

Business Connections

Virginia
Commonwealth
University

Self-Care & Vocational Skills at Home

During the COVID-19 shutdown, we may not be able to engage in our typical schedule and activities. Some individuals may have to take time off from work, others may be working to build skills for future employment. This fact sheet will give you ideas for how you can use this time at home to practice and build skills for your employment goals as well as improve your overall quality of life.

Why is it Important to Practice these Skills at Home?

It is important to take care of yourself, maintain the skills and abilities you have worked so hard to develop, and even learn new skills while you are at home. Self-care activities at home can promote physical, emotional, and social wellness. Self-care activities can also help you practice and build skills needed to gain employment and achieve workplace success! For example, self-care activities can help you build stamina, identify learning styles, practice following directions, develop fine and gross motor skills, hygiene routines, understand healthy boundaries, and create a sense of autonomy which are all critical to success at work. Many skills learned in the home can translate to job duties in the workplace and the experience you gain at home may make it easier to learn skills once in a work setting.

Make a list of a few new skills you want to develop, current skills you want to maintain, or even past skills you want to redevelop. The following are examples of household activities that promote self-care and connect with vocational skill development.

Household Activities to Enhance Skills:

1. Develop a Routine

- Set alarms for wake up, bedtime, breaks, changing tasks, and/or activities.
- Write down a schedule and create lists of preferred activities and chores.
- Create a visual schedule! You may want to use a calendar, whiteboard, chalk board, notepad, or whatever is available.

2. Set Goals

- Write goals down, type them in your phone, computer, or even use technology devices that will send you reminders of goals or deadlines.
- Be specific: What is important to me? What would I like to work on or learn? What can I improve in my home?

3. Chores

- Create a list or chart of chores and how often they need to be completed.
- Ideas might include: wash and dry dishes, load the dishwasher, vacuum, sweep, wipe or sanitize surfaces, load and unload the washer and dryer, fold clothes, dust, take out the trash, organize spaces, and take care of pets.

4. Proper Hygiene & Health

- Practice proper hand washing, shower regularly, brush teeth, drink water, and eat healthy.



VCU

WE ARE TOGETHER. HEALTHY. PROGRESSIVE. AND COMMITTED TO EXCELLENCE.

- Make a plan for when or how often to do each of these things and add them to your schedule.

5. Cooking & Meal Times

- Follow a simple recipe or help a family member make a meal. You can even cook with someone over voice or video calls!
- Ask a family member to teach you how to use kitchen tools (knife, blender, stove, etc.) and set cook timers.
- Learn how to set the table, fold napkins, or roll silverware by watching YouTube videos.

6. Exercise

- Take a walk (alone or with family), play basketball, soccer, tennis, badminton or a sport of your preference, try workouts from television or online sources, and ride bikes/scooters.
- Encourage other family members to exercise with you.
- Practice sanitizing equipment after use.

7. Outdoors

- Walk the dog, practice crossing the street safely, or plant in a garden.
- Practice potential work skills such as painting, spreading mulch, caring for plants (water, fertilize, weed, etc.), and mowing the lawn.
- Learn how to use gardening tools such as shovels, rakes, lawn mower, weed eater, clippers, etc.

8. Games & Creative Outlets

- Board games, card games, and puzzles are great ways to promote communication, focus, strategy, flexibility, and following directions.
- Many of the skills used in games can be translated to skills needed for a job and are also fun!
- Engaging in creative outlets can help inspire us through the creativity of others and reinforce attention and focus. Some creative outlets might be drawing, painting, coloring, writing poetry, journaling, dancing, singing, playing an instrument, etc.

9. Social & Communication

- Even when we are social distancing, there are many ways we can stay connected! You can send emails, write letters, practice texting, as well as phone or video calls.
- Learn about video conferencing/call manners. Tutorial from VCU-Business Connections coming on this topic!
- Create healthy boundaries – When feeling well, develop a communication plan for when feeling upset or frustrated. For example, develop, discuss, and practice with others how you may let someone know that you need a break by saying or showing a note card that says “I need a minute”.
 - It is also important to set healthy boundaries for time spent on social media and screen time in general.

10. Technology

- Assist with making an online grocery order, shop online, use apps that help your family (calendar, alarm clock, bill payments, etc.).
- Work on computer skills such as data entry by creating a pantry inventory or creating a monthly budget.

For more videos and tips from VCU-Business Connections, please visit:

<https://vcurrtc.org/businessconnections/covid19.cfm>

Virginia Commonwealth University, School of Education and Department of Physical Medicine and Rehabilitation is an equal opportunity/affirmative action institution providing access to education and employment without regard to age, race, color, national origin, gender, religion, sexual orientation, veteran's status, political affiliation, or disability. If special accommodations are needed, please contact Vicki Brooke at (804) 828-1851 VOICE or (804) 828-2494 TTY.

