
5. Delineate conditions which can be corrected in their placement settings to diminish dependency.

**D. A Question of Readiness**

Objective: To focus on the concept of readiness as a framework for assessing the basic reasons adolescents hesitate to become actively involved in learning and applying the knowledge and skills associated with independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Identify factors influencing a person's willingness to perform certain tasks.
2. Discern factors affecting a person's ability to perform certain tasks.
3. List factors affecting a person's readiness to perform certain tasks.

**E. Forging the Cornerstones for Independence**

Objectives: To explore two sets of issues: first, how the elements of trust and autonomy, so important to development and the concept of living independently, are acquired and validated from infancy through adolescence through positive child-rearing practices; second, the implications which lack of autonomy and trust have for promoting the readiness of youths to acquire skills for independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Describe the relationship between the early stages of development and an adolescent becoming independent.
2. Explain how the integration of trust and autonomy form the basis for attaining independence.
3. Delineate the implications which lack of autonomy and trust have for promoting the readiness of youths to acquire independent living skills.

**F. Understanding Developmental Needs of Adolescents**

Objectives: To enhance caseworkers' understanding of adolescent development, knowledge which is crucial to their ability to help teenagers embark on independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Identify the developmental characteristics of adolescents.
2. Identify issues and problems likely to be encountered in working with the adolescent foster child.
3. Describe the developmental tasks of adolescence.
4. Assess behavior corresponding to adolescent development.
5. Determine an adolescent's readiness for independent living.
6. Identify ways to increase the adolescent's readiness for independent living.

## UNIT II

### A. Self Concept and The Foster Teen

Objective: To focus on the ways self-concept influences the behavioral choices made by adolescents and to give service providers principles for pinpointing constructive change which can be used to assess the readiness of youth for functional independence.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Identify the components of self-concept.
2. Explain how self-concept is formed.
3. Describe the effects of placement on the foster youth's self-concept.
4. Recognize the effects of self-concept on an adolescent's ability and willingness to achieve success when living independently.
5. Identify methods for improving the self-concept of teens in foster care.
6. Employ methods for developing a positive self-concept with adolescents-in-care.

### B. Assessing and Building Essential Connections

Objective: To provide a simple yet comprehensive framework for defining and responding to the needs of adolescents preparing for independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Define essential connections.
2. Examine essential connections in their own personal lives.
3. Identify needs met through essential connections.
4. Appreciate the importance of essential connections.
5. Describe the effects of being disconnected.
6. Assess the connections of the teens on their caseload.
7. Develop strategies to help teens in foster care build and maintain essential connections.
8. Describe techniques for gathering information about a teen's connections.
9. Clarify their role in connecting teens in foster care.

### C. Understanding and Responding to Adolescent Behavior

Objective: To provide a model for assessing, understanding, and responding to the needs motivating the behavior of adolescents preparing for independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Appreciate the complexity of human behavior.
2. Assess the needs being communicated through an adolescent's behavior.
3. Develop strategies for meeting the needs of adolescents preparing for independent living.
4. Explain the relationship between an adolescent's needs and behaviors and the criteria for independent living.

**D. Toward Enhancing Effective Communication With Adolescents**

Objective: To improve participants' communication with adolescents.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. examine their effectiveness in communicating with adolescents.
2. Identify effective techniques for communicating with adolescents.
3. Employ effective techniques for communicating with adolescents.

**E. Goal Setting With Adolescents**

Objective: To demonstrate the importance of the goal planning process and its value in addressing problems which may be hindering the adolescent's achievement of independence.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Develop goals with adolescents geared toward accomplishing tasks associated with independent living.
2. Guide adolescents through steps to achieve their goals.

**UNIT III**

**A. Deciding The Future**

Objective: To offer a procedure that supplements and supports the adolescent's inborn ability to accomplish tasks associated with independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Clarify their own decision making experience in the process of change.
2. Identify the steps for facilitating change in adolescents.
3. Use the decision making model with the adolescents in their homes or on their caseloads.

**B. Problem Solving**

Objective: To provide a method of solving problems that demonstrates respect and does not require force or coercion.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. identify the steps in the problem solving process.
2. Appreciate the advantages of using a no-lose method of solving problems.
3. Apply the problem solving method to a conflict situation.

**C. Contracting With Adolescents**

Objective: To offer a contracting process for formalizing the commitments of primary caregivers and/or adolescents.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Describe the advantages of contracting as a method of enhancing adolescent's independent living skills.
2. Utilize contracting with primary caregivers and adolescents.
3. Facilitate the use of contracts between primary caregivers and foster adolescents to achieve independent living goals.

**D. A Team Approach to Independence: Enabling the Enabler**

Objective: To promote a team effort in preparing adolescents for independent living.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Apply a mutual assessment tool to the practice of teamwork.
2. Enable other adult team members to more effectively promote the development of independence in adolescents.

**E. Developing A Plan to Prepare Adolescents for independent Living**

Objective: To integrate the knowledge and skills presented in this program by developing a plan for an adolescent on their caseload.

Learning Outcomes - the student will:

1. Conduct a thorough assessment of a teen in care.
2. Develop a plan for promoting a teen's readiness for independent living.