

Life Skills Readiness Checklist

Is your teen ready to launch into adulthood with confidence? Use this checklist to identify which skills they've mastered—and where they might need more support.

Money & Budgeting

- Understands the difference between wants and needs
- Can create and follow a simple budget
- Knows how to use a debit card responsibly
- Understands how credit works and why credit scores matter
- Knows what the credit card trap is and how to avoid it
- Can spot and avoid financial scams

Time & Organization

- Uses a planner or calendar to track tasks and events
- Can manage deadlines and avoid procrastination
- Keeps personal space and digital files organized
- Understands how to set realistic goals and follow through

Communication Skills

- Knows how to write a professional email
- Can speak clearly in interviews or presentations
- Can advocate for themselves respectfully
- Understands online etiquette and digital footprint awareness

Everyday Adulting

- Can do laundry, basic cleaning, and simple meals
- Knows how to schedule appointments and fill out forms
- Understands basic insurance and ID documents
- Can follow emergency procedures and self-care routines

Reflection: Top 3 Skills to Improve

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____

🚫 5 Mistakes Parents Make When Teaching Life Skills

Teaching your teen real-world skills is one of the most important parts of parenting—but it's not always easy. If you've ever felt frustrated, ignored, or unsure of how to approach these conversations, you're not alone. Here are five common mistakes well-meaning parents make—and how to avoid them.

1. Waiting Too Long to Start

Many parents wait until senior year—or even after graduation—to teach life skills. But by then, teens are busy or already overwhelmed. Starting earlier gives them time to practice in low-pressure situations.

- ✅ Start small with one skill at a time, like budgeting or managing a schedule.

2. Doing Everything *For* Them

It's tempting to jump in and fix things, but doing so can rob teens of the chance to learn. Without real practice, they may feel unprepared when it's time to fly solo.

- ✅ Let them take the lead on small tasks—like making appointments or handling money—with your support.

3. Assuming They'll 'Just Pick It Up'

Life skills aren't always intuitive. Teens may not know how to budget, write a professional email, or understand insurance unless someone shows them.

- ✅ Use structured lessons or tools (like Launch to Life) to walk them through it step-by-step.

4. Teaching in the Middle of a Meltdown

Trying to teach budgeting when your teen is already stressed about money? It won't land. Timing matters.

- ✅ Pick calm, neutral times for life skills learning—and make it feel safe, not like a lecture.

5. Forgetting That Learning Takes Time

It's easy to get discouraged if your teen doesn't grasp a skill right away. But repetition and practice are key.

- ✅ Be patient. Reinforce skills with real-world practice and celebrate small wins.

The truth is, teaching life skills doesn't have to be a struggle. With the right tools and support, your teen can build real confidence—and you don't have to do it alone.

👉 **Learn more about the Launch to Life Program at www.NLAlready.com**



Teen Independence Starter Pack

This starter pack includes simple, practical tools to help your teen take ownership of their life—starting now. These quick-start resources work great on their own or alongside the full Launch to Life course.

Budgeting Cheat Sheet

A budget is just a plan for your money. Here's a simple breakdown teens can use:

- 50% Needs (bills, groceries, basic transportation)
- 30% Wants (fun, hobbies, dining out)
- 20% Savings or debt repayment

Tip: Track every dollar for a week to see where it really goes.

Weekly Responsibility Tracker

Use this to build habits and personal accountability. Add chores, appointments, and responsibilities:

Mon: _____
Tue: _____
Wed: _____
Thu: _____
Fri: _____
Sat: _____
Sun: _____

Tip: Celebrate when you complete a full week! Small wins matter.

Goal-Setting Worksheet

Use the SMART method: Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, Time-based.


Goal: _____
Why it matters: _____
Steps to get there:
1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
Deadline: _____

Tip: Start with one goal you're excited about—not just one you 'should' do.

Conversation Starters

Use these to spark meaningful (non-cringe) conversations about real life:

- What's one thing you feel ready to handle on your own?
- What do you wish school taught you about adulting?
- What would you do with \$1,000 right now?
- Is there anything you're nervous about after graduation?
- How can I support you without taking over?

 Tip: Don't force it—ask casually while driving, walking, or during a shared activity.

 **Want more tools like these? Visit www.NLAlready.com to join Launch to Life.**