



Title	Soft Skills Toward Independence & Employment
Created by	Lisa Handelman, Capital Camps, The Jewish Federation of Greater Washington
Intended Audience	Parents and caregivers
Materials Needed	List of skills worksheet Two different color highlighters or pens
Program Description	<p>It is never too early or too late to start our children on a path towards independence. This activity is designed to encourage discussion and start the process of looking at “soft skills”. Soft skills are the non-technical, “hidden curriculum” skills that help a student or employee communicate and interact with others.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Look over the “List of Skills” worksheet 2. Use one color pen or highlighter to identify each skill your child has successfully mastered. It is important to focus on strengths and to use these strengths to build future skills. 3. Use a different color pen or highlighter to identify skills you feel your child could begin to work on. 4. Look over the list of skills that your child has mastered. Pick one or two skills from this list. Think of ways to extend and expand these skills. Involve your child in this process. Let him/her know the skills you feel he/she has mastered and together create a plan to strengthen these skills. 5. Look over the list of skills you feel your child could master. Involve your child in this process. Let him/her pick the next set of skills to work on. It is important to let your child be involved in this process. <p>Examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - If you can manage a calendar but have difficulty adapting to change, you can learn to use the calendar to record and plan changes. - If you can manage your own phone, learning how to answer the family phone and take a message may be a good expansion. - If you can’t yet manage allowance, you can begin by using “snack coupons” to buy a choice of afterschool snacks. - Being asked about likes, dislikes, how others can help can lead to communicating these more independently.



List of Skills

Self Help	Social Skills	Pre-Work Skills
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Gets self up in the morning ● Picks out appropriate clothes for weather ● Completes chores ● Sets table/makes bed ● Manages allowance ● Uses a calendar ● Answers the telephone ● Can manage personal phone/computer ● Collects necessary items for the day ● Puts belongings away appropriately ● Remembers personal items throughout the day ● Helps cleanup after activities ● Manages Free time ● Swims—is safe near water 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pays attention to someone speaking ● Follows directions ● Waits turn ● Displays good sportsmanship ● Communicates likes to peers/adults ● Communicate dislike to peers/adults ● Ask for help ● Accepts feedback from peers/adults ● Engages in informal conversation (asks and answers questions; stays on topic) ● Able to navigate difficult situations (with or without help) ● Able to adapt to changes in the schedule ● Can “read” body language 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Completes tasks ● Can delay preferred activity until work is completed ● Generalizes – can do a similar task from one learned ● Can distinguish between work and play (or between jobs and break) ● Willing to try new things ● Responds to verbal requests/directions ● Can follow written or picture directions ● Has an identified area of interest ● Can work with others ● Independent reading skills ● Independent writing skills ● Independent math skills