



# RSA PTI Independent Futures that Work!



Project Introduction  
Raising the Standards Conference  
May 19, 2022

The RSA PTI Independent Futures that Work! Project is funded through a grant from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitation Services, Rehabilitation Services Administration, and is a project of the Alabama Parent Education Center.

# What is the Independent Futures that Work! Project?

- Independent Futures that Work (IFTW) is a project of the Alabama Parent Education Center (APEC) in partnership with the Parent Training and Information (PTI) Centers in Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Oklahoma, and Texas.
- Designed to help young adults with disabilities to independently learn, live, and work in the community as young adults.



# What is the Independent Futures that Work! Project?

- Resources will be provided through an online resource center.
- Useful resources on our website will help youth with disabilities to develop the skills needed to live the best life possible.
- Resources will also provide families and professionals support as they help young adults to transition to adult life.

# Find our Online Resource Center (Website) at <http://independentfuturesthatwork.com>

- Resources for:
  - Working Independently
  - Living Independently
  - Learning Independently
  - Calendar of Upcoming Project events
  - Flyers and Printable Handouts
- Links to our PTI Partner's state-specific resources under "Find Help in Your State"



## Follow our Social Media to find updates and shared resources:


- **Facebook:**  
[www.facebook.com/IndependentFuturesThatWork](https://www.facebook.com/IndependentFuturesThatWork)
- **Instagram:**  
<https://www.instagram.com/independentfuturesthatwork>
- **Twitter:**  
[https://twitter.com/RSAPTI\\_IFTW](https://twitter.com/RSAPTI_IFTW)





# Project-Designed Resources


## Communication Tip Sheets



### Tips for Youth Effective Cell Phone Communication



Cell phone use have become an important part of everyday life in today's world. We use cell phones to stay in touch with family and friends, and to stay in contact with others. Making the most of your cell phone without using it in a rude or disrespectful way can really help you communicate well.




**Tip #1: Only use your cell phone when it is appropriate to do so.**

Below are some places or situations where cell phone use may not be appropriate:

- In a library, theater, or church
- During a wedding, funeral, meal with others, or face-to-face conversation
- In meetings at work
- During a job interview
- While driving
- While checking out and paying in a store

When you are in places such as those listed above, put your phone on silent or vibrate and tuck it out of sight. Let calls go to voice mail and return calls later.



**Tip #2: Use your cell phone in a respectful manner.**

If you must use your phone around others, follow this advice:

- Avoid talking about personal or confidential topics in public places
- Watch your language and don't use curse words
- Avoid using a loud tone of voice when talking
- Keep a reasonable distance (about 10 feet) from others when talking on the phone in public
- Avoid arguing on the phone with others in public places
- Be aware of your ringtone – the content and loudness of the ringtone can send a wrong message to others about you

**Tip #3: Voice mail is a helpful tool when you cannot answer your phone.**

Be sure to set up your phone's voice mailbox and check it often. Be sure to delete out old messages unless you need to save them for an important reason. Be sure to let callers know that it is your voice mailbox by at least stating your name. It can be frustrating for a caller if your voice mailbox gives either a not set up or full message when they try to leave a message.



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### Tips for Youth "Do's" and "Don'ts" for Communicating on Social Media




Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Snap Chat, and TikTok are all forms of social media. Using social media is a way of life for many of us. Knowing how to use social media correctly is very important. Information posted on social media can affect our lives in positive and negative ways. It is important to remember that once you post on social media platforms, that post will always be out there. Information posted can have a bad effect on people's lives if the wrong information is posted.

#### Do's for Using Social Media

- ❖ Look over everything before you post
- ❖ Post positive comments and messages to encourage and uplift others
- ❖ Know what should be a public vs. what should be a private post or message
- ❖ Use the private and public settings in social media to limit who can see your posts
- ❖ Log out of your account on public computers or devices when you are finished
- ❖ Send and accept friend requests only to or from people you know
- ❖ Assume that everyone in the world can and will see what you post
- ❖ Give credit to others if you repost
- ❖ Be respectful of others' feelings and opinions, as not everyone shares your same opinion on things
- ❖ Base your statements on known facts




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### Tips for Youth Using Text to Communicate with Others

Texting is often the go-to method for communicating with others. Texting can be tricky sometimes because it cannot convey tone of voice, body language, gestures, etc. Following some common texting rules can help avoid hurt feelings and misunderstandings.




**Tip #1: When Is Texting Not Appropriate?**

There are times when you should not communicate by text message. Here are some of those times:

- Telling someone that a person close to them has died
- Ending a relationship with someone
- In the middle of the night when someone is sleeping
- When you are not in the right frame of mind (i.e., mad, sleepy, tired, upset, under the influence)
- When you need to tell someone bad news
- At the movies, plays or concerts
- During funerals or church services
- While driving
- When you need to share private or confidential information

**Tip #2: Replying to Text Messages**


One of the benefits of texting is that it does not always require that you respond immediately. However, it is polite to text back in a reasonable time frame to texts that require a response. Sending an "Okay" or "Let me get back to you" message to the person, lets them know you saw the text message. If you would not reply in conversation, then your text may not need a reply.



**Tip #3: Sending Text Messages**

Text messages were created to be short messages to others. When texting, keep in mind the following:

- Keep the messages short
- Be careful with emojis as all smart phones do not use the same emojis



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### Tips for Youth Using Email to Effectively Communicate

As you move from school to adult life, the way you communicate with others will become very important. This is especially true in the workplace. Today, email is the way most businesses and agencies communicate with employees, customers, and other businesses. Below you will find some tips for communicating with others through email.



**Tip #1: Think About Whether Sending an Email is Appropriate**

People receive many emails every day. Before using an email, ask yourself if it would be easier to talk with someone over the phone to get a question answered? Will multiple exchanges be needed to get an answer? If so, an email might not be the best method. A personal conversation might be the better way to get the answer or communicate your concerns. If the content of the email is something you would not say in person, it is probably not something you should email either. Also, remember that emails are not private and can be sent on to others.

**Tip #2: Subject Lines on Emails**

Clearly state what your email is about on the subject line. Keep the subject line short and to the point. Your subject line should state the topic of the email. For example, "Meeting" would not provide enough information for the reader to know what you are emailing about. However, using "Friday Meeting on Cleaning Project" would let the person know more about what you are emailing about.



**Tip #3: Using the To, Cc and Bcc Lines on Emails**

It can be confusing to know how to use these lines. As a rule, the To field is for the person you are emailing and want a response from. The Cc (carbon copy) field is for the people you want to see the email, but may not need to reply to you. The person in the To field can see the others' email addresses typed on that line. The Bcc (blind carbon copy) field is a hidden field for email addresses that you do not want the people in the To and Cc fields to see. You might use the Bcc field to let your boss be aware of an email you are sending. You might use it if you are emailing a large group of people who do




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# Project-Designed Resources

## Employment Tip Sheets

### My Pocket Résumé



**A Tool to Assist in the Job  
Application Process**

Birth			Social Security #			Driver's License #		
Personal Information								
Address			Phone Numbers					
			Home					
			Cell					
			Other					
Education								
Name and Address of School			Highest Grade Completed?		How long attended?			
			Year Graduated?		Course/certificate or degree?			
Name and Address of School			Highest Grade Completed?		How long attended?			
			Year Graduated?		Course/certificate or degree?			
Degrees, etc.								
Employment, or machines operated								
Previous Employment								
Address		Name of Supervisor		Worked From To Dates		Wage or Salary		
References								
Address			Phone Number					

**For Your Job Interview**

**You Go**

out the business or employer

at Résumé

tions to be sure you are qualified

**Appearance and Attitude**

essed for the interview

ted

ve

bad attitude at home

s directly and truthfully

you want to work for the employer

that the interview says

ask questions

**Test**

tructions carefully

thoroughly

a pen with black or blue ink

**h You to the Interview**

d

State ID Card

d a black or blue ink pen

**Workforce Innovations and Opportunity  
Act of 2014 (WIOA)**

**What is WIOA?**



WIOA is a federal law that increased opportunities for job seekers to get and keep a job. Through WIOA, state vocational rehabilitation agencies have developed services that assist young adults with disabilities in seeking and obtaining jobs.

**Why is WIOA important for young  
adults with disabilities?**



WIOA helps people with disabilities receive services that help them better access jobs, education, training, and support. People with disabilities often have a low employment rate, so WIOA is designed to provide services that will increase the employment rate.

**What kind of services are available under WIOA?**



Services available under WIOA include the following: job exploration counseling; work-based learning; counseling on comprehensive transition programs or postsecondary education programs available after high school; workplace readiness training on social skills and independent living; and instruction in self-advocacy.

**Why is receiving services important?**



Receiving services helps people with disabilities be better prepared as they begin to seek a job or postsecondary education and training. WIOA services also help prepare youth with disabilities for competitive, integrated employment instead of jobs paying below minimum wage.

**Where can I find more information?**

You can find more information on WIOA at these sites:

- U.S. Department of Labor WIOA website: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/eta/wioa>
- The Workforce Innovation and Opportunity Act and Limitations on Payment of Subminimum Wages under Section 14(c) of the Fair Labor Standards Act: <https://www.dol.gov/agencies/whd/fact-sheets/39h-14c-WIOA>

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IFTW v. 1 Logo/Laws



# Project-Designed Resources

## Learning Tip Sheets - Laws

### *The Fair Housing Act (FHA)*

#### What is the *Fair Housing Act*?



The *Fair Housing Act*, amended in 1988, is a Federal law that prohibits discrimination based upon disability, race, color, national origin, religion, sex, and family status when a person is buying, renting, or trying to finance a home. The law covers both public and private housing, including providing for reasonable accommodations and modifications when individuals are renting.

#### How does this law help young adults with disabilities?

This law ensures that young adults with disabilities can live independently as a tenant. It provides accommodations at all stages of the rental process, from application, while living in the rental unit, and to prevent eviction. Examples of such accommodations can be applications written in large print or braille or a handicapped parking spot near the rental unit.



#### Why is this law important for me?



The *Fair Housing Act* is important for young adults with disabilities because they are more likely to face discrimination when they are looking for housing. Knowing their rights under this law will assist them in finding housing and access to related services. It will help them know where to seek assistance when they feel they are being discriminated against.

#### How can I find out more information about FHA?

You can find more information about *The Fair Housing Act* on these sites:

- "Housing Discrimination Under the Fair Housing Act", U.S. Department of Housing and Urban Development, [https://www.hud.gov/program\\_offices/fair\\_housing\\_equal\\_op/fair\\_housing\\_act\\_overview](https://www.hud.gov/program_offices/fair_housing_equal_op/fair_housing_act_overview)
- "Fair Housing Act", The United States Department of Justice, <https://www.justice.gov/crt/fair-housing-act-2>
- "What Fair Housing Means for People with Disabilities", Judge David L. Bazelon Center for Mental Health Law, [https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.111/d25.2ac.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fair-Housing-Guide\\_2018-Update.pdf](https://secureservercdn.net/198.71.233.111/d25.2ac.myftpupload.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/Fair-Housing-Guide_2018-Update.pdf)



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IFTW v. 2 Legal/Laws



### *The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA)*

#### What is the ADA?



ADA is a federal civil rights law that protects people with disabilities from discrimination. It allows people with disabilities the opportunity to participate as an equal within American society. The law contains five "titles," or sections. Each section has protections for specific areas of public life.

#### What kinds of discrimination does this law protect me from?

ADA protects adults with disabilities from discrimination in the workplace; discrimination in state and local government programs, activities, and services; discrimination in public places such as restaurants, stores, day cares, doctor's offices, etc.; discrimination from telecommunications accessibility (phones, computers, etc.); and discrimination from retaliation from complaints filed under the law.



#### Why is this law important to me?



The provisions under ADA make sure that a person with a disability who has the qualifications for a job must be provided with "reasonable accommodations" and cannot be denied the job because of his or her disability. The law also makes it possible for adults with disabilities to have wheelchair accessibility to places where public meetings are held and to public transportation. The law also provides accessibility standards for privately-owned restaurants, theaters, museums, etc. to follow for people with disabilities. The law makes sure that adults with disabilities can use phones, television, 911 services, etc. The law also makes sure that someone cannot be bullied or treated poorly because he or she has filed an ADA complaint.

#### How can I find out more information about ADA?

You can find more information on ADA at these sites:

- U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division <https://beta.ada.gov>
- U.S. Department of Labor <https://dol.gov/general/topic/disability/ada>
- ADA National Network <https://adata.org/learn-about-ada>
- U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission <https://eeoc.gov/statutes/titles-i-and-v-americans-disabilities-act-1990-ada>



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# Independent Living, Here We Come!

**INDEPENDENT  
FUTURES THAT WORK**

AN AARP® INITIATIVE



# Project-Designed Resources

## Working Independently, Here We Come! (Coming Soon)

### Working Independently, Here We Come!



Working independently in competitive, integrated employment is the optimal goal for all youth and young adults with disabilities. Varying degrees of employment are possible. These possibilities include full- or part-time employment in a paid, competitive job; working in supportive employment; or unpaid volunteer work. Feeling productive in society brings positive self-esteem. Varying degrees of support will be needed to prepare these youth and young adults for the work force. Job shadowing, job coaching, and supervised work experiences are all important for employment preparation. This checklist provides needed skills to help youth and young adults with disabilities prepare for working as independently as possible given the unique needs and challenges of each youth or young adult. Depending on ability level, some higher-level skills may not be able to be mastered by all youth with disabilities.



#### Organization and Time Management

Skills needed to keep track of life events and manage time

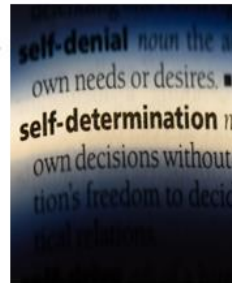
- ☐ Uses a calendar to keep track of school/work/personal activities
- ☐ Tells time on an analog and/or digital clock
- ☐ Uses alarms to get up on time
- ☐ Uses timers for reminders
- ☐ Makes and follows a to-do list
- ☐ Gets to activities and events on-time
- ☐ Breaks large tasks into smaller, more manageable steps
- ☐ Sets long-term goals and creates steps to meet them
- ☐ Has cell phone with apps for daily use and living

#### Self-Advocacy Skills

Skills needed to know one's rights, make decisions, and advocate for oneself

Skills related to employment for those who need assistance appropriately in various situations and knows

Skills needed to make decisions on needed services and wants to others, understand social cues and workplace



#### Safety Skills

Skills needed for keeping oneself safe in a work environment



- ☐ Knows how and when to call 9-1-1
- ☐ Knows how to safely operate equipment on the job site
- ☐ Knows and follows safety procedures at the workplace
- ☐ Follows directions to safely operate equipment on the job
- ☐ Knows who to contact if injury occurs

#### Financial Management Skills

Skills needed to manage money, paychecks, and other financial matters

Skills needed to understand deductions are taken out of paychecks, fill out forms for employment (taxes, etc.) and/or savings account, understand transactions and balances, and ensure people get paid



#### Job-Seeking Skills

Skills needed to seek and gain employment

- ☐ Identifies places to look for job postings
- ☐ Prepares a resumé
- ☐ Completes a job application
- ☐ Writes a cover letter
- ☐ Develops job interview skills
- ☐ Dresses appropriately for job interviews
- ☐ Has appropriate hygiene for interviews

#### Job-Keeping Skills

Skills needed to keep a job

Skills needed to meet expectations for work, understand workplace culture, and know when to request time off for personal needs. Skills needed to maintain a positive work attitude, complete job forms (time sheets, forms, etc.), keep track of time worked, and clean clothes. Skills needed to maintain personal hygiene, travel to and from the job site, and follow directions to the job site.



#### Communication Skills

Skills needed to appropriately communicate with others on the job

- ☐ Asks for feedback
- ☐ Uses appropriate language on the job site
- ☐ Is aware of and manages own body language appropriately
- ☐ Manages voice control appropriately
- ☐ Is able to carry on a conversation with others

#### Interpersonal Skills

Skills needed to interact with others on the job

Skills needed to demonstrate friendliness, adaptability, and social skills in group settings. Skills needed to communicate, speaking, listening, and social skills. Skills needed to be a member of a work team. Skills needed to interact appropriately with those in authority. Skills needed to interact professionally with co-workers. Skills needed to respond appropriately to requests from those co-workers, and customers. Skills needed to understand work ethics.



#### Personal Skills

Skills that influence how a person acts and completes tasks

- ☐ Works well as part of a team
- ☐ Demonstrates leadership skills
- ☐ Demonstrates a strong work ethic
- ☐ Demonstrates problem-solving skills
- ☐ Demonstrates empathy for others
- ☐ Pays attention to detail
- ☐ Keeps a tidy and organized area

The Department of Vocational Rehabilitation services can help you with some of these skills. You can find information for your state on the website that Work website under "Find Help in Your State" button at the <http://www.independentfutureshatwork.com/>.

Created by the Independent Futures that Work project to assist parents and youth with the skills needed for working as independently as possible given the youth's unique needs.

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IFTW Here We Come, v.2



# Training Opportunities

- The Independent Futures that Work! project will be having training opportunities, both virtual and in-person over the next several years on topics relating to independent living, working, and learning.
- Follow us on our social media platforms and/or our project's calendar for trainings in areas of interest to youth and young adults with disabilities, parents of youth with disabilities, and professionals who serve those youth, young adults and families.

Questions? Contact:  
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Thanks for attending our presentation!



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