

Section 7—Being Safe



Safety is one of the biggest hurdles for people with disabilities who want to live on their own. Because most people want to live completely on their own or at least with less help, safety is a big issue. It is a good idea to have someone look over your new home and think about any hazards or safety issues they see before you move in. You can't fix them if you don't know about them!

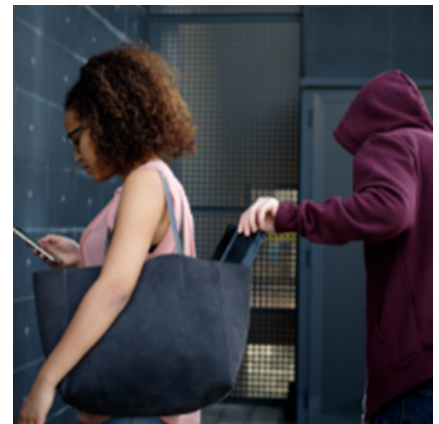
Safety can include many different things, like being safe from burglars, fires, or storms. It can also mean not being taken advantage of or having your identity stolen. Calling 9-1-1 all the time would cause problems. You certainly want to call them when you need them, but it's not their job to come out every time you are worried something may be wrong. You will need the skills to know when you have a valid safety concern where you should call 9-1-1.

Being safe is often about paying attention to what you are doing and who is around you. Most safety concerns can be erased if you think ahead. For example, when you come home you should lock your door first thing. If you don't plan on going out again, you may forget to lock it later. Plus, anyone can walk into your home when your door is unlocked. After the sun sets, it's also a good idea to close your curtains or blinds. This way anyone walking by cannot see into your home.

If you are cooking, your mind should be on cooking. Don't go into another room to watch a little TV. What happens if you forget? Something may burn – but you could also start a fire.

Thanks to tech, it's easier than ever to be safe. But in many ways, you are more exposed than ever. Sadly, there are people that spend their entire day on the internet trying to find easy victims to steal from or harm in other ways.

It's hard for some people to remember with whom they can share what information. You may have been taught not to give anyone your social security number or address over the phone. But then you need to make a doctor's appointment and these are things they may ask. You need to work with your family to set basic rules on who can have what info.



Some families act out different things that could happen when you give out the wrong info. This might help you remember who you can and who you shouldn't give info to. This could be a fun and easy way to know what could happen when you give personal information to the wrong person.

You need to be able to show your family that you know how to be safe. If you can't, living on your own will be very stressful for you and your family. The last thing you want to do is move out and have your family and friends worry about you all the time.

Resources

How to Use a Fire Extinguisher

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cv7yPN2KjOs>

National Fire Protection Association Tips Sheets

<https://www.nfpa.org/Public-Education>

American Red Cross Safety Tips

<https://www.redcross.org/>

U.S. Department of Justice – Online Safety

<https://www.ojp.gov/feature/internet-safety/online-safety-youth>

Checklist

Independent Living Skills	I Can Do This	I Need to Practice	I'm Going To Start	I Will Always Need Support	This doesn't apply to me	Notes
SAFETY FROM INTRUDERS						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to use a key to lock and unlock my door						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to lock and unlock my windows						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to close my curtains and/or blinds						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to look through my peephole before opening the door						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know not to open the door to strangers						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know the function of police, fire and EMT services						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can state my home address and phone number.						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to call 9-1-1						
SAFETY FROM FIRES						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know where a fire extinguisher is located						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to use a fire extinguisher						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know the purpose of a smoke detector and when to have batteries changed						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can properly dispose of cigarettes and ashes						
<input type="checkbox"/> I have been trained on how to exit my home in the event of a fire						

Independent Living Skills	I Can Do This	I Need to Practice	I'm Going To Start	I Will Always Need Support	This doesn't apply to me	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> I know that using electrical appliances or items incorrectly can cause fires						
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand basic fire prevention (No smoking in bed, avoid excessive use of extension cords, don't use frayed electrical cords, careful of grease popping out of the pan)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand that different types of fire are extinguished using different things						
<i>SAFETY FROM WEATHER</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know when I need to evacuate due to weather						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know where the safest place is in my home in the event of a tornado warning						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know to stay inside when it's lightning						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know to keep my cell phone charged in the event of power outages						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know to keep a working flashlight with batteries in the event of power outages						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not use candles during power outages						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can recognize the smell of gas						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know when to call 9-1-1						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know when I need to change computer passwords						
<i>SAFETY IN MY COMMUNITY</i>						

Independent Living Skills	I Can Do This	I Need to Practice	I'm Going To Start	I Will Always Need Support	This doesn't apply to me	Notes
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to safely navigate around my neighborhood (using sidewalks, crossing streets, etc.)						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know my vulnerabilities						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know to be aware of strangers acting suspiciously						
<i>SAFETY FROM INTERNET</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know how to protect all of my digital passwords						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know how to protect all of my PIN numbers						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know how to protect all of my digital usernames						
<input type="checkbox"/> I keep my debit and credit cards in a safe place						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not leave my bank statements or credit card statements out where anyone can see them						
<input type="checkbox"/> I shred all my bills once they are paid						
<i>SAFETY FROM FRAUD</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I know who I can and cannot give my personal information to, like name, address, etc.						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not share my social security number with anyone over the phone or in person						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not share my credit card or debit card information with anyone over the phone						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not let others use my debit or credit card						

Independent Living Skills	I Can Do This	I Need to Practice	I'm Going To Start	I Will Always Need Support	This doesn't apply to me	Notes
<i>SAFETY FROM THE INTERNET</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not give out any personal information to anyone over the internet						
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand who I can and cannot trust on the internet						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not share any internet usernames, passwords or pin numbers with anyone						
<input type="checkbox"/> I do not send pictures of myself to anyone over the internet						
<input type="checkbox"/> I understand what I should and should not share on Social Media						
<i>SAFETY FROM OTHER THINGS</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can recognize the smell of natural gas and know what to do if I smell it						
<i>PERSONAL INFORMATION FOR SAFETY REASONS</i>						
<input type="checkbox"/> I am able to call 9-1-1						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can give my name						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can give my address						
<input type="checkbox"/> I can explain why I'm calling 9-1-1						