

Inclusive Developmental and Therapy Center

Learning & Life Skills for Children with Intellectual Disability

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✓ Can I help my child at home?

Yes, you really can. Help your child learn the real-life skills that build independence, safety and dignity — at home, at school and out in the world. This free program breaks it down into simple weekly steps, built from proven therapy techniques — things any parent can do at home, in everyday moments, at no cost. It doesn't replace a professional assessment where one is needed, but for a lot of children it makes a real difference, and it never does any harm.

Go at your own pace — a new, gentle focus each week.

Download the whole program as a printable PDF to keep.

Includes the signs that mean it's worth getting a bit of extra help.

If your child has an intellectual disability, the skills worth pouring your energy into are the ones they will actually use: making themselves understood, dressing and eating, staying safe, handling money and everyday tasks, and taking part in family and community life. Teach those skills in the place they really happen — the kitchen, the bathroom, the shop, the classroom — one small step at a time, and let your child finish the job themselves.

A child with an intellectual disability learns more slowly and needs more repetitions, but they do learn. So the plan below is built on three ordinary ideas. Break a skill into small steps (therapists call this a task analysis). **Teach the last step first, so every attempt ends in success.** Then practise the same skill in different rooms, on different days, with different people, so it travels — that spreading is called generalisation, and without it a skill stays trapped in one corner

of the house. Those same three ideas run through all of our free home programs for parents, so nothing you learn here goes to waste.

Teaching a skill backwards

Putting on a shirt, split into five steps

1

Pick up the shirt

you do this

2

Head through the neck

you do this

3

One arm in

you do this

4

Other arm in

hand this over next

5

Pull the shirt down

your child starts here

Your child finishes the job every single time — so every try ends in a success. When step 5 is easy, hand over step 4 as well, then step 3.

Parents describe it to us in their own words — bacha parhai mein kamzor hai, bacha der se seekhta hai, bacha apna kaam khud nahi karta. In our own sessions the pattern is usually the same: the child is being asked to do a whole task when they can only manage one piece of it, and the piece keeps changing. This program is supportive, not a diagnosis, and it does not replace a proper assessment or a school placement decision. It treats your child as the capable learner they are, and it is built to work hand in hand with their school and therapists rather than off on its own.



Who this program is for

- ✓ Children with an intellectual disability, global developmental delay or significant learning difficulties
- ✓ Children described at school as “slow learners”, who need far more repetitions than their classmates
- ✓ Parents who want to focus on practical, everyday independence rather than worksheets
- ✓ Families wanting to reinforce and extend the very skills school is already teaching
- ✓ Children who learn best by doing rather than by listening or reading
- ✓ Anyone wanting a respectful plan that builds skill, safety and dignity

Important – when to get professional help

This is a supportive home program — it isn't a diagnosis, and it doesn't replace a proper assessment. Please speak to a professional soon if:

Skills your child had start slipping, or their behaviour or mood clearly shifts — raise it with a professional

Signs your child doesn't yet understand danger around roads, water, heat or strangers

No shared learning plan with school — ask about an individual education plan or its local equivalent

Worries about hearing, vision, seizures, or sleep that could be holding learning back

Your child has never had a developmental assessment, so nobody has explained what is actually going on

A sense that your child is stuck or unhappy — take it to their doctor or team sooner rather than later

Getting help where you live

Everything here is free to use **anywhere in the world**. If you'd like a professional to take a closer look, the best next step is someone local to you:

Work with us online, from anywhere. We offer **online sessions and parent coaching** worldwide — book an online consultation and we'll guide you and your child directly.

Talk to your child's **doctor, paediatrician, GP or health visitor** — share what you noticed.

Ask about **free early-childhood or early-intervention services** in your area — many countries offer them for young children (e.g. Early Intervention in the US, NHS referrals in the UK).

Search **“child speech & language therapist near me”**, or ask your doctor for a referral.

Near Multan, Pakistan? You're also warmly welcome in person at our centre — **contact us here.**

☆ **Your step-by-step roadmap**

Move at your child's pace, not the calendar's — the “weeks” are just a gentle order, not a race. Feel free to repeat any stage for as long as it's helping.

Stage 1 – Communicate to be understood

Make sure your child has a reliable way to express needs and choices.

Give your child one dependable way to communicate — words, signs, pictures or a device — and use it every single day. If your child has few or no words yet, our home program for helping a child start talking covers the earlier steps.

Model asking, refusing and choosing in real moments: “I want”, “no thank you”, “more please”.

Answer every attempt, so your child learns that communicating actually gets results.

Pause and wait a few seconds after you offer something — that silence is the room your child needs to have a go.

 **Try** Build choices into ordinary moments — which snack, which shirt — so
this: communicating pays off right away.

Stage 2 – Self-care and daily living

Teach the everyday self-help skills of dressing, washing, eating and tidying.

Write the routine out as a list of small steps first — five or six for a shirt, a few more for handwashing — and teach one step at a time.

Use the same order and the same simple words or pictures each time until it becomes a habit — a printable daily routine chart keeps that order the same for everyone in the house.

Let your child do as much as they can, and only step in for the parts they genuinely need.

Fade your help gradually: hand over hand, then a light touch, then a pointed finger, then just the word.

 **Try** Teach the last step first — your child finishes the task and feels that
this: win, then you add the earlier steps over time.

Stage 3 – Staying safe

Build practical safety skills for home and out in the world.

Practise the real safety routines: stopping at the road, hot-and-cold, and who is safe to talk to.

Rehearse what to do if they're lost or hurt, and how to ask an adult for help.

Teach your child to say or show their name, and keep a card or tag with your phone number on them when you are out.

Keep the rules simple, consistent and practised often, in the real places they matter.

 **Try** Rehearse safety in the actual spot — at the kerb, by the cooker —
this: because those are the skills that transfer to real life.

Stage 4 – Early literacy at their level

Grow functional reading that helps your child in daily life.

Start with words and signs that mean something: their name, “toilet”, “exit”, “stop”, “danger”.

Read together every day, following your child's interest and keeping it enjoyable and low-pressure.

Tie print to real life — food packets, shop signs, bus numbers — so reading clearly earns its keep.

 **Try** Teach the words your child sees every day first — reading that solves a
this: real problem sticks far better than random lists.

Stage 5 – Everyday numbers

Build practical numeracy your child can use.

Count real things — steps, spoons, coins — and drop number words in through the day; printable number cards give you something to match and point to.

Practise money, time and quantity inside real tasks: paying, setting timers, “how many do we need?”.

Keep it concrete and hands-on rather than abstract, and come back to it often.

Aim at the useful end of maths first: recognising notes and coins, knowing when it is time to leave, counting out enough plates.

 **Try** Let your child hand over the coins at a real shop — practical maths in a **this:** real setting is worth a stack of worksheets.

Stage 6 – Use it everywhere

Help skills generalise across people, places and settings.

Practise each new skill in different rooms, on different days, and with different family members.

Ask the other adults in your child’s life to use the same words, signs and steps you do.

Take skills out into the community — the shop, the park, a relative’s home.

Change one thing at a time — a new person, or a new place, but not both at once.

 **Try** A skill only really counts as learned when your child uses it somewhere **this:** new without a prompt — so keep widening where it’s practised.

Stage 7 – Independence and dignity

Grow responsibility, choice and a sense of “I can”.

Give your child real jobs and responsibilities suited to their level, and praise the effort they put in.

Offer genuine choices and honour them, so your child learns that their voice matters.

Talk to your child, not over them, when other adults ask questions about them.

Step back a little more as skills grow, making room for safe, supported independence — there are more everyday ideas in our guide to building independence in young children.

 **Try** Wait a few extra seconds before you help — that pause is the gap **this:** where your child does it themselves and feels proud.

Stage 8 – Partner with school

Join up home learning with your child's school and team.

Ask your child's teachers which skills they're working on, so you can reinforce the very same ones at home.

Share what's working at home, so school can use the same words, pictures and steps.

Keep a simple record of progress and concerns to look over together at meetings.

Take a written summary to every meeting — what your child can now do alone, what needs a prompt, and what you would like next.

 **Try** Agree just one or two shared goals with school at a time — everyone **this:** pulling the same way helps skills take hold faster. If you would like a therapist to help you choose those goals, you can book a session at our Multan centre.

Little tricks that make it work

- ✓ Choose skills your child will genuinely use — usefulness is your best guide to what to teach next.
- ✓ Break every skill into small steps, and keep the words and the order the same each time.
- ✓ Expect many more repetitions than you think you need, and keep each go short and cheerful.
- ✓ Teach in the real place the skill happens; hands-on practice beats explaining every time.
- ✓ Practise across settings and people so skills travel beyond one room.
- ✓ Protect your child's dignity — offer real choices, real jobs, and the time to try it themselves.

How you'll know it's working

- Your child needs a smaller prompt than before — a word instead of your hands
- Your child does more of a daily routine — dressing, eating, tidying — independently
- A skill learned at home starts showing up at school or out in the community
- Your child communicates needs and choices more reliably
- Safety, money or reading skills appear in real, everyday situations



Is this based on real methods? This program reflects standard special-education and life-skills practice for children with intellectual disability — teaching the functional skills that make up adaptive behaviour (communication, self-care, safety and practical academics) by breaking them into small steps, fading your help gradually, practising in real settings so skills generalise, and working in partnership with school — and is designed to support, not replace, professional care.

✔ **Educational information, not a diagnosis.** Our guidance follows standard, research-based practice (CDC, NHS, ASHA and WHO), is written by our therapy team and **medically reviewed by a GMC-registered doctor**. Every child is different, so we can't promise specific results — always use your own judgement and speak to a qualified professional about your child. **Read our full disclaimer.**

— FAQ

Learning & Life Skills: questions parents ask