Leadership Project- VA Lend through VCU

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A Brighter Side to ASD Living Skills Group

Companion Manual- Facilitators Guide

Introduce the following:

* Connect each week to the previous week
* Basic vocab
* Basic procedures + actions
* Basic content + application
* My goal for each lesson, expectations of attendees, lesson expectations/outcomes
* Lesson content & vocab
* Materials & activities
* Logistics & Budget limitations

**Week One: Introductions & Goal Setting**

Introductions and Establishing a Gathering Space- 10 minutes

* Create a sheet that has name, age, + fun fact about self/(or) draw self (6-10 minutes)

Introducing K W L – 30 minutes

* Introduce purpose of series – topics, format, etc (5-8 minutes)
* Introduce K W L components (5 minutes)
* KWL for what they know, want to learn, and later did learn about transitions, goals, achieving your goals, work, cooking, etc anything at all
* Fill out K + W, know already, want to know more. File for later use to fill out L at the end of the session, L is what was learned (10 minutes)
* Share with one another (10 minutes) (in large group or smaller groups of 3-4 people)
* This section of the meeting is used primarily for everyone to take some time to get to know each other, break the ice a bit, go beyond small talk

Brighter Goals- 20 minutes

* Introduce the SMART/MOO goal format
	+ SMART= specific, measurable, attainable, realistic, time bound
	+ MOO= measurable, observable, objective

Attendees should create 1-2 goals for each living skills lesson, 5-10 in total

**Vocab**: specific, measurable, observable, objective, attainable, realistic, time bound (individual cards for participants to take home, visuals for session)

Conclusion- 10-15 minutes

* Questions, wrapping up, have all attendees clear their station independently/partially independently
* Social and snack, if funding

Budget

* Space (provided?)
* Facilitator time
* Materials
* Snack / drinks (if possible)

**Week Two: Self-Care and Daily Living Skills**

Self-Care Exploration and Task Analysis – 60 minutes

* Introduce the importance of self-care and why it matters (10 minutes)
* Discuss daily living skills and how they support independence
* **Vocab**: hygiene, task analysis, routine, independence
* Written tasks, picture tasks, etc. to support different learning styles
* Watch short video(s) or demonstration if available

Task analysis of hygiene activities – break down tasks into steps (30 minutes)

* Introduce the concept of task analysis (breaking down tasks into small steps) and discuss benefits of approaching something using task analysis
* Analyze as a group the task of putting on a shirt
* Then, choose one individual task to complete independently (or with necessary support):

Materials: task analysis worksheets, handouts, physical examples (e.g., toothbrush, shoes)

* Encourage self-paced participation and sensory-friendly options as needed

Conclusion – 10 minutes

* Social time and decompression
* Extra time for anyone finishing up or asking questions
* Ensure all attendees tidy up their workstations independently/partially independently

Budget

* Space (provided?)
* Facilitator time
* Materials (hygiene items, worksheets, visuals)
* Snack / drinks (if possible)

**Week Three: Meal Planning and Cooking**

Cooking and Nutrition – 60 minutes

* Objective: Learn basic cooking skills and understand nutritional value
* Materials:
	+ Ingredients for simple recipes (bacon/pre cooked bacon if there’s not a stove top, lettuce, tomato)
	+ Cooking utensils: cutting boards, knives, a pan if there is a stove top, oven mits
	+ Visual step-by-step recipe cards
	+ Sensory-friendly accommodations (e.g., gloves, pre-chopped ingredients)

Introduction – 5 minutes

* Welcome and outline the day’s plan
* Discuss recipe and nutritional benefits (protein, fiber, etc.)
* Offer accommodations, encourage self-paced learning

Activity 1: Chopping & Prepping – 25 minutes

* Learn safe knife skills and food prep techniques

 1. Select bacon, lettuce, tomato

 2. Demonstrate safe chopping

 3. Participants practice with support

 4. Discuss sensory alternatives, diet preferences, etc

Activity 2: Cooking & Assembly – 25 minutes

* Learn stovetop use and meal assembly

 1. Demonstrate how to cook bacon if there is a stovetop. If there is no stove top, retrieve pre-cooked bacon

 2. Demonstrate stacking the sandwich

 3. Toast whole-grain bread and explain health benefits

 4. Provide alternative meal options if needed

Conclusion – 10 minutes

* Eat together
* Reflect: what was learned, what was fun or hard
* Distribute take-home recipe cards
* Encourage feedback and future interest in cooking

Budget

* Space (kitchen access preferred)
* Facilitator time
* Groceries and kitchen tools
* Snack / drinks (from meal prep)

**Week Four: Budgeting and Money Management**

Financial Literacy & Budget Building – 60 minutes

* Begin with KWL: what do you know, want to know, and later what you learned about budgeting/money (20 minutes)
* Introduce budgeting basics (needs vs wants) and tracking expenses
* Discussion: why is budgeting important?

Activity:

 ◦ Review average cost of living and typical monthly expenses

 ◦ Compare against minimum wage income

 ◦ Participants make a list of wants/needs with estimated costs

 ◦ Fill out a budget worksheet as a group (30 minutes)

* **Vocab**: budget, expense, income, needs vs wants
* Provide handouts and visuals for participants to take home
* Homework: locate a place they would like to take the bus, and complete O\*Net profiler assessment (prepares for Week Six)

Conclusion – 10-15 minutes

* Recap what was learned
* Social and snack (if funding allows)
* Remind about homework and offer help if needed

Budget

* Space (provided?)
* Facilitator time
* Materials: budget sheets, pencils, calculators

**Week Five: Transportation and Community Engagement**

Navigating Community & Building Social Connections – 45 minutes

* Introduce public transportation and community navigation
* Talking points:
	+ Using public transit without pressure (e.g., practice ride)
	+ Bus schedules (e.g., once per hour), trip planning
	+ Contacting travel trainers (customerservice@gohrt.com) Invite travel trainer as guest speaker if possible
* Activity:
	+ Before class, as homework, students choose a local destination
	+ In class, pick one or two of those pre-decided destinations and work together to plan bus routes there (group activity)

Community Engagement – 20 minutes

* Share interests and hobbies
* Learn how to research local groups, clubs, and events
	+ Examples: open mic night, board games, volunteer work
* Discuss how shared hobbies can lead to new social connections

Conclusion – 10 minutes

* Recap and reflect
* Encourage continued community exploration
* Social and snack (if funding allows)

Budget:

* Space (provided?)
* Facilitator time
* **Materials**: maps, example bus routes, hobby research sheets
* Snack / drinks (if possible)

**Week Six: Future Planning (Conclusion)**

Exploring Next Steps – 60 minutes:

* Review results of the O\*Net profiler homework
	+ Discuss what students found easy, hard, or interesting
	+ Talk about job paths, training, school options
	+ **Vocab**: career, skills, interest, training, vocational
* Activity: brainstorming jobs or programs that align with interests
	+ Small groups or individual reflection
	+ Share ideas, ask questions

Goals & KWL Wrap Up – 15-20 minutes:

* Take out weekly KWL sheets and SMART/MOO goals
	+ What did you learn?
	+ Did you meet your goals? What helped or got in the way?
* Reflection prompts:
	+ What was your favorite part of this series?
	+ What did you learn the most about?
	+ What do you still want to learn more about?

Conclusion – 10-15 minutes

* Celebrate accomplishments
* Social time and snacks
* Encourage continued growth and curiosity

Budget:

* Space (provided?)
* Facilitator time
* Materials: printed results, goal sheets
* Snack / drinks (if possible)