

## THE ROAD TO INDEPENDENCE IS NOT ALWAYS EASY. WE WANT YOU TO KNOW...

### For **Infant/Toddler Students**, it is OK:

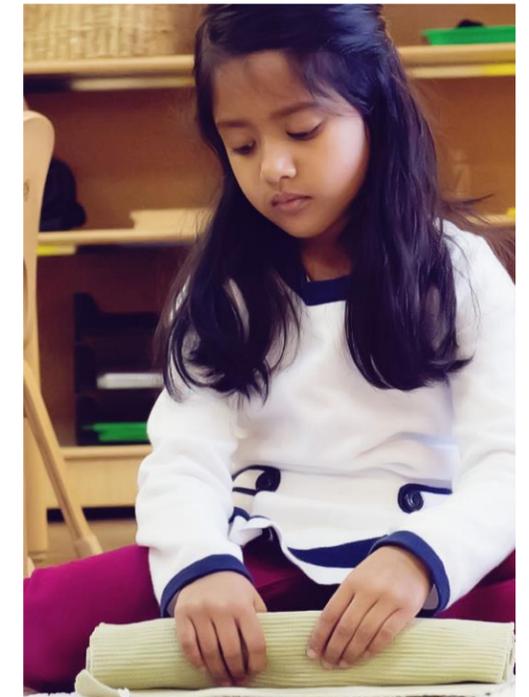
- if your child is not independent at times.
- if your child needs to be carried sometimes.
- if your child makes a mess. He can help clean it up.
- if your child complains a bit about doing what she has been asked to do; stand your ground!
- to be the parent and not a friend. "You have to love your child enough to let them hate you." –Carol Burnett
- if your child is crying or whining when he comes into class; just let him go and he will be fine. We will call you in the event he does not settle down.
- if your child makes mistakes. It allows her to learn on her own.

### For **Early Childhood Students**, it is OK:

- if your child complains about doing what he has been asked to do; stand your ground!
- if your child is crying or whining when she comes into class; just let her go and she will be fine. We will call you if she does not settle down.
- if your child's clothing is not perfectly matched. It shows that he has been given the opportunity to make his choice independently.
- if your child makes mistakes. It allows her to learn on her own.
- if your child's hair is not perfectly coiffed and/or groomed.
- if your child spills when pouring, drops when carrying, or does not clean up "perfectly."
- if your child misspells words and writes letters and/or numbers backwards.
- if your child forgets his backpack, lunch, folder, etc. on occasion. The natural consequences that occur may keep it from happening in the future.
- if your child temporarily misplaces an item.
- if you let your child try to solve her conflicts on her own before intervening.
- if your child is brought to school in their PJs if you have had a particularly difficult time that morning.
- if your child brings leftovers for lunch.
- if your child is not eager to do academic work when he gets home.
- if your child is assertive about her needs or feelings—this shows valuable self-awareness.
- if your child thrives under repetition; he relishes the ability to master a skill and use it.

### For **Elementary Students**, it is OK:

- for your child to learn from her mistakes.
- to eat whatever the teacher can find at school for lunch because lunch was forgotten at home or in the car.
- if the laundry is not folded perfectly or in the right place in the closet or drawer.
- if your child feels some frustration at having to figure something out on his own.
- to miss a favorite television show to have time to wind down and read before bed.
- to go to bed early to keep from being too tired to get up on time in the morning.
- to make two trips to move all of her belongings from one place to the next.
- for your child to feel disappointed because he was told "no."
- for your child to search for something that has been lost.
- for your child to complain about doing homework and using the dictionary.
- if her projects or book reports look like she did it and not her parent.
- to spill.
- to forget his homework (occasionally).
- if your child is more focused on quality of work over the quantity.
- for your child to complain about taking care of his belongings.
- for your child to complain about having to dress appropriately for the weather.
- to not be able to explain all of the work done at school and why.
- if your child does not share details of her day with you.
- to have a limit on screen time during the school week and on weekends and/or not have screen time until homework and chores are done.
- for your child to arrive at school in her pajamas with a comb, a toothbrush, and clothes in a bag.
- to be upset with a friend, and work to resolve the issue.
- for you to have different expectations of your child than other parents have of theirs.



# INDEPENDENCE GUIDE

BENCHMARKS TO AID IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF INDEPENDENCE IN YOUR CHILD



"Never help a child with a task at which he feels he can succeed."

— Maria Montessori

# Cumulative Benchmarks of Independence

## CARE FOR SELF

In an organized environment, **Infants** can:

- soothe themselves.
- nap independently.
- cooperate with dressing.
- help wash hands.
- sit on toilet.
- feed themselves using hands or utensils.
- drink from an open cup.
- sit in a chair.
- walk into class.
- engage themselves alone for short periods of time.
- eat while sitting in a chair.

In an organized environment, **Toddlers** can:

- dress themselves.
- engage self for brief periods of time.
- walk to class without being carried.
- carry their belongings (backpack, lunch, and coat) to class and place them in the cubby without parental help.
- open and close their lunchboxes and containers.
- feed themselves from an open cup.
- eat while sitting in a chair (no highchairs).
- go to the bathroom independently as long as their clothes are not a hindrance.
- entertain themselves without the TV, computer, tablet, or smartphone.
- help brush their teeth and hair.
- put on socks and shoes by themselves.
- eat with utensils.

In an organized environment, **Early Childhood Students** can:

- help in making their lunch.
- brush their hair in the morning.
- dress themselves and put on their own jacket/coat.
- put on their socks and shoes. Even if they need help with tying, etc., they can make the effort.
- remember their backpack, jacket, lunch, work folder/binder, etc.
- carry their own belongings (backpack, lunch, snack, etc.) to class.
- walk into class from the morning car line by themselves.
- go to the bathroom independently as long as their clothes are not a hindrance.
- pour their beverages and serve themselves, clean up after themselves upon finishing eating.
- carry their plate to the kitchen after meals.

In an organized environment, **Lower Elementary Students** can:

- wake to an alarm clock, get dressed, and be ready for breakfast.
- make their breakfast.
- fill their water bottle.
- pack their lunch with nutritious foods.
- remember to bring lunch, coat, water bottle, and backpack to and from school.
- walk in from car line alone.
- carry their belongings.
- serve themselves.
- clean up spills and accidents.
- complete homework by themselves and turn it in when due.
- Get into and out of their car seat or booster seat by themselves.

In an organized environment, **Upper Elementary Students** can:

- dress and prepare their own breakfast each morning.
- plan and pack their own lunch.
- be responsible for remembering water bottle, homework, take-home folder, and other papers that are due.
- wear weather appropriate clothing, including remembering to wear/bring a jacket for outdoor recess.
- pick up after themselves.
- allot time, and manage until completion, their book of the month report and project.
- accurately complete most of their work- plan most weeks.

## CARE FOR SELF

## CARE FOR ENVIRONMENT

In an organized environment, **Infants** can:

- help with cleanup of materials.
- clean up spills with direction.
- hand over plate and utensils when finished eating.
- help slice soft fruit.
- wipe table with sponge.
- water plants with help.
- put soiled bib in laundry basket.
- help feed fish.
- learn to be gentle and respectful with materials.

In an organized environment, **Toddlers** can:

- clean up and put their toys away in an orderly environment where items have a place.
- help prepare meals, i.e., wash vegetables.
- water plants.
- help with gardening.
- clean up spills.
- help wash the car.
- help sweep the floor.
- put some laundry away.
- be respectful of other living creatures.
- help with chores at home such as putting away dirty dishes or helping to make a bed.

In an organized environment, **Early Childhood Students** can:

- help set the table.
- sort silverware after it has been washed.
- clean up spills; sweep floors.
- put away their toys.
- straighten their room.
- sort clean socks, fold towels, etc., on laundry day.
- have responsibilities in keeping the environment clean and tidy.
- help prepare veggies/fruit for meals at home.
- help plant flowers, weeded flower beds, water plants, etc.

At home and at school, **Lower Elementary Students** can:

- make their bed every day.
- fold laundry and put it away.
- feed and care for pets.
- put away toys, games, and books.
- set the table for meals.
- help to do the dishes.
- sort their trash (recycling and compost).
- take out the trash and recycling.
- sweep and vacuum the floors.
- read a book to parents, siblings, and by themselves.

At home and at school, **Upper Elementary Students** can:

- pick up after themselves (they do it at school).
- clean their rooms and help around the house daily.
- take out the trash and recycling.
- care for pets.
- put away groceries.
- help wash the car (it transports them everywhere).
- help with yard work.

## CARE FOR ENVIRONMENT

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS

In an organized environment, **Infants** can:

- treat peers gently.
- greet peers with wave or hug.
- communicate feelings or desires using expressions and signs.
- respond to basic verbal setting of limits.
- participate in short group activities.
- learn basic self-control.

In an organized environment, **Toddlers** can:

- let others finish a sentence before interrupting to ask a question.
- follow social expectations of eating/drinking in designated areas and times.
- learn to deal with frustrations without having a parent anticipate and solve problems for them.
- use words or signs rather than whine.
- resolve conflict without physical actions.

In an organized environment, **Early Childhood Students** can:

- show respect for others.
- wait patiently without interrupting conversations.
- use appropriate table manners.
- understand not to take or use things that belong to others without asking for permission.
- begin to solve problems with little or no interference from adults.
- feel empathy for others.

At home and at school, **Lower Elementary Students** can:

- say please and thank you.
- help others with work.
- solve problems with friends and adults.
- take advantage of peer mediation when necessary.
- apologize and make amends.

At home and at school, **Upper Elementary Students** can:

- write thank you notes for gifts received.
- exhibit grace and courtesy.
- use Conflict Resolution skills.
- help others problem solve.
- respect authority.

## INTERPERSONAL SKILLS