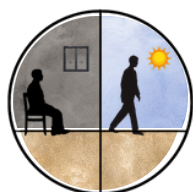




TRAINING METHODOLOGY **FOR** OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY OF PEOPLE WITH INTELLECTUAL DISABILITIES



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vulnerable groups



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This “Training Methodology for Occupational Therapy of People with Intellectual Disabilities” is a result of the project Path to Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities - PROGRESS

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Project Resume and Overview of the Training Methodology

The project “Path to Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities - Progress” is implemented by the coordinator Center for Youth Activism - KRIK, North Macedonia together with the partners Foundation Zanandrea, Italy; Edra, Greece and Monikom, North Macedonia as a technical partner.

The project is funded by the European Union, within the programme Erasmus +, from the National Agency for European Educational Programmes and Mobility in North Macedonia.

The main objectives of the project are:

- to equip the organizations that are working with adult persons with disabilities and professional staff with the essential skills in implementing activities;
- to network the social system through creating a platform for creating connections between the public institutions that are creators and implementation of public policies, and the private social service providers on national and international level of the partnership of the project; and
- to establish a web platform for learning opportunities and easy access to resources, knowledge and opportunities.

One of the main results of the projects is creation of methodology for building the capacities of the caregivers, family members, staff working in independent living units or in small group homes with supported living and to train the staff which is working with the adults with disabilities on the process on how to support them in their independent living.

This Training Methodology is dedicated for staff working on independent living, more precisely how to organize occupational therapy activities for adult persons with disabilities. The Training Methodology is fully developed session by session including all the main aspects of the occupational therapy presented in the following modules:

- Personal care and hygiene
- Care for the space where we live in
- Food and nutrition
- Physical activities and wellbeing
- Connections with other people-making friends
- Getting familiar with the surroundings where they live (markets, pharmacies, bars etc.)
- Personal interests of the beneficiaries and possibilities for being creative in different fields:
 - Basics of art therapy
 - Basics of music therapy
 - Basics of horticulture as a method for occupational therapy

Local training based on the Training methodology will be conducted in each of the partner organization's countries. This will serve as pilot of the training methodology and the feedback will be taken into account for finalizing the document.

Introduction

The project's primary objectives are threefold: to enhance the skills of organizations and professional staff working with adults with disabilities, to create a collaborative network among public institutions and private social service providers, and to develop a web platform offering easy access to learning opportunities and resources.

A cornerstone of this project is the development of a comprehensive training methodology specifically designed for caregivers, family members, and staff working in independent living units or small group homes. This methodology focuses on equipping these individuals with the knowledge and tools necessary to support adults with disabilities in achieving greater autonomy.

Central to this training methodology is occupational therapy, a holistic approach that helps individuals improve their daily living skills and overall well-being. Occupational therapy addresses functional motor, sensory-motor, perceptual, neuropsychological, and psychosocial disorders, aiming to enhance individuals' ability to perform everyday activities independently. This therapy not only improves practical skills but also boosts self-confidence, emotional well-being, and social interaction.

The training modules cover a wide range of essential aspects of daily living:

- Personal care and hygiene: Workshops on handwashing, dental hygiene, and personal grooming.
- Care for living spaces: Activities on planning and maintaining a home for independent living, including gardening.
- Food and nutrition: Sessions on creating healthy recipes and understanding nutritional values.
- Physical activities and well-being: Exercises and activities like accessible dance and sitting volleyball to promote physical health.
- Social connections: Developing social skills, participating in group activities, and sustaining friendships.
- Familiarization with local surroundings: Training on navigating markets, pharmacies, and other local amenities.
- Creative personal interests: Introducing basic concepts of art therapy, music therapy, and horticulture.

Local training sessions based on this methodology will be conducted in each partner organization's country, serving as pilots to refine and finalize the approach. Feedback from these sessions will ensure the training is practical, effective, and adaptable to various contexts.

By integrating occupational therapy into its framework, the "Path to Independent Living of Persons with Disabilities - Progress" project provides a comprehensive and dynamic approach to supporting adults with disabilities. This initiative not only empowers individuals to lead more independent and fulfilling lives but also strengthens the capacity of caregivers and professionals, fostering a more inclusive and supportive community.

Occupational Therapy

Occupational therapy is a type of treatment aimed at helping people of all ages who have a functional motor, sensori-motor, perceptual, neuropsychological and/or psycho-social disorder. This therapy helps people to improve the quality of their life through the performance of various activities, to become more self-confident, to cope with everyday situations, to perform the various roles in their life, if they do not have or have lost the ability due to illness, injury or a handicap. The goal is to achieve maximum independence and freedom in everyday life.

Occupational therapy aims to provide:

- Assistance and adaptation in the living environment, the family and the workplace;
- Directing and maintaining attention;
- Improving mood;
- Encouraging communication;
- Encouraging independence;
- Encouraging independence and performing self-care activities in daily activities;
- Training of perceptual functions;
- Manual dexterity training;
- Boosting mood;
- Proper stress management;
- Acts on psychosocial activities (through social contacts achieved through group work);

- Proper management of free time (play, sports, hobbies, interests, socialization);
- Helps to control and release inappropriate impulses;
- It helps to accept the person's own identity.

Tasks of occupational therapy:

- Occupational therapy assessment and analysis of the performance of daily activities covering the areas of self-care activities, productivity and leisure activities;
- Occupational therapy assessment and analysis of sensorimotor, cognitive and psychosocial abilities;
- Occupational therapy assessment and analysis of the work and socio-cultural environment in which daily activities take place;
- Establishing, maintaining and/or modifying the performance of self-care activities (feeding, dressing, hygiene, bathing, functional mobility);
- Establishing, maintaining and/or modifying the performance of productive activities (household activities, professional roles and tasks, caring for others, volunteering);
- Establishing and maintaining and/or modifying the performance of activities in free time (play, hobbies, rest and recreation);
- Establishing and maintaining sensorimotor, cognitive and psychosocial components, activities using different therapeutic approaches, methods and techniques;
- Adaptation to the residential, work and social environment and the abilities and needs of individuals;
- Monitoring the outcome of occupational therapy;
- Keeping documentation about occupational therapy;
- Planning and carrying out research on daily activities, to improve health and quality of life.

Brief historic overview of occupational therapy

Although occupational therapy got its place in the framework of treatment and rehabilitation, even at the beginning of the 20th century, the idea of engaging patients in various activities with the goal; treatment has been practiced since ancient times in the history of medicine. It can be said that this part of the therapeutic activity has a long history. The development of occupational therapy and the factors that have caused it, coincide with the development of the person in general.

The ancestor of today's man became a man in the true sense of the word, because in the process of adapting to the environment to satisfy his needs, he started to use the simplest implements for cultivating the land and weapons for his own self-sufficiency. In doing so, he ended up using his upper extremities (arms), which over time led to the straightening of the body [which contributed to the change of the spinal column and the skull, which gave the opportunity for the development of the brain. Over time, the apparatus for creating articulate speech also developed.

The man with his work influenced nature and changed his surroundings, slowly changing himself. The work itself was a factor that created the society. The need for association with others for the sake of the common struggle for survival was also characteristic of the ancestors of man, however, the manufacture of tools, whatever that was, [that] united the individuals in such a unity that made up the production interests.

The society is a product of the man's organized work. Under the influence of public work activities, people's personality and consciousness are gradually being formed. If man's work activity is the same as the non-governable biological nature that created the speech apparatus, the same force created the worker.

For the understanding of human spirituality, its activity, that is, its behavior and actions, is also important. Negotiated physical condition, for example: need for food, housing, clothing, etc., as well as spiritual needs. The wish and the request for the man to fulfill his needs are guiding him towards such or similar activities. The needs of the man or the citizen, are what keeps the man active. If we start from the theory that work created man to be man, then we practically conclude, i.e. We believe that the activation of the mentally ill helps in faster rehabilitation and rehabilitation.

The lack of voice and the mental dullness that prevails in mental patients do not represent any clinical picture, but they are the result of inappropriate treatment, which forces the patient to passivity, but with properly guided motor activity, these deficiencies quickly disappear. That is why the activation, i.e. the engagement of such patients represents a very important tool and an irresolvable component of the therapeutic activities. Such rehabilitation, which tries to include the patient in the work process, is a very important segment for the resocialization of the mentally ill because it represents an important supplement to drug therapy.

On the one hand, the work itself and the results of that work act therapeutically, and on the other hand, the work activity represents the basis for establishing transfer relationships on the basis of communication that requires inclusion and cooperation in the work process. However, the work should be seen as a unity of therapeutic, educational and economic values, and when the work is applied in medicine, its therapeutic component is of primary importance.

The modest data from history indicate the aspiration of medical professionals and their efforts to extract therapeutic value from generally known productive activities.

Recommendations for Implementation of the Training Methodology

Main Objective of the Training Methodology

The main objective of the training methodology is to strengthen the skills of family and professional caregivers that are working with persons with disabilities in improving their everyday skills and competencies for independent living.

Professional Caregivers

Family Caregivers - will help families, friends

Target Groups of the Training Methodology

Caregivers - caregivers should be equipped and prepared with knowledge, resources, available materials, mentoring and support in order to implement the trainings for occupational therapy

Adult Persons with Intellectual Disabilities - the occupational therapy will enable PWD to complete necessary tasks despite complex impairments.

- Create appropriate activities that allow clients to develop new skills and participate in daily life routines
- Identify and use activities that are best suited to help a given client achieve success and rebuild the self-confidence for and interest in doing things
- Help families of clients understand their member's impairments and how those impairments affect the client's emotions, behavior, self-esteem, performance, and development

Implementers of the Training Methodology

Implementers of this training methodology are facilitators with the following background: occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, professional caregivers

Preparations for implementation of the Training Methodology

The preparation of professional teams for implementing occupational therapy for persons with intellectual disabilities involves a comprehensive and multidisciplinary approach. First, team members must undergo specialized training to understand the unique needs, abilities, and challenges faced by individuals with intellectual disabilities.

This training often includes workshops on communication strategies, sensory integration, behavioral management, and therapeutic techniques tailored to enhance daily living skills, social participation, and independence. Professionals also need to collaborate closely, ensuring that occupational therapists, psychologists, social workers, and support staff work together to develop individualized care plans. This preparation extends to creating a supportive environment, adapting tools and materials to be accessible and meaningful, and fostering inclusive attitudes within the team to provide person-centered care. Regular team meetings, ongoing education, and reflective practice are essential to ensure the continuous improvement and effectiveness of the therapy programs.

Measuring the Impact of the Training Methodology

Measuring the impact of occupational therapy for persons with intellectual disabilities requires both qualitative and quantitative methods. Quantitatively, progress can be tracked through standardized assessments that measure improvements in daily living skills, social participation, and functional independence. Qualitatively, feedback from participants, caregivers, and professionals can offer insights into changes in well-being, confidence, and quality of life. Regular evaluations, including before-and-after comparisons, goal attainment scaling, and observation of behavior changes, help determine the therapy's effectiveness and inform any necessary adjustments to the program.

Training Methodology

Overview of the Working Programme

Theme 1: Personal care and hygiene

Workshop 1: Handwashing and germ prevention

Workshop 2: Dental hygiene and oral care

Workshop 3: Personal grooming and bathing

Theme 2: Care for the space where we live in

Workshop 1: Planning a home for independent living

Workshop 2: Gardening

Workshop 3:

Theme 3: Food and Nutrition

Workshop 1: Make a healthy recipe

Workshop 2: What's good?

Workshop 3: Nutritional Adventure

Theme 4: Physical activities and wellbeing

Workshop 1: Body and movement

Workshop 2: Sitting volleyball

Workshop 3: Accessible dance

Theme 5: Connections with other people - making friends

Workshop 1: Social skills and communication

Workshop 2: Group activities and games

Workshop 3: Creating and sustaining friendships

Theme 6: Getting familiar with the surrounding they live in

Workshop 1: At the market

Workshop 2: Smart Shopping

Workshop 3: Navigating the neighborhood

Theme 7: Art Occupational Therapy

Workshop 1: Exploring emotions through art

Workshop 2: Building self-esteem through art

Workshop 3: Group art-project - creating a community mural

Establishing a relation with a person with disability

No matter what the abilities are, of the person, no one wants to be treated like a child. When talking to a person with a disability, don't use baby vocabulary, pet names, or speak louder than your average tone of voice. Do not use protective gestures such as touching, patting the back or head. These habits show that you think that the person with a disability is not capable of understanding you and that you equate him with a child. Use a normal voice and vocabulary, talk to him as you would to someone without a disability.

It is appropriate to slow down your speech for someone who is hard of hearing or cognitively impaired. It may also be acceptable to speak to people who have hearing loss in a louder than average voice so they can hear you. Usually someone will admonish you if you speak too quietly. You can also ask if you are speaking too fast or ask them to tell you if you need to slow down or speak more clearly if necessary. Don't feel like you have to simplify/simplify your vocabulary to the most basic words. The only time you may be asked to simplify your language is if you are talking to someone who has severe intellectual or communication difficulties. Talk casually and ask about their language needs.

Do not use labels/stigma or offensive terms. Labels and derogatory names are not appropriate and should be avoided in a conversation with someone who has a disability.

Identifying someone by their disability or assigning them an offensive label (such as disabled or disabled) is offensive and disrespectful. Always watch the things you say, censor your speech if necessary. Avoid names like moron, retard, disabled, spastic, etc. at all times. Be careful not to identify someone by their disability rather than their name.

- If you represent someone with a disability, you should not introduce the disability. You can say "This is my colleague Suzanne" without saying "This is my colleague Suzanne, who is deaf".
- If you use a common phrase like "I have to run!" to someone in a wheelchair, don't apologize. These types of phrases are not intended to be offensive, and by apologizing will simply draw attention to your awareness of their disability.

Speak directly to the person, not to an assistant or interpreter. It is frustrating for someone with a disability to have to deal with people who never speak directly to them if an assistant or interpreter is present. Talk to a person in a wheelchair, rather than the person standing next to them. Their body may not be fully functional, but that doesn't mean their brain isn't! If you are talking to someone who has a personal assistant for help or someone who is deaf and has a sign language interpreter, you should still talk directly to the disabled person. Even if the person doesn't have typical listening body language (for example, an autistic person who doesn't look at you), don't assume they can't hear you. Talk to them!

Be patient and ask questions if necessary. Sometimes it can be tempting to speed up the conversation or complete the sentences of someone with a disability, but doing so can be disrespectful. Always let them talk and work at their own pace without prompting them to talk, think or move faster. Additionally, if you don't understand something someone is saying because they're speaking too slowly or too fast, don't be afraid to ask questions. Assuming you know what someone said can be harmful and embarrassing if you mishear it, so always check.

Someone with a speech impediment can be particularly difficult to understand, so don't rush/make them speak faster and ask them to repeat themselves if necessary. Some people need extra time to process speech or turn their thoughts into spoken words (regardless of intellectual ability). It is okay if there are also long pauses in the conversation.

Don't be afraid to ask about a person's disability. It may not be appropriate to ask about someone's disability out of curiosity, but if you think this might help you make the situation easier for them (like asking a person if they'd rather get in the elevator with you instead of taking the stairs if see that he has trouble walking), it is appropriate to ask questions. Chances are they've been asked about their disability repeatedly throughout their lives and know how to explain it in a few sentences. If the disability occurred as a result of an accident or if the person finds the information too personal, they will likely respond that they prefer not to discuss it. Assuming you know what their disability is can be offensive; it is better to ask than to assume. You should know that some disabilities are not visible.

If you see someone who looks "normal" parking in a handicapped spot, don't confront them and accuse them of not having a disability; he may have a disability that you cannot see. Sometimes called "invisible disabilities," disabilities that cannot be immediately seen are also disabilities. It is a good habit to be kind and considerate to everyone; you can't know someone's situation just by looking at them. Some disabilities vary from day to day: someone who needed a wheelchair yesterday may only need a cane today. This doesn't mean they're faking it or "getting better", just that they have good days and bad days like everyone else.

Put yourself in the position of someone with a disability. It may be easier to understand how to communicate with people who have disabilities if you imagine that you have a disability yourself. Think about how you would like people to talk to or treat you. It is very likely that you will want to be treated as you are now. Therefore, you should talk to people with disabilities as you would talk to anyone else. Welcome a new co-worker with a disability like anyone else. Never stare at someone with a disability, be protective. Don't focus on the disability. It is not important to understand the nature of someone's disability. It is important to treat them equally, talk to them like you would anyone else and behave as you would normally do if a new person came into your life.

Offer real help. Some people hesitate to offer help to someone with a disability for fear of offending them. Indeed, if you're offering help because of the assumption that someone can't do something on their own, your offer can be offensive. However, very few people would be offended by a genuine, specific offer of help. Many people with disabilities are hesitant to ask for help, but afterwards they may be grateful for the offer.

- For example, if you are going shopping with a friend who uses a wheelchair, you can ask if they need help carrying their bags or securing their wheelchair. Offering to help a friend is usually not offensive.
- If you are unsure of a specific way to help, you can ask, "Is there anything I can do to help you?"
- Never "help" someone without first asking; for example, don't grab someone's wheelchair and try to push them up a steep ramp. Instead, ask if they need a push or if there's anything else you can do to make it easier for them to navigate the field.

Keep in mind that most people have adapted to their disability. Some disabilities are present from birth and others come later in life due to development, accident or illness. However the disability develops, most people learn to adjust and care for themselves independently. Most are independent in their daily lives and require little help from others. As a result, it can be offensive to assume that someone with a disability can't do many things and to constantly try to do things for them. If you help for a long time and in a childish voice, this can be annoying and offensive. Work under the assumption that the person can complete each task alone.

- A person who becomes disabled later in life as a result of an accident may require more help than someone with a lifelong disability (a homeless person), but you should always wait until they ask for your help before you assume they need it.
- Don't avoid asking someone with a disability to do a task because you worry they can't do it.
- If you offer help, make the offer real and specific. If you offer from a position of genuine kindness, rather than an assumption that the person can't do something, you're less likely to offend them.

Respecting a Person with Disability

Learning the right way to behave and speak around someone with a disability may not be as intuitive as you think. Often, there are ways of speaking and behaving that can be very disrespectful to a person with a disability, causing them resentment, anger or frustration. Instead of possibly causing a problem, learn the best way to behave and speak to respect people with disabilities.

Respecting persons with intellectual disabilities is integral to the successful implementation of occupational therapy. Occupational therapy (OT) aims to help individuals develop, recover, or maintain meaningful activities and independence, and this process must be grounded in respect for the dignity, autonomy, and individual needs of each person. When occupational therapists approach their work with respect at its core, they create a more effective, supportive environment that promotes empowerment and personal growth.

A key element of respect in occupational therapy is active listening and valuing the individual's preferences, choices, and experiences. Persons with intellectual disabilities often communicate in unique ways, and OT professionals must take the time to understand and respond to these communication styles. By incorporating the individual's voice in planning and decision-making, therapists demonstrate respect for their autonomy. This could mean offering choices in therapeutic activities or adapting tasks to suit the individual's pace and preferences, ensuring that therapy remains person-centered rather than prescriptive.

Respectful communication helps foster trust between the therapist and the individual, leading to more meaningful and productive therapeutic outcomes.

Respect in OT also means recognizing and building upon the individual's strengths, rather than focusing solely on their limitations. Occupational therapy for persons with intellectual disabilities is most effective when it highlights their capabilities and promotes self-efficacy. By setting realistic, personalized goals that align with the individual's abilities and aspirations, therapists show that they believe in the person's potential for growth and achievement. This strengths-based approach not only encourages progress but also empowers the individual to take ownership of their development, enhancing their confidence and engagement in therapy.

Another important aspect is the respect for the person's right to self-determination, especially in decision-making. Occupational therapy often involves assisting individuals in making choices about their daily activities, routines, and personal care. Respecting their choices, even when guidance is necessary, is fundamental to empowering individuals with intellectual disabilities. For instance, therapists can offer options within therapeutic exercises or activities, allowing individuals to express preferences and make decisions about their care. This promotes a sense of control and self-worth, reinforcing that their opinions and desires are valued.

Creating a respectful environment extends beyond interpersonal interactions to the design of the therapeutic space and the materials used. Occupational therapists must ensure that environments are accessible and conducive to participation, with adaptations that meet the individual's physical, cognitive, and sensory needs.

Whether it's modifying equipment, breaking down tasks into manageable steps, or providing assistive devices, these adjustments show respect for the individual's need to engage meaningfully in the therapeutic process. Such adaptations reflect an understanding of the barriers faced by persons with intellectual disabilities and a commitment to removing those barriers so they can participate fully.

Respect also encompasses the way occupational therapists collaborate with families, caregivers, and other professionals. Recognizing that families play a critical role in supporting individuals with intellectual disabilities, therapists must work in partnership with them, valuing their insights and involving them in care plans. This collaborative approach ensures that therapy is aligned with the individual's life outside of sessions, creating a holistic and respectful framework for care.

Respecting persons with intellectual disabilities in OT means challenging societal stigma and advocating for inclusion. Occupational therapists can take an active role in promoting understanding and reducing prejudice by educating others about intellectual disabilities and demonstrating the value of inclusive practices. Whether through community-based programs, workshops, or advocacy efforts, therapists contribute to a broader culture of respect and inclusion, where individuals with intellectual disabilities are seen as full members of society with the right to participate in all aspects of life.

Incorporating respect into occupational therapy for persons with intellectual disabilities creates a therapeutic environment that not only addresses their needs but also upholds their dignity and promotes their right to a meaningful, independent life.

Through respectful practices, occupational therapists empower individuals to achieve their personal goals and improve their quality of life, fostering both therapeutic success and broader societal change.

Theme 1: Personal care and hygiene

Personal hygiene and care are crucial for persons with disabilities in order to prevent infections, illnesses, and other health complications. Maintaining personal hygiene is important for social acceptance and interaction, it can boost confidence and self-esteem, helping individuals engage more comfortably in social activities. Additionally, learning personal hygiene and self-care skills fosters a more independent life of persons with disabilities and enables individuals to take care of themselves, reducing reliance on others and enhancing their quality of life. Practicing personal hygiene can improve mental health by promoting a sense of normalcy, routine, and personal control.

Occupational therapy plays a significant role in teaching and reinforcing personal hygiene and care skills for persons with disabilities. OT assesses the individual's current abilities, challenges, and specific needs related to personal hygiene. OT Therapists develop personalized training programs that are tailored to the individual's capabilities. This may include step-by-step instructions, visual aids, and hands-on practice, they can also teach adaptive techniques and use assistive devices to make personal hygiene tasks more accessible.

For example, they might recommend specialized tools for brushing teeth or adaptive clothing for easier dressing. Therapists help individuals establish daily routines that incorporate personal hygiene practices, making these activities a regular part of their day. Regular sessions with an occupational therapist provide ongoing support and reinforcement, helping individuals practice and retain new skills. For different abilities, OT may suggest modifications to the home environment to make personal hygiene tasks easier, such as installing grab bars in the bathroom or using a shower chair. Therapists also educate family members and caregivers on how to support the individual's personal hygiene routines effectively.

Conducting workshops that include demonstrations and practice sessions on tasks like handwashing, dental care, bathing, and grooming. Creating visual schedules or step-by-step guides for personal hygiene routines to aid understanding and memory. Incorporating gamification elements into hygiene education to make learning fun and engaging, such as reward systems for completing hygiene tasks or interactive games that teach hygiene concepts. Utilizing technology such as apps that remind and guide individuals through their personal care routines. By addressing these aspects, occupational therapy helps individuals with disabilities achieve better health, increased independence, and improved quality of life through effective personal hygiene and self-care practices.

T1 Workshop 1

TITLE: Personal Grooming and Bathing

Description of the activity

This training focuses on teaching participants the importance of regular bathing and grooming, including hair washing and nail care. Participants will learn through demonstrations, guided practice, and interactive activities designed to ensure they understand and can perform proper grooming and bathing routines. Through a combination of demonstrations, guided practice, and interactive activities, participants will learn how to maintain personal hygiene effectively. The training is structured to accommodate the specific needs of adults with intellectual disabilities, ensuring that the instructions are clear, engaging, and easy to follow.

Details	
Duration	1 hour
Participants	Adults with intellectual disabilities
Facilitators	Occupational Therapists, Professional and Family Caregivers
Equipment	Shampoo and conditioner Towels Hairbrushes and combs Nail clippers and files Visual aids (posters, videos)
Space	A room or bathroom spacious enough for participation and demonstration

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the importance of regular bathing and grooming
- Learn the correct techniques for hair washing and nail care
- Develop a personal grooming routine

COURSE

Preparation	1.Gather Materials: Ensure that all necessary materials such as shampoo, conditioner, towels, hairbrushes, combs, nail clippers, and files are readily available. 2.Set Up Visual Aids: Prepare posters, handouts, and any visual aids that will help in demonstrating the grooming techniques. 3.Technology Preparation: Set up any required technology for showing videos or other digital demonstrations.
Implementation	Discuss the importance of regular bathing and grooming Show a short video on personal hygiene Demonstrate the proper techniques for hair washing and nail care Explain each step clearly Participants practice grooming techniques with facilitator guidance Use visual aids to reinforce each step Participants create a personal grooming checklist

Variations

1. Scented Shampoos and Conditioners:

Engaging the Senses: Use a variety of scented shampoos and conditioners to engage participants' senses. Scents like lavender, citrus, or vanilla can make the activity more pleasant and appealing.

Personal Preference: Allow participants to choose their preferred scents, giving them a sense of control and personalization in their grooming routine.

Discussion: Facilitate a discussion about different scents, asking participants which ones they like best and why. This can help in making the activity more interactive.

2. Incorporate Songs or Rhymes:

Fun and Memorability: Create or use existing songs or rhymes about grooming routines. Singing songs while performing grooming tasks can make the learning process fun and memorable.

Repetition: Repetitive songs or rhymes can help reinforce the steps of the grooming routine, making it easier for participants to remember.

Participation: Encourage participants to sing along or come up with their own grooming songs. This can foster creativity and make the session more engaging.

3. Themed Grooming Days:

Special Themes: Organize themed grooming days where the focus is on a specific aspect of grooming, such as "Hair Care Day" or "Nail Care Day."

Dress-Up: Participants can dress up or bring props related to the theme, making the activity more immersive and enjoyable.

Activities: Include related activities, such as making hair accessories on Hair Care Day or decorating nail files on Nail Care Day.

4. Sensory-Friendly Materials:

Different Textures: Provide grooming tools with different textures (e.g., soft brushes, rough sponges) to cater to participants with sensory sensitivities.

Comfortable Environment: Ensure the room temperature is comfortable and the environment is calm to reduce any sensory overload.

5. Interactive Stories or Role-Playing:

Storytelling: Use interactive stories that incorporate grooming activities. For example, create a story where characters go through their daily grooming routines, and participants can act out the scenes.

	Role-Playing: Participants can take turns role-playing different grooming scenarios, such as getting ready for a special event or a day at the beach. 6. Visual and Tactile Learning: Visual Aids: Use colorful visual aids, such as step-by-step posters, pictograms, or flip charts, to illustrate grooming steps. Tactile Tools: Provide tactile tools like 3D models of hands and heads for participants to practice on. This can be especially helpful for those who learn better through hands-on experiences.
Evaluation	<i>Observe participants during guided practice</i> <i>Use a checklist to assess technique adherence</i> <i>Provide feedback and additional practice if needed</i> <i>Use pictograms or different visual materials</i>

T1 Workshop 2

TITLE: Dental Hygiene and Oral Care

Description of the activity

This training focuses on the importance of dental hygiene and teaches participants how to effectively brush and floss their teeth. Participants will learn through demonstrations, guided practice, and hands-on activities to ensure they understand and can perform proper oral care routines. Participants will gain knowledge and hands-on experience in proper oral care techniques, ensuring they are well-equipped to maintain good dental hygiene. The session will feature interactive demonstrations, guided practice, and engaging activities to make learning both effective and enjoyable. By the end of the training, participants will understand the importance of dental hygiene, know how to brush and floss their teeth correctly, and be able to incorporate these practices into their daily routines.

Details	
Duration	1 hour
Participants	Adults with intellectual disabilities
Facilitators	Occupational Therapists, Professional or family caregivers, dentists
Equipment	Toothbrushes Toothpaste Dental floss Model of teeth Visual aids (posters, videos)

Space	A room equipped with tables for practice activities
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OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the importance of dental hygiene
- Learn the correct technique for brushing and flossing teeth
- Develop a daily oral care routine

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Gather toothbrushes, toothpaste, and floss for each participant</i> <i>Set up visual aids and models of teeth</i> <i>Prepare any necessary technology for videos or demonstrations</i>
Implementation	Begin with a friendly introduction and a discussion about the importance of dental hygiene. Ask participants questions to engage them, such as "Why do you think keeping your teeth clean is important?" or "What do you do to take care of your teeth?" Show a short, engaging video that explains the basics of oral care.

Use animated characters or relatable scenarios to capture attention and illustrate key points.

Use a large model of teeth to demonstrate the correct techniques for brushing and flossing.

Explain each step slowly and clearly, allowing time for participants to ask questions.

Provide each participant with a toothbrush, toothpaste, and dental floss.

Guide them through the brushing and flossing process, offering individual assistance and feedback.

Use visual aids, such as posters or diagrams, to reinforce each step.

Play a game where participants identify foods that are good or bad for teeth.

Use pictures of different foods and ask participants to place them in the correct category.

Discuss why certain foods are better for dental health than others.

Encourage participants to share their experiences and any challenges they face with dental hygiene.

Answer any questions they may have and provide additional tips for maintaining good oral health.

Variations	Use different flavors of toothpaste to make the brushing activity more enjoyable. Allow participants to choose their favorite flavor, adding a fun and sensory element to the practice.
Evaluation	<i>Carefully observe participants during the guided practice to ensure they are using the correct techniques.</i> <i>Provide positive reinforcement and gentle corrections as needed.</i> <i>Use a checklist to assess each participant's adherence to proper brushing and flossing techniques.</i> <i>Evaluate factors such as brushing duration, coverage of all teeth surfaces, and effective use of dental floss.</i> <i>Offer constructive feedback based on the observations and checklist assessments.</i> <i>Allow participants to practice further if needed, ensuring they feel confident in their abilities before concluding the session.</i>

T1 Workshop 3

TITLE: Hand Washing and Germ Prevention

Description of the activity

This training focuses on teaching participants the importance and techniques of proper hand washing to prevent the spread of germs and maintain personal hygiene. Given that adults with intellectual disabilities may face unique challenges in understanding and implementing proper hygiene practices, this activity is designed to be engaging, hands-on, and supportive. The session includes a mix of visual, auditory, and kinesthetic learning methods to cater to different learning styles. By the end of the training, participants will not only understand the importance of hand washing but will also be able to perform the correct technique independently and recognize various situations where hand washing is necessary.

Details	
Duration	1 hour
Participants	Adults with intellectual disabilities
Facilitators	Occupational therapists, professional or family caregivers
Equipment	Sink with running water Soap (liquid or bar) Paper towels or hand dryer Hand sanitizer Visual aids (posters, videos)
Space	A classroom with a sink or a bathroom with sufficient space for group activities

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand the importance of hand washing
- Learn the correct technique for washing hands
- Recognize situations requiring hand washing

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Prepare visual aids and handouts</i> <i>Ensure the sink area is clean and accessible</i> <i>Set up any necessary technology for videos or demonstrations</i>
Implementation	Introduction (10 mins) Discuss the importance of hand washing; Show a short video on germ prevention; provide insights about all the different situations requiring hand washing Demonstration (15 mins) Demonstrate the proper hand washing technique; Explain each step clearly; use pictograms or different visual materials Guided Practice (20 mins) Participants practice hand washing with facilitator guidance; Use visual aids to remember each step

	Interactive Activity (10 mins) Use a UV light and special lotion to show how germs can remain on hands if not washed properly Q&A and Recap (5 mins) Answer any questions; Recap key points
Variations	For situations where water access is limited, include a segment on the proper use of hand sanitizer. Demonstrate the correct amount to use and the technique for thoroughly covering all parts of the hands. Use different textures (e.g., foaming soap, gel) to provide a tactile experience. Have participants role-play different scenarios where hand washing is necessary. This can help reinforce the importance of the practice in various contexts.
Evaluation	<i>Observe participants during guided practice</i> <i>Use a checklist to assess technique adherence</i> <i>Provide feedback and additional practice if needed</i>

Theme 2: Care for the space we live in

The skills for maintaining care for the space that we live in is especially important for persons with intellectual disabilities on their path to independent living. Maintaining a clean and organized living environment helps prevent accidents and reduces the risk of infections and illnesses. Learning to care for one's living space promotes independence and self-sufficiency. It enables individuals to take control of their environment and to motivate them to practice daily routines. A tidy and well-maintained living space contributes to a better quality of life by providing a comfortable and pleasant environment. Being able to care for one's home can enhance social inclusion and interactions, as it allows individuals to host visitors confidently and participate in community living. Engaging in activities that care for the living space can improve self-esteem, provide a sense of accomplishment, and reduce stress and anxiety.

Occupational therapy plays a key role in teaching and reinforcing skills needed to care for living spaces among persons with intellectual disabilities. OT creates personalized schedules with tracking records for better organized way of cleaning and maintaining the space that people live in, adapted to the abilities and the surroundings of the individual. OT conducts workshops that include practical demonstrations and sessions on tasks like making the bed, doing the laundry, washing dishes and organizing the personal belongings.

Creating visual schedules or step-by-step guides for household chores to aid understanding and memory, incorporating gamification elements into home care education to make learning fun and engaging, such as reward systems for completing chores or interactive games that teach organizational skills and utilizing technology such as apps that remind and guide individuals through their household tasks and provide checklists to ensure completion is very important and practical.

T2 Workshop 1

TITLE: DISSEMBLING AND RECOMPOSING

Description of the activity

Cleaning — or rather a lack thereof — can have an impact on one’s health. Still, is often unpleasant and, for some people with physical limitations and/or certain disabilities, maintaining a housecleaning routine can be extra laborious. Everyone is different and has different priorities. This workshop will help youth workers to help youngster with with cognitive disability, such as mild to moderate mental retardation but also with physical disabilities, to overcome some difficulties they can face in their everyday lives when it comes to clean their own spaces.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8 people up to 15
Facilitators	2
Equipment	Computer, tv, a phone that can be used for recording , papers, posters and markers, glue, a printer, PECS
Space	A room large enough to allow multiple groups to work together without bothering each other

OBJECTIVES:

- Understand what obstacles a person with a disability who lives alone encounters every day
- Find the right method that can be taught to better understand and remember how to clean properly, re-proposing this activity to more or less heterogeneous groups of people with disabilities
- Using PECS in daily life activities.

COURSE

Preparation

-If some one doesn't know, briefly explain what PECS is and what is used for. The Picture Exchange Communication System, or PECS, allows people with little or no communication abilities to communicate using pictures.

-Initially the group is invited to think about all the tasks that a person living independently is required to carry out to keep a tidy and clean house, such as clean the bathrooms, the floor, the windows, dusting....

-The group is then divided into two subgroups, each of which is made up of 4 people who will have the task of identifying themselves in the role of a person with a disability, each with different difficulties: a blind person, a deaf person, one in a wheelchair and one with mental retardation .

-One group will be in charge to produce a graphic output while the other a virtual output

Implementation

- Each group is invited to select 2 of the tasks they’ve been discussing before in the preparatory phase.
- Each group will then have to develop an organizational plan in which each task will be broken down into the various sub-actions. For example, if the task "Clean the bathroom" has been chosen, this will be broken down into:
 - 1-vacuuming the floor
 - 2-cleaning first the toilet then the bidet with hot water (specifying with which products and which sponge and which color)
 - 3-change the sponge and then move to the sink and the mirror
 - 4- then the shower
 - 5- then mop the floor.
- Having done that, a group will develop a paper output, such as a billboard or a poster, which will be hung in the specific place and where all the cleaning phases will be visible accompanied by photos and short descriptions. The other group will develop an output which will be more technologic, using a tablet or a laptop, such as videos or audio + pictures.
- Here are some example of PECS images that can be used



Variations	-If there is a bigger group, it can be divided into more subgroups and each group will have to develop an output in which the activities that concern a specific room in the house are described and broken down, for example kitchen, bathroom, bedroom, living room, terrace...
Evaluation	Evaluation will be held with the whole group together. Facilitators will ask the participants first what their feelings are about the workshop, and about putting themselves in a person with disability clothes. After the first round of impressions, facilitators would ask if they think they could use this activity with their daily work with youngsters with disability and, if any, which changes would propose to the activity.

T2 Workshop 2

TITLE: GREEN THUMBS UP

Description of the activity

Gardening, whether it’s working with a vertical garden or a large plot, is a wonderful way to get in touch with nature. For people living with intellectual or developmental disabilities, gardening (or horticultural therapy) can be a holistic way to learn a new skill while also feeling more grounded. Furthermore, it is a way to feel the connection with something I care about and that needs my attention and care in order to survive. In a certain sense, it makes us responsible towards something else.

Details	
Duration	1,5 hours
Participants	10
Facilitators	2
Equipment	Stories in books and/or a tv, seeds of aromathic plants and some aromathic plants already partially grown, ceramic vases, water, topsoil, chalkboard paint and chinks, watering cans.
Space	A room large enough to allow multiple groups to work together without bothering each other

OBJECTIVES:

- Understanding the meaning of “taking care of something alive”
- Help a person with disabilities feel productive
- Give a practical task to do with consistency to a PWD
- Encourage someone to learn new skills
- Create a beautiful place where people can relax and appreciate the beauty of the nature

COURSE

Preparation	Every person is standing in front of a table. In front of him/her there are: 2 different aromatic plants and their respective seeds, a ceramic vase, some topsoil, a watering can, chalkboard paints and chinks.
Implementation	1-Initially the facilitators have the task of making youth workers aware of the importance for a person with a disability to perceive themselves as a responsible individual and how this awareness comes through taking care of something or someone. This can happen through the telling of a story or watching a short documentary. 2-First, the focus is on the plants. Every person has to describe the plants in front of him/her : which color, which shapes and consistency have the leaves, what does it smell like, how it can be used in cooking food.

	3-Then the second step is to decorate the vase using chalkboard paint, writing down the name of the plants or simply painting and drawing the vase as they prefer. Then the pot will be filled with soil and everyone will need to place some seeds inside and then cover it again with soil. 4-It's now important to explain exactly how people will have to take care first of the seed and then of the plants. The group can create all together a "vademecum" of what needs to be done from watering (and which is the right amount), to fertilizing, pruning and placing the plant in the best position (not too sunny, not too shady).
Variations	It can be also done with garden plants, such as tomatoes, cucumbers, zucchini and may more....The products of these plants will probably be more satisfying since they can be cooked directly and became a dish itselfes. It is also possible to produce a sort of recipe book over time, starting from the aromatic plant and its characteristics.
Evaluation	At the end of the workshop they will be asked two different tasks: • Every youth worker will be invited to think about different types of disability and which problems and solutions there might be. • To write down a word that describes every phase of the workshop.

T2 Workshop 3

TITLE: HOUSE PLANNING

Description of the activity

When talking about designing and furnishing a home for people with disabilities, it is essential to take into account and start from the needs that the people who will live there express. Pre-packaged packages cannot be offered as they would risk not satisfying all the requirements of a home accessible to all. Furthermore, it is important that the house feels personalized and welcoming and that the people who will then live there are directly involved as much as possible.

Details	
Duration	1 full day
Participants	15
Facilitators	2
Equipment	floor plans of various houses and apartments printed in plotter version, a computer or a phone where can search on internet, pen and markers
Space	A room large enough to allow multiple groups to work together without bothering each other

OBJECTIVES:

- Fully understand a person with disability needs by clashing with accessibility problems
- To learn how to furnish a house fully adapted for every possible need a person with disability has.
- Understand the importance of considering the tastes and preferences of a person with disabilities when choosing where to live

COURSE

Preparation	<i>We divide into groups of 4 or 5 people. Each group is given a map of a house or apartment with a brief description of the place where it is located: it's a house in the countryside or an apartment in the city center, garden or not, center or suburbs, isolated or surrounded....</i>
Implementation	<i>Morning -In the first part of this workshop, the youth workers will have to identify what obstacles and difficulties a person with a disability might have to face if they lived in the house represented on the map they have. They should then draw up a list of all those identified based on each type of disability, from physical-sensory ones to cognitive ones. - In the second part they will then be asked to think of at least one possible solution for each problem/impediment found</i>

	- In the third part, the group meets and both the problems and the possible solutions found are presented in plenary. Afternoon On the second day the whole group should develop a booklet or a script for a video based on what they discuss the day before. It would be important that the booklet or video contains information on all the areas for which the need and the corresponding solution has been identified such as, for example: catching things, accessibility, sensory impediments....
Variations	• It can be given an online map instead of a paper one and the whole workshop would be done using computers and projectors. • it could be an interesting variable to have some of the operators simulate a specific disability (blindness, deafness, paralysis of the legs...) to ensure that they can identify as much as possible with the possible obstacles that they could encounter within that home
Evaluation	At the end of the activity it would be interesting to ask: How much importance did you give to concrete practical aspects and to any personal desires or inclinations? How important do you think each guy's personal tastes are in addition to accessibility? This could be important feedback in order for them to remember not to underestimate this aspect.

Theme 3: Food and Nutrition

For individuals with intellectual disabilities, learning to prepare their own food and understanding the importance of nutrition is essential for health, independence, and overall well-being. Knowing how to prepare nutritious meals ensures a balanced diet, vital for maintaining physical health and preventing illnesses. It also promotes independence, allowing individuals to make their own food choices and prepare meals without relying on others, thereby enhancing their confidence and self-esteem. Additionally, knowledge of safe food handling and preparation techniques reduces the risk of foodborne illnesses and kitchen accidents.

Occupational therapy is crucial in this learning process. Therapists start by assessing the individual's abilities, challenges, and specific needs related to food preparation and nutrition. They develop personalized training programs that include step-by-step instructions, visual aids, and hands-on practice tailored to the individual's capabilities. Through regular sessions, therapists provide continuous support and reinforcement, ensuring that new skills are practiced and retained.

T3 Workshop 1

TITLE: Healthy Meal Preparation

Description of the activity

This workshop focuses on teaching participants how to prepare simple, healthy meals. Through hands-on activities, they will learn about basic cooking skills, meal planning, and the importance of balanced nutrition. The training is designed to be accessible and engaging for adults with intellectual disabilities.

Details	
Duration	60 minutes
Participants	10 participants
Facilitators	1 facilitator
Equipment	Healthy ingredients for a simple recipe, cooking utensils excluding knives or blenders
Space	Indoors, a setting with tables and chairs and space for cooking

OBJECTIVES:

- Learn about healthy ingredients and their benefits.
- Understand how to quickly prepare some easy and nutritious meals.
- Encourage participants to cook healthy meals at home.
- Provide a hands-on, inclusive cooking experience for people with disabilities.
- Encourage good hygiene practices when preparing and consuming food.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Choose a simple healthy recipe that can be easily prepared within the time frame and with basic kitchen equipment.</i> <i>Arrange chairs in a semicircle around the cooking demonstration area. Ensure all necessary cooking utensils and ingredients are prepared and accessible.</i>
Implementation	Introduction (10 minutes) Welcome participants and explain the importance of preparing and eating healthy meals. Discuss the objectives and structure of the activity. Demonstration (30 minutes): Demonstrate how to select and make differences between fresh and rotten fruits and vegetables. This can be done in a few simple steps:

	• Explain the process of washing and its importance • Explain the nutritional benefits of each ingredient used • Create a simple recipe from the selected ingredients (eg. a salad) • Allow participants to taste the dishes in the end
Variations	<i>Group Preparing:</i> Divide participants into small groups and assign each group a simple recipe to prepare. Each group can then share their dish with the rest of the participants. <i>Ingredient Exploration:</i> Have participants bring a healthy ingredient from home and share a recipe or way to use it in a meal with the group.
Evaluation	Reflection: Ask the participants what they learned and how they can use that knowledge for the future. Questions for Discussion: At the end of the session discuss questions about the importance of preparing healthy meals

T3 Workshop 2

TITLE: What's good?

Description of the activity

This workshop helps participants identify healthy and unhealthy meal options. Through interactive discussions and visual cards, they will learn to make better food choices and understand the impact of nutrition on their well-being. The activity is designed to be fun and accessible, encouraging active participation and practical learning.

Details	
Duration	30 - 40 minutes
Participants	8 - 12
Facilitators	One facilitator per group
Equipment	Cards with healthy food and fast food options
Space	Indoors or outdoors

OBJECTIVES:

- Increase awareness of healthy and unhealthy food options
- Educate participants on the benefits of healthy eating
- Encourage critical thinking about food choices
- Foster social interaction and engagement

COURSE

Preparation	Print Cards: Create 10 cards with images and names of healthy food options (e.g., apple, carrot, broccoli) and 10 cards with images and names of fast food options (e.g., hamburger, fries, soda). Link to cards Set up chairs in a circle to facilitate interaction and discussion. Ensure all participants are comfortably seated in the circle.
Implementation	• Welcome the participants and explain the purpose of the activity. • Discuss the importance of making healthy food choices and how it impacts overall well-being. • Introduce each food option one by one by showing the cards to the participants.

	Provide brief information about each food option, explaining why it is healthy or unhealthy. For example: • “An apple is a healthy option because it is high in fiber and vitamins.” • “A hamburger is often considered unhealthy due to its high fat and calorie content.” Mix the cards thoroughly: 1. Present the mixed cards to the participants again. 2. Ask participants to take turns picking a card and deciding whether it represents a healthy or unhealthy food option. 3. Facilitate a discussion for each choice, reinforcing why the choice is healthy or unhealthy. 4. Encourage participants to share their thoughts and any personal experiences related to the food options. 5. Summarize the key points discussed during the activity. 6. Encourage participants to think about how they can incorporate more healthy food choices into their daily lives. 7. Open the floor for any final questions or comments.
Variations	<i>Food Pyramid Challenge</i> <i>Objective:</i> Introduce the concept of balanced meals using the food pyramid.

	<i>After discussing healthy and unhealthy food options, give each participant a blank food pyramid template. Ask participants to place the food cards into the correct category on the pyramid (e.g., fruits, vegetables, grains). Discuss why a balanced diet is important and how each food group contributes to overall health.</i> <i>Healthy Meal Planning</i> <i>Objective:</i> <i>Encourage participants to plan a healthy meal using the food cards.</i> <i>Divide participants into small groups. Provide each group with a set of food cards. Ask each group to plan a healthy meal using the cards, ensuring a balance of different food groups. Groups present their meal plans, and the facilitator provides feedback on the nutritional balance.</i>
Evaluation	Participants will complete a short quiz to assess their understanding of healthy and unhealthy meal choices. Group discussions will provide an opportunity for feedback and reflection on the workshop. Facilitators will observe engagement during activities to evaluate the effectiveness of the session.

T3 Workshop 3

TITLE: Nutritional Adventure

Description of the activity

Participants embark on a fun, interactive adventure where they complete various “nutritional quests” to learn about healthy eating and nutrition. The activity uses a gamified approach with challenges and rewards to engage participants in exploring food groups, understanding portion sizes, and making healthy food choices. Participants will move through different “adventure stations,” each with a unique challenge related to nutrition. They will earn points and collect “nutrition badges” as they complete each challenge.

Details	
Duration	1 hour
Participants	8 - 12 adults with intellectual disabilities
Facilitators	Two facilitators per group (occupational therapists or trained nutritionists)
Equipment	Adventure station materials (e.g., food models, portion size plates, nutrition cards) Points tracking sheets Nutrition badges (stickers or cards) Timer Visuals or pictograms (cards or posters showing food groups)
Space	Indoors or outdoors

OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will identify different food groups and their benefits.
- Participants will learn about appropriate portion sizes for various foods.
- Participants will practice making healthier food choices through interactive challenges.
- Use gamification to increase motivation and participation in learning about nutrition.

COURSE

Preparation	1. Set Up Adventure Stations: Arrange the room with different stations, each focusing on a specific nutrition topic (e.g., fruit and vegetable identification, portion size matching, healthy vs. unhealthy choices). 2. Create Materials: Prepare food models, portion size plates, and nutrition cards. Set up the points tracking sheets or digital app. 3. Prepare Badges: Have nutrition badges ready for distribution. 4. Brief Facilitators: Ensure facilitators are familiar with the activities and the objectives.
Implementation	1. Brief participants on the adventure theme and explain the rules and objectives. Divide them into small teams. 2. Each team visits the adventure stations in rotation. At each station, they complete a challenge and earn points.

	Station 1: “Food Group Match” – Match food items to their respective groups. Station 2: “Portion Perfect” – Use portion size plates to correctly portion out different foods. Station 3: “Healthy Choice Hunt” – Identify and select the healthier options from a set of food choices. 3. Review the points earned and distribute nutrition badges. Discuss what participants learned and enjoyed.
Variations	<i>Adapt the stations for an online platform using virtual breakout rooms for each challenge.</i> <i>Change the adventure theme (e.g., “Space Adventure” or “Jungle Expedition”) to keep the activity fresh and exciting.</i>
Evaluation	Collect feedback from participants about their enjoyment and what they learned. Review observations on participant engagement and understanding of nutritional concepts. Use a brief quiz or group discussion to assess knowledge retention and areas for improvement.

Theme 4: Physical Activities and Wellbeing

Physical activities are crucial for persons with intellectual disabilities due to their numerous physical, mental, emotional, and social benefits. Regular physical activity can enhance cardiovascular health, help manage weight, and improve muscle strength, joint flexibility, and overall physical endurance. It also enhances motor skills, coordination, and balance, reducing the risk of falls and injuries. Mentally and emotionally, physical activities can boost mood, alleviate anxiety and depression, and improve cognitive abilities such as attention, memory, and executive functioning. Participating in these activities can also boost self-esteem as individuals achieve personal goals and experience a sense of accomplishment. Socially, group activities provide opportunities for interaction, helping individuals build friendships, improve social skills, and foster a sense of community inclusion.

Occupational therapy (OT) plays a pivotal role in integrating physical activities into the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities. Occupational therapists assess individual capabilities and interests to create tailored exercise programs that are enjoyable and achievable. They work on developing fine and gross motor skills, ensuring safe and effective participation in physical activities. By recommending and training individuals to use adaptive equipment and techniques, OTs make physical activities accessible.

They also help individuals incorporate physical activities into their daily routines, promoting consistency and long-term engagement. Providing education and support to individuals and their families emphasizes the importance of physical activity and how to integrate it into everyday life. Occupational therapists often collaborate with physical therapists, fitness trainers, and other professionals to create a holistic approach to physical activity and health. Examples of OT interventions include designing individualized exercise routines, encouraging participation in recreational sports and games, organizing group activities such as dance classes or swimming sessions, and using skill-building games that develop coordination and motor skills in a fun and engaging way. Incorporating physical activities into the lives of persons with intellectual disabilities can lead to significant improvements in their overall well-being, and occupational therapy provides the necessary support and guidance to make these activities accessible and beneficial.

T4 Workshop 1

TITLE: Accessible dance

Description of the activity

This activity aims to show participants the positive effects of dance and to empower them to implement quality dance activities with people with disabilities. Participants will experience first-hand that dance helps with reducing stress, has cognitive benefits, positive impact on social interaction, physical fitness, self-confidence, and creativity. The activity below is inspired by the Curriculum “Training of Youth Workers in Supporting the Social Inclusion of Young People with Disabilities in Leisure and Outdoor Activities” developed as part of the FISLAYPWD project.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	20 participants
Facilitators	1-2
Equipment	• <i>Chairs</i> • <i>Scarves or eye bandages for blindfolding</i> • <i>Earplugs</i> • <i>Pens</i> • <i>Post-it</i> • <i>Laptop</i> • <i>Projector</i> • <i>Internet connection</i> • <i>Speakers</i> • <i>Selection of music from different genres</i>

Space	A large, open and free space where participants can move freely during the dancing activity. The space should also be easily accessible, warm and light with a suitable floor. Wheelchair users should be encouraged to check tyres if they are full and clean. For hearing impaired people it is better if the space has good acoustics.
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OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the challenges that people with disabilities face in engaging in dancing activities and think about innovative approaches to remove different barriers.
- To experience and understand dance as an activity that enhance wellbeing and social inclusion.

COURSE

Preparation	• Prepare equipment. • Prepare the post-it with the clues for the pantomime activity.
Preparation	1. The first activity is “pantomime” ice-breaker activity. Participants are divided in 2-3 teams. Every participant gets a post-it with a certain clue (for example celebrity from your country, different feelings, animals, objects, etc.). In turn, one participant from each team has to explain to their teammates their clue, without using words, just by gestures, facial expressions, movement (1-2 minutes per participant).

The other teammates need to guess which clue is being shown to them.

2. During the second activity, the facilitator shows participants different clips with accessible dance example. Some suggestions can be found below:

- [Accessible dance class with Chelsie Hill](#)
- [Wheelchair dance – Feel it still](#)
- [Shake it off – dance choreography](#)

3. Then, participants are asked to do gentle warm-up exercises to prepare the body for the movement.

4. Afterwards, participants begin the dancing session. Participants are divided in pairs. The pairs are divided into 3 categories: “wheelchair”, “vision impairment” or “hearing impairment”. Those pairs with “wheelchair” will use one chair per pair and dance by sitting on it, pairs with “vision impairment” get scarf or eye bandage and get blindfolded, while pairs with “hearing impairment” get a set of earplugs.

5. Then, the trainer puts on some music and participants will start to dance with their partner. One participant in a pair will try to dance and move according to the “disability assigned”, and the other will provide support in doing so. After 10 minutes, participants change roles.

6. Debrief: participants are invited to reflect on the activity and how they felt during it. Specific discussion questions are provided in the evaluation section.

Variations	For a shorter activity, you can skip step 2 and provide the suggestions to participants at the end of the course, as additional resources.
Evaluation	At the end of the workshop, ask the group the following questions: • How did you feel during the activity? • How did you feel to dance while experiencing a disability? • How did you feel to dance with a person with a disability? • What did you learn? • How can you apply it when organising similar youth work activities with people with disabilities?

Tips / Advices

- For the activity to work at its best, participants must feel comfortable and free to experiment. It is thus very important that the facilitator encourages a relaxed atmosphere and a spirit of cooperation among the participants.

IN-DEPTH RESOURCES...

- [J. Lowe, E. Sanchez, K. Stevens and B. Darnell: Considering Difference – Making Dance Accessible: An Introduction.](#)
- A. Benjamin (2002). Making an Entrance: Theory and Practice for Disabled and Non-Disabled Dancers.

T4 Workshop 2

TITLE: Body and movement

Description of the activity

This activity aims to foster the sensations associated with self-acceptance, understanding, empathy and inclusion, by providing participants with practical and theoretical tools on body-centred approaches (such as mindfulness and contact improvisation). The activity below is inspired by the Curriculum “Training of Youth Workers in Supporting the Social Inclusion of Young People with Disabilities in Leisure and Outdoor Activities” developed as part of the FISLAYPWD project.

Details	
Duration	2h00
Participants	20 participants
Facilitators	1-2
Equipment	• <i>Comfortable clothing</i> • <i>Yoga mats or cushions for relaxation</i> • <i>Blankets for relaxation</i> • <i>Speakers</i> • <i>Selected music for the contact improvisation activity</i>
Space	A large, open and free space where participants can move freely during the contact improvisation activity. In addition, to facilitate the initial relaxation activity, it is advisable to make the environment cosy and warm, (e.g. incense could be lit).

OBJECTIVES:

- To explore body-centered methods that can improve the acceptance of our bodies and of ourselves.
- To experience first-hand contact improvisation activities to foster physical and emotional communication, empathy, and connection with others.
- To reflect on the transformative power of body-centered approaches in promoting positive attitudes towards inclusion.

COURSE

Preparation	• <i>Prepare equipment.</i> • <i>Carefully study the principles and safety guidelines of the methodology of contact improvisation.</i>
Implementation	1. The first activity is an energiser on body language. Participants are divided in 2-3 groups. Participants are asked to move randomly within the space designated for their groups. Then, when the facilitator names a body part, the participants must touch everybody within their group by using that named body part. The activity continues for 10-15 minutes and serves as a warm-up exercise to prevent any injuries and to start creating a connection between the participants. 2. The second activity is contact improvisation. Initially, the facilitator introduces the basic principles of contact improvisation and some safety guidelines.

3. The main principles are:

- participants should engage in mutual support and weight-sharing, allowing movements to flow organically;
- participants should improvise and not follow a predetermined choreography;
- participants should focus on the body and emotional language of their partners. They should harmonise their movements by responding genuinely to each other's cues and intentions.

4. The main safety guidelines are:

- participants should communicate and respect each other's personal and physical space and boundaries;
- participants should communicate about any discomfort or concern they may feel with their partners, sincerely and constructively;
- participants should be mindful of their movements and surroundings, and they should perform only the movements in line with the level of their skills to prevent any potential injury during the activity.

5. Afterwards, the trainer puts on some music to begin the contact improvisation session. Firstly, participants must pair up and start moving and dancing with a partner. They should try to implement what they have learned about the contact improvisation (how to react to each other's cues, weight-sharing, listen to each other and respond with harmonic movements).

	Then, participants break up pairs and join in a collective exercise where they can explore larger movement patterns, group dynamics and spontaneous interactions. In this part, participants are free to experiment creatively while performing the activity. The facilitator asks participants to be supportive and inclusive with each other to create an environment where everyone feels free to express themselves through the movement. 6. The last activity is a relaxation exercise. The facilitator asks participants to find a comfortable position either sitting or lying down and explains to them that they should relax, focus only on their body and not getting distracted by their daily thoughts (e.g., “what should I do next? what did I do today?”). Then participants are asked to focus on their breath and to mentally scan their bodies from head to toe, see which areas are warmer, which are colder, and if they notice some areas of their body that are tense, to bring their attention and try to relax them, by breathing into them. 7. Debrief: participants are invited to reflect on their own body image. Participants are then asked to write down their thoughts, feelings, and attitudes towards their bodies, without judgment. They could reflect on which body parts they feel most confident with and which they feel least confident with, both in relation to themselves and in relation to others.
Variations	For a shorter activity, you can skip step 6 and do the evaluation activity directly.

Evaluation	At the end of the workshop, ask the group the following questions: • How did you feel during the activity? • What was it like to interact with other participants through the movement and with your body alone? • Were you able to understand and empathize with others? • Do you think that these experiences may influence your attitudes towards inclusion and diversity? • What are the important points that you got from this exercise that can be useful in your youth work with youngsters with disabilities?
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Tips / Advises

- For the activity to work at its best, participants must feel comfortable and free to experiment. It is thus very important that the facilitator encourages a relaxed atmosphere and a spirit of cooperation among the participants.

IN-DEPTH RESOURCES...

- [Guided Imagery & Mindfulness Exercise: Body Image \(Adapted from http://www.innerhealthstudio.com & The Body Image Workbook: An Eight Step Program for Learning to Like Your Looks, by Thomas F. Cash\)](http://www.innerhealthstudio.com)
- [Suggested Guidelines for Safety and Awareness at Contact Improvisation](#)
- [Fundamentals of Contact Improvisation](#)

T4 Workshop 3

TITLE: Sitting Volleyball

Description of the activity

This activity provides participants with practical and theoretical tools to implement an Integrated Sport, which is a fusion of ludic and motor activities involving the active participation of both individuals with and without disability. In particular, participants will have the opportunity to experience first-hand an integrated and adapted version of a volleyball match. The activity below is inspired by the Curriculum “Training of Youth Workers in Supporting the Social Inclusion of Young People with Disabilities in Leisure and Outdoor Activities” developed as part of the FISLAYPWD project.

Details	
Duration	2h00
Participants	20 participants
Facilitators	1-2
Equipment	• <i>Volleyball net;</i> • <i>Volleyball ball;</i> • <i>Chairs for every participant (except for ones in wheelchairs).</i>
Space	To play adapted sitting volleyball, a volleyball court must be prepared with slightly different characteristics to a normal court, which are: - The height of the net must be 1 meter (lower than a traditional net) - The court must have dimensions of 10 meters by 6 meters (smaller than a traditional court)

OBJECTIVES:

- To understand the difficulties that persons with disabilities may encounter in sports;
- To understand the untapped potential of persons with disability in sports;
- To acquire specific skills and knowledge regarding the game of sitting volleyball.

COURSE

Preparation	• <i>Prepare equipment.</i> • <i>Carefully study the main features of Integrated Sports.</i> • <i>Carefully study the rules and features of Sitting Volley.</i>
Implementation	1. Before starting the game, the facilitator introduces to participants the definition of Integrated Sports, explaining that these are “sports designed by the foundations, modifying rules, spaces and materials, to enable people with and without disabilities to participate together.” 2. Then, participants are asked to do some warm-up exercises before the match, including dynamic full body stretching, but focusing specifically on the hips, wrists, neck and shoulders. Other pre-game training may include: • passing the ball between players sitting in a circle; • in round participants should try volleyball beats sitting on a chair.

	3. Afterwards, the facilitator explains the rules of the game, which are in all respects similar to those of volleyball, except that players must play seated, and are allowed to block the ball with two hands when receiving. The aim of the game is to send the ball over the net, making it touch the ground in the opponent's field (you earn 1 point). Match ends when one team gets 10 points. 4. Before starting the match, players will have 5-10 minutes to decide a name for the team and choose in which position each player will be and plan a possible game strategy. 5. The game starts. Each team consists of 6 players. Several teams can be formed to play against each other in succession as in a mini tournament. Players' changes can be made during each match. 6. Debrief: participants are invited to reflect on the activity and how they felt during it. Specific discussion questions are provided in the evaluation section.
Variations	A possible alternative is that, instead of sitting on chairs, players can be seated directly on the floor.
Evaluation	At the end of the workshop, ask the group the following questions: • How did you feel during the activity? • Which parts of the activity did you like the most? • What were the hardest parts of the activity? • How did you prepare for the execution part, within your team?

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| | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How did you feel not being able to use your legs? (for youngsters without physical disability) • How did you feel about having the same skills as your teammates (or more)? (youngsters with mobility impairments) • What have you learned from this activity as a youth worker that will later facilitate this and similar activities with youngsters mainstream and with disabilities? |
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Tips / Advices

- The activity of sitting volleyball is mostly suitable for mainstream youngsters and for youngsters with physical and/or mental disabilities, if they are able to handle a ball. In the case of young people who have difficulty catching and handling a ball, in some sports, such as Baskin, multiple types of balls can also be used to allow for grip.
- During the debriefing, the facilitator should suggest possible alternatives to the participants on how to implement similar activities with people with disabilities. For example, when working with young people unable to maneuver a ball or with visual impairments, these people could equally be involved as "Supporters". These people, together with some other participants, will be divided into two teams. Their task is to invent one or more support songs and sing them, accompanying them with some movements.

This sport activity is open to a big range of possible participants, but when there are some specific physical barriers that could not be overcome, youth workers and trainers should be creative to open new chances and possibilities.

IN-DEPTH RESOURCES...

- [INTEGRATED SPORT: KEYWORDS OF AN INCLUSIVE MODEL, November 2018, Conference: 3rd International Eurasian Conference on Sport, Education and Society](#)
- [Elizabeth Love \(May 2023\). Adaptive Sports: Sitting Volleyball. Published by Braunability.](#)

Theme 5: Connections with Other People-Making Friends

Connecting with others and forming friendships is essential for individuals with intellectual disabilities, offering numerous benefits across various aspects of life. Social interaction can significantly improve emotional well-being, reducing feelings of loneliness and isolation while boosting self-esteem and confidence. Building relationships and making friends provides opportunities for individuals to develop social skills such as communication, empathy, and cooperation, which are crucial for navigating social environments effectively. Friendships offer a sense of belonging and community, fostering a supportive network that can help individuals feel more included and valued.

Occupational therapy (OT) is instrumental in facilitating social connections and helping individuals with intellectual disabilities build meaningful relationships. Occupational therapists assess social skills and needs, creating personalized interventions that focus on enhancing communication abilities and social interactions. They may introduce role-playing activities and social stories to help individuals understand and practice social cues, body language, and appropriate responses in various situations. Group activities organized by OTs, such as team sports, art classes, or community outings, provide structured environments where individuals can interact and form friendships in a safe and supportive setting.

Furthermore, OTs often work on building the individual's confidence to initiate and maintain conversations, helping them navigate social scenarios with greater ease. They may also provide training on using social media and technology to stay connected with friends and family, promoting a sense of independence and autonomy in maintaining relationships. Collaboration with families, caregivers, and other professionals is crucial, as OTs offer guidance on fostering inclusive environments at home, school, and in the community, ensuring that individuals have ample opportunities to socialize and make friends.

By facilitating social connections and friendships, occupational therapy contributes to a richer, more fulfilling life for individuals with intellectual disabilities. These relationships not only enhance emotional and mental health but also provide a network of support that is invaluable in everyday life, promoting a sense of belonging, acceptance, and overall well-being.

T5 Workshop 1

TITLE: Social Skills and Communication

Description of the activity

This activity focuses on developing social skills and effective communication. Participants will practice expressing themselves, listening actively, and understanding non-verbal cues through role-playing and group activities. The activity is designed to build confidence and promote positive interactions in everyday situations.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	☐ Role-playing scenarios/scripts ☐ Worksheets on active listening techniques ☐ Visual aids on non-verbal communication
Space	A comfortable room with enough space for role-playing activities.

OBJECTIVES:

- To enhance social skills and effective communication techniques to facilitate making and maintaining friendships.
- To improve participants' recognition and use of verbal and non-verbal communication

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Prepare role-playing scenarios, worksheets, and visual aids.</i>
Implementation	Introduction (10 minutes): Briefly explain the objective of the workshop and outline the activities. Role-Playing Exercises (30 minutes): Practice common social interactions, such as introducing oneself, making small talk, and asking open-ended questions. Active Listening Drills (30 minutes): Engage in activities that promote active listening, such as repeating back what was said and summarizing conversations. Non-Verbal Communication (30 minutes): Discuss and practice the importance of body language, eye contact, and facial expressions in social interactions. Conclusion (20 minutes): Summarize the session, reflect on the experience, and provide feedback forms.

Variations	□ Include video examples of effective and ineffective communication. □ Use improv exercises to enhance spontaneity in social interactions.
Evaluation	• <i>Collect feedback forms.</i> • <i>Observe participants' engagement and improvement in social skills.</i> • <i>Evaluate confidence in social interactions before and after the workshop.</i>

T5 Workshop 2

TITLE: Group Activities and Games

Description of the activity

This activity uses fun and easy group games to help participants learn how to work together and communicate with each other , and with other people around them. They will practice simple teamwork and problem-solving skills while playing. The games are designed to be enjoyable and entertaining, to help participants feel more included and to support them in building friendships. Participants will also develop their social skills and learn how to share ideas and take turns. The activity promotes a supportive environment where everyone can participate and everyone will feel equally valued for their contribution.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	List of icebreaker games Materials for team-building exercises Reflection prompts or discussion questions
Space	A spacious room with ample space for movement and group activities.

OBJECTIVES:

- To build connection and teamwork through engaging group activities and games.
- To improve their communication skills by encouraging to share ideas.
- To create an inclusive environment where all participants feel confident and valued.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Prepare a list of games and gather necessary materials.</i>
Implementation	Introduction (10 minutes): Briefly explain the objective of the workshop and outline the activities. Icebreaker Games (30 minutes): Play fun icebreaker games to help participants get to know each other and build rapport. Team-Building Exercises (60 minutes): Engage in cooperative activities that require teamwork, such as building a structure with limited materials or solving puzzles together. Reflection Session (20 minutes): Discuss the experiences and feelings during the activities, focusing on teamwork and connection.
Variations	<i>Include outdoor activities if the weather permits.</i> <i>Use a variety of games to cater to different interests and abilities.</i>

Evaluation	<i>Collect feedback forms. Observe participants' engagement and teamwork. Evaluate the development of connections and relationships before and after the workshop</i>
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T5 Workshop 3

TITLE: Creating and Sustaining Friendships

Description of the activity

This activity will help participants to better understand how to create and maintain friendships. Through discussions and role-playing scenarios, they will learn about trust, empathy, and the importance of communication in building strong bonds and relationships. The session encourages participants to practice these skills and to experience the process of establishing relations with people.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	Paper and markers for mapping Case study materials Action plan templates
Space	A comfortable room with tables and chairs for group discussions.

OBJECTIVES:

- To give practical tips for creating and sustaining meaningful friendships
- To help participants understand the key elements of friendships, such as trust and communication.
- To provide opportunities for participants to practice social skills with others. .

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Prepare mapping materials, case studies, and action plan templates.</i>
Implementation	Introduction (10 minutes): Briefly explain the objective of the workshop and outline the activities. Friendship Mapping (30 minutes): Participants create maps of their current social network, identifying strong, weak, and potential connections. Case Studies and Discussions (40 minutes): Review case studies of different friendship scenarios, discussing challenges and strategies for maintaining friendships. Personal Action Plan (30 minutes): Develop a personal action plan for building and nurturing friendships, including goals and steps to take. Conclusion (10 minutes): Summarize the session, reflect on the experience, and provide feedback forms.

Variations	<i>Use digital tools for creating friendship maps.</i> <i>Incorporate role-playing to practice scenarios discussed in the case studies.</i>
Evaluation	<i>Collect feedback forms.</i> <i>Observe participants' engagement and understanding of friendship dynamics.</i> <i>Evaluate participants' confidence and plan for building friendships before and after the workshop.</i>

Theme 6: Getting Familiar with the Surrounding Where They Live In (markets, pharmacies, bars etc.)

One essential aspect of this journey is getting familiar with the surroundings where they live, such as markets, pharmacies, and local social venues. This familiarity, combined with targeted occupational training, significantly enhances their independence and autonomy.

Knowing the local area helps individuals recognize safe places and understand where to go in case of emergencies. Familiarity with landmarks and routes reduces the risk of getting lost, contributing to their overall safety. Understanding where essential services are located, such as grocery stores and pharmacies, is fundamental for managing daily tasks independently. Being able to navigate these places allows individuals to purchase necessary items, manage health needs, and engage in social activities.

Visiting local establishments encourages interaction with community members, fostering social connections and a sense of belonging. Regular visits help individuals build relationships with shopkeepers and service providers, enhancing their support network. Successfully navigating their surroundings boosts confidence and self-esteem. It empowers individuals to make choices and decisions about their activities and needs, contributing to their autonomy.

Encountering and overcoming challenges in the community, such as finding a location or making a purchase, enhances problem-solving abilities. These experiences contribute to better decision-making and adaptability in various situations.

Occupational training is crucial in helping individuals with intellectual disabilities gain independence and autonomy. This training provides the skills and confidence needed to navigate their surroundings effectively. Training programs teach essential skills such as money management, communication, and time management. Practical exercises include role-playing scenarios, using public transportation, and making purchases. Specialized training focuses on map reading, understanding public transportation routes, and using GPS devices. Practicing these skills in real-world settings enhances spatial awareness and confidence.

Programs include social skills training to improve interactions with others, such as asking for help, making small talk, and handling social situations. Training also covers understanding social norms and behaviors in different settings. Occupational therapists tailor training to individual needs, ensuring each person receives the support they require to succeed. This includes one-on-one coaching, adaptive tools, and gradual exposure to new environments. Training helps individuals establish routines for daily activities, making it easier to remember and perform tasks independently. Consistent routines enhance predictability and reduce anxiety.

Programs encourage participation in community activities, such as volunteering or joining local clubs, to increase social engagement and build a support network. Community involvement fosters a sense of belonging and contributes to overall well-being. Combining familiarity with their surroundings and comprehensive occupational training enables individuals with intellectual disabilities to achieve greater independence, autonomy, and a higher quality of life. This policy brief highlights the importance of these elements and advocates for their integration into support programs for persons with intellectual disabilities.

T6 Workshop 1

TITLE: Exploring Local Markets

Description of the activity

This activity involves visiting local markets and grocery stores together with the participants, and jointly to explore different types of products and learn about budgeting and shopping skills. Participants will practice making choices, comparing prices, and understanding the value of money in real-life settings. The workshop encourages independence, social interaction, and hands-on learning.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12 persons with disabilities, accompanied by support staff or caregivers.
Facilitators	Occupational therapists, professional or family caregivers
Equipment	Simulated market stalls, adaptive tools (e.g., mobility aids, communication boards), shopping baskets.
Space	A large room arranged to resemble a market with different sections for various types of goods.

OBJECTIVES:

- To familiarize participants with navigating a market environment.
- To practice interacting with vendors and making purchases.
- To enhance confidence in using adaptive tools in real-life scenarios.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Set up the simulated market space with stalls for food, clothing, and other common market items.</i> <i>Brief vendors and volunteers on their roles and how to assist participants.</i> <i>Prepare adaptive tools and ensure they are in working order.</i>
Implementation	Begin with a brief introduction about the market environment and its typical layout. Divide participants into small groups, each with a guide (facilitator or volunteer). Allow participants to explore the stalls, ask questions, and make mock purchases using play money. Debrief with participants, discussing their experiences and any challenges faced.
Variations	Include the similar activity with different setup: • Pharmacy • Post - office • Shops • Library

Variations	Organize real-life visits. Prepare maps that are visually easy to understand with photos for navigation in real life in the neighborhood.
Evaluation	Participants will be asked to reflect on their experience during the market visit, sharing what they learned about budgeting and shopping. Facilitators will observe participants' decision-making skills and ability to compare prices. A short questionnaire depending on the group can be used to evaluate the participants' confidence in applying these skills in future.

T6 Workshop 2

TITLE: SMART SHOPPING

Description of the activity

This training activity is designed to teach persons with intellectual disabilities the basics of personal finance through hands-on, interactive experiences. Participants will engage in activities that simulate real-life financial tasks, such as budgeting, saving, and managing expenses. The goal is to build confidence and practical skills in managing personal finances. Participants will work in small groups to complete a series of interactive tasks, including role-playing scenarios, using financial planning tools, and engaging in group discussions. The activity incorporates visual aids and gamification elements to enhance learning and retention.

Details	
Duration	3 hours
Participants	6-12 individuals with intellectual disabilities, divided into small groups of 2-3 participants each.
Facilitators	Occupational therapists, professional and family caregivers with experience in financial literacy and working with persons with intellectual disabilities.
Equipment	Financial planning worksheets Play money or virtual money apps Calculators

	Visual aids (e.g., charts, graphs) Computers or tablets (optional) Projector and screen (for group discussions)
Space	A large room with enough space for group work and individual activities. The room should have tables and chairs arranged to facilitate group interactions and individual tasks.

OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will learn about budgeting, saving, and managing expenses.
- Participants will practice creating a budget, tracking expenses, and making financial decisions.
- Participants will gain confidence in managing their personal finances through interactive and engaging activities.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Develop worksheets that include sections for budgeting, tracking expenses, and setting financial goals.</i> <i>Design simple and accessible charts and graphs to illustrate financial concepts clearly.</i> <i>Ensure that all equipment (calculators, play money, computers) is ready and functioning.</i>
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	<i>Arrange the room to accommodate group work and individual tasks.</i>
Implementation	Begin with a discussion on the importance of managing personal finances. Introduce basic financial concepts (e.g., income, expenses, savings). Use visual aids to explain these concepts in a clear and engaging way. I Divide participants into small groups. Provide each group with a fictional monthly income and a list of expenses. Have groups create a budget using the provided worksheets and play money. Facilitate a discussion on the challenges they faced and how they made financial decisions. II Each participant will track their expenses using a simple expense tracking tool (worksheet or app). Simulate various scenarios (e.g., unexpected expenses) and have participants adjust their budgets accordingly. Discuss strategies for managing unexpected expenses and sticking to a budget. III Present participants with role-playing scenarios where they need to make financial decisions (e.g., deciding whether to buy a wanted item or save for future needs). Have participants discuss their decisions and the reasoning behind them. Provide feedback and suggestions for improvement.

	IV Set Up the Mock Store: Arrange tables or areas with various items and price tags. Include a variety of items to simulate different shopping needs (e.g., food, clothing, toys). Let participants to visit the mock store and use their play money to "buy" items from different sections. Facilitate role-playing scenarios where participants encounter common shopping dilemmas (e.g., deciding between two items due to budget constraints). Monitor participants and provide support as needed, ensuring they stay within their budget and make thoughtful decisions.
Variations	Depanding on the participants of the group try to use voice readers or adapted backgrounds and carefully chosen colours of the charts and the apps used in the game. Make sure that the play money are similar to the real money in order not to make confusion.
Evaluation	Group discussion to assess participants' ability to identify needs vs. wants, track expenses, and make financial decisions. A self-assessment questionnaire to measure what the participants learned in managing personal finances. The questionnaire should be conducted both before and after the activity.

T6 Workshop 3

TITLE: Navigating the Neighborhood - Using Bus and Taxi Services

Description of the activity

This training aims to equip individuals with disabilities with the skills and confidence needed to navigate their neighborhood using public transportation and taxis. The session will be highly interactive, incorporating role-play, practical exercises, and real-world scenarios to ensure participants are comfortable and proficient with both bus and taxi systems. The training includes a mix of theoretical knowledge, practical exercises, and role-playing to cover various aspects of navigating public transportation. It emphasizes safety, independence, and problem-solving skills.

Details	
Duration	2.5 hours
Participants	5 - 10 divided in small groups
Facilitators	2 - 3 occupational therapists, professional or family caregivers
Equipment	Bus and taxi route maps Bus and taxi schedules Public transportation apps or websites for practice Simulated bus and taxi environment (mock-up or photos) Role-playing props (bus passes, tickets, IDs)

Space	A large room or space that can be set up to simulate bus and taxi environments. This space should have areas for group discussion, role-playing, and individual practice.
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OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will learn about the bus and taxi systems in their neighborhood, including routes, schedules, and ticketing.
- Participants will practice using maps, schedules, and apps to plan routes and manage transportation independently.
- Through role-play and practical exercises, participants will gain confidence in navigating real-world transportation scenarios.
- Participants will learn safety tips for traveling on public transportation and in taxis, including how to handle unexpected situations.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Collect information about participants’ familiarity with public transportation and specific needs.</i> <i>Prepare and organize maps, schedules, apps, and role-playing props.</i> <i>Arrange the training space to simulate bus and taxi environments.</i> <i>Ensure all facilitators are briefed on the training objectives, materials, and their roles.</i>
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Implementation	Introduction to public transportation systems (bus and taxi). Explanation of bus and taxi routes, schedules, and ticketing. Demonstration of how to use public transportation cards, maps, apps and websites. Participants get familiar and use maps and schedules to plan a bus journey. Role-play scenarios where participants practice boarding, riding, and disembarking from a simulated bus environment. Interactive Exercise - Taxi Navigation Practice booking a taxi, identifying taxi stands, and using taxi services. Role-play scenarios where participants practice navigating to and from a taxi. Safety and Problem-Solving Session Discuss common issues and safety tips. Role-play unexpected situations (e.g., missed stop, taxi issues, stolen phone) and problem-solving strategies.
Variations	For participants with limited mobility or sensory impairments, provide audio instructions and accessible map. Allow extra time for participants who may need more support during role-play or exercises. Use simplified language and visual cards.
Evaluation	The facilitator will observe how each of the participants contributes to the activity and can assess whether they are ready to take the next step, or should they practice more with the same, similar or different approach in order to reach the objective.

Theme 7: Art Occupational Therapy

Art occupational therapy for persons with intellectual disabilities is a transformative approach that combines creative expression with therapeutic techniques to promote well-being and personal growth.

Art therapy uses various art forms, including painting, drawing, sculpting, and other creative activities, to help individuals express their emotions, develop their skills, and improve their overall quality of life. This therapeutic method is particularly effective for persons with intellectual disabilities, as it provides a non-verbal outlet for self-expression, which can be essential for those who may have difficulty articulating their thoughts and feelings through traditional means.

One of the primary benefits of art occupational therapy is its ability to foster communication. Through art, individuals can convey their emotions, experiences, and ideas in a safe and supportive environment. This can lead to enhanced self-awareness and self-esteem, as individuals gain a sense of accomplishment and pride in their creations. Additionally, art therapy can help reduce anxiety, stress, and frustration, providing a calming and therapeutic outlet for pent-up emotions.

Art occupational therapy also promotes cognitive and motor skills development.

Engaging in creative activities can improve fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and spatial awareness. These activities can also enhance cognitive functions such as problem-solving, planning, and critical thinking. By participating in structured art projects, individuals with intellectual disabilities can develop routines and discipline, which can translate to other areas of their lives.

T7 Workshop 1

TITLE: Exploring Emotions Through Art

Description of the activity

Participants will be guided through the exercise to help them connect with their emotions and express them visually. The activity will focus on creating a positive and non-judgmental space for emotional exploration. By the end of the workshop, participants will have created personal art pieces that reflect their feelings. The session encourages self-expression, emotional awareness and development of skills for stress management through art.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	☐ Magazines, newspapers ☐ Scissors, glue ☐ Paints, brushes, canvas or paper ☐ Music player and a selection of music
Space	A well-lit, spacious room with tables and chairs, and a music player setup.

OBJECTIVES:

- To help participants express and understand their emotions through creative art activities.
- To inspire participants to use art as a tool for expressing emotions.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Collect magazines, newspapers, and other collage materials. Prepare a selection of music that evokes different moods. Set up art supplies and ensure a comfortable, inviting environment.</i>
Implementation	☐ Introduction (10 minutes): Briefly explain the objective of the workshop and outline the activities. Emphasize a safe and non-judgmental space for self-expression. ☐ Emotion Collage (30 minutes): Participants create collages using provided materials to represent different emotions. Encourage them to think about colors, images, and textures that reflect their feelings. ☐ Painting with Music (30 minutes): Participants paint while listening to different genres of music, exploring how the music influences their artistic expression and mood. ☐ Group Discussion (30 minutes): Participants share and discuss their artwork, focusing on the emotions conveyed and experienced during the creative process.

Implementation	□ Conclusion (20 minutes): Summarize the session, reflect on the experience, and provide feedback forms.
Variations	• Use digital tools for creating collages. • Adjust the type of music based on participants' preferences. Music should be integrated into the workshop as a way to set the mood and support emotional expression.
Evaluation	□ <i>Collect feedback forms.</i> □ <i>Observe participants' engagement and willingness to share.</i> □ <i>Evaluate changes in mood or emotional expression before and after the workshop.</i>

T7 Workshop 2

TITLE: Building Self-Esteem Through Art

Description of the activity

This workshop will try to build the self-esteem and confidence of the participants through artistic expression. Participants will create art projects that highlight their strengths, achievements, and positive qualities through drawing, painting, and making collage. The activity encourages personal growth, a sense of accomplishment and self-worth of persons with disabilities.

Details	
Duration	2 hours
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	☐ Drawing or painting supplies ☐ Photos, magazines, and other collage materials ☐ Poster boards, markers, and decorative items
Space	A well-lit, spacious room with tables and chairs.

OBJECTIVES:

- To boost self-esteem and self-awareness by creating personal art projects that reflect individual strengths and achievements.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Gather all necessary art supplies and ensure a comfortable, inviting environment.</i>
Implementation	☐ Introduction (10 minutes): Briefly explain the objective of the workshop and outline the activities. ☐ Self-Portrait Project (40 minutes): Participants draw or paint self-portraits that emphasize their positive qualities and strengths. ☐ Achievement Collage (30 minutes): Create a collage showcasing personal achievements and milestones using various materials. ☐ Affirmation Art (30 minutes): Design and decorate posters with positive affirmations and quotes that inspire self-confidence. ☐ Conclusion (10 minutes): Summarize the session, reflect on the experience, and provide feedback forms.

Variations	• <i>Offer digital tools for creating self-portraits and collages - Participants can be introduced to art digital platforms like Canva or Pixlr, where they can create collages that reflect their personality and strengths.</i> • <i>Include a photo booth for taking self-portraits. - you can create a simple photo booth with a background drop and a photo camera. Take photos of the participants, print and hand them out to the participants in order to use them in the group projects.</i>
Evaluation	□ <i>Collect feedback forms.</i> □ <i>Observe participants' engagement and their expressions of self-esteem.</i> □ <i>Evaluate changes in self-perception before and after the workshop.</i>

T7 Workshop 3

TITLE: Group Art Project - Creating a Community Mural

Description of the activity

This activity can be conducted in collaborations with the local self-government, municipality or region, or even in collaboration with the management board of a building if the tenants agree to collaborate. The activity will give opportunity to persons with disabilities to contribute in a bigger project, to express their artistic skills, to share their ideas and to raise awareness.

Details	
Duration	3 hours (may be spread over multiple sessions)
Participants	8-12
Facilitators	1-2 occupational therapists or trained facilitators
Equipment	☐ Large canvas or wall space ☐ Paints, brushes, and other painting supplies ☐ Planning materials (paper, pens, sketches)
Space	A large, open space suitable for mural painting.

OBJECTIVES:

- To promote teamwork, communication, and a sense of community by collaborating on a large-scale art project.
- Raise awareness and visibility of persons with intellectual disabilities.

COURSE

Preparation	<i>Secure a large canvas or wall space, gather painting supplies, and plan for a collaborative environment.</i>
Implementation	☐ Planning Session (30 minutes): Discuss and plan the theme and design of the mural, ensuring all participants have input. ☐ Collaborative Painting (120 minutes): Work together to create the mural on a large canvas or wall, with each participant contributing their unique artistic style. ☐ Reflection and Celebration (30 minutes): Reflect on the collaborative process and celebrate the completed mural with a small event or unveiling ceremony..
Variations	• Create a digital mural using an online collaborative art tool. • Break the project into multiple sessions to accommodate participants' schedules.

Evaluation	Facilitators will observe participants’ engagement and teamwork during the mural creation process, noting how well they collaborate, communicate, and contribute to the overall design.

