

Support and Independence



Independence
is about having more
voice and choice in
your own life.

*Because growing independence doesn't always
mean needing less support.*

Growing independence isn't simply about doing everything alone.
Sometimes it looks like making choices.
Sometimes it looks like asking for help.
Sometimes it means having more control over your own life
while support remains in place.

Support and independence can grow together.

Independence can look like...

- ☐ Managing responsibilities
- ☐ Making social choices
- ☐ Recognising when support is needed
- ☐ Asking for accommodations
- ☐ Setting personal boundaries
- ☐ Having greater control over personal information
- ☐ Making decisions with support
- ☐ Having a stronger voice in everyday life



Remember

Independence isn't measured by how little support
someone needs.

It is measured by how much ownership they
have over their own life.

Support and independence can grow together.

Where Is Independence Already Growing?



Look for progress,
not perfection.
Small steps
matter.

Growth often appears before full independence.

 Statement	Already happening	Developing	Needs more opportunity
1 The young person makes choices about how they spend their time.	☐	☐	☐
2 They recognise when a task is becoming difficult.	☐	☐	☐
3 They can identify support that may help.	☐	☐	☐
4 They are beginning to speak up about accommodations.	☐	☐	☐
5 They express preferences about who supports them and how.	☐	☐	☐
6 They make decisions about friendships and social activities.	☐	☐	☐
7 They tell adults when something feels uncomfortable.	☐	☐	☐
8 They take increasing responsibility for routines or schoolwork.	☐	☐	☐
9 They understand that choices can have consequences.	☐	☐	☐
10 They ask for privacy around personal conversations.	☐	☐	☐



Notice...

Independence often grows through repeated opportunities to choose, practise and speak.

Small choices become greater confidence.

Support or Control?

The way we respond can either build independence or take it away.



Every response sends a message about trust, voice and choice.



SUPPORT SAYS...



“What would help you manage this?”



“Would you like a reminder or would you prefer to plan it yourself?”



“Who would you like involved in this conversation?”



“Do you want me to help you ask?”



“Is this something you are comfortable sharing?”



“Would you like advice, help or just someone to listen?”



CONTROL SAYS...



“I’ll decide because it is easier.”



“You are not ready.”



“I already told everyone.”



“You need to manage without help.”



“I know what is best for you.”



“You should be grateful someone is helping.”



Before deciding...

☐ Is this decision really mine?

☐ Could this young person be involved?

☐ Am I building ownership or dependence?

☐ Will this increase their ownership and voice?

Support should increase a young person’s voice—not replace it.

One Step Towards Greater Ownership

Small changes in voice and choice can make a big difference.



Independence grows through opportunities to choose, practice and be heard.



Where is independence already growing?



Where might adults still be making decisions they could begin sharing?



What responsibility could be introduced gradually?



What support still needs to remain?



What choice could belong more clearly to the young person?



What would greater ownership look like this month?



Remember

The goal is not to remove support.
The goal is to help the young person have a greater say in the life that support is meant to make possible.

Support should open doors—not take them over.