



IN(TER)DEPENDENT LIVING: Building Awareness

E1MN is Minnesota’s state agency partnership to advance Employment First outcomes for youth and adults with disabilities.



These lessons can help students build their knowledge and awareness of what successfully managing adult life means for them, and about topics they can explore as they make plans for their life in adulthood.

Minnesota’s Youth in Transition Framework uses the blended term “in(ter)dependence” to encompass both independent and interdependent living concepts and reflect the many different ways youth can manage adult life. [Learn more about this term »](#)

LESSON PLANS FOR TEACHERS

LESSON 1: In(ter)dependent living definitionpage 2

LESSON 2: In(ter)dependent living topics page 4

LESSON 3: My Vault’s In(ter)dependent living activitiespage 6

LENGTH
20–25 minutes for each lesson

TARGET PARTICIPANTS
Youth in transition (14–24 years of age)

Lesson 1: In(ter)dependent living definition



LENGTH: 20-25 minutes

OBJECTIVE: Students can describe what independent / interdependent living means.

INTRO

Talking point: We're going to spend some time talking about living as an adult in your community. You might hear this called independent living.

For some people, when they hear the term independent living, they picture someone doing everything completely by themselves, but for other people, they might think of it more as building your own life and making your own decisions, even if they get help with some things.

Another term that sometimes gets used is interdependence. Interdependence refers to the way that every person gets help and support from others sometimes—and they help and support the people around them, too.

DISCUSSION

What does independent / interdependent living mean?

Instructions: Ask each student to share their thoughts about living independently and interdependently.

- Talking points:**
- What do you think of when you hear the term independent, or interdependent, living?
 - Does anyone have an example of a time when they helped someone else, or got help from someone?
 - Why do you think it's important to recognize that nobody can do everything by themselves and that we all need help sometimes?

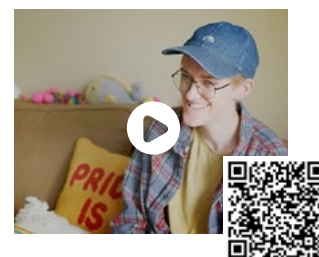
Answer: The details of living as an adult can mean something different for each person. Really, it's about successfully managing adult life within your community—building connections, making decisions and being part of your community.

ACTIVITY

Stories about in(ter)dependent living

Materials: Video: [Living as independently as possible](#)

- Talking points:**
- Let's watch a 5-minute video about what independent living means to several people.
 - As you watch the video, look for examples of independent and interdependent living that are things you want.
 - After the video I'll ask you to share the examples you heard. *(Play video.)*
 - You can see how living in the community means something a little bit different to each person in that video.



Video: [Living as independently as possible](#)

Continued next page »

Lesson 1: In(ter)dependent living definition (cont.)



DISCUSSION

What might independent or interdependent living mean to you?

Instructions: Ask students to raise their hand and share an example of independent or interdependent living from the video.

Answers:

- Making decisions about life and how you want to be successful. (Dupree)
- Going shopping and cooking. (Kevin)
- Living alone, inviting people over. (Riss)
- Paying for rent and utilities, learning cooking and budgeting skills. (Joe)
- Partially relying on yourself and knowing yourself well enough to know when to ask for help, living in your own apartment close to family and friends. (Hannah)
- Being self-sufficient, doing household chores and being responsible for your own space, learning how to be smarter financially, getting rides from family and friends, learning to drive. (Andrew)
- Living in your own apartment with PCA and pets. (Sam)
- Living your own life and making your own choices. (TK)
- Paying college education bills on time, finding a permanent job that suits your dream career, having a place of your own to live, getting around the city on your own, having a family of your own. (José-Daniel)

Lesson 2: In(ter)dependent living topics



LENGTH: 20-25 minutes

OBJECTIVE: Students can name at least two in(ter)dependent living topics.

INTRO

- Talking points:**
- There are seven topics that make up independent or interdependent living.
 - These topics are important for you to know about because it helps you consider all the different activities that make up in(ter)dependent living and make a plan for how to successfully manage those activities as you transition to adulthood.
 - Let's look at each one, then let's see if together we can match some of the topics to examples in a video.

DISCUSSION In(ter)dependent living topics

Materials: Handout: [Successfully managing adult life \(PDF\)](#)

- Instructions:**
- Give students the handout and describe the seven topics by sharing the information on the handout: daily life, community living, money, healthy living, safety, recreation and advocacy and supports.
 - As you describe each topic, ask students to share examples of a responsibility or task they do by themselves that relates to that topic, and examples of ways that they get help from the people in their lives with that topic.



Successfully managing adult life handout

ACTIVITY An in(ter)dependent living story

Materials: Video: [Hannah's story](#)

- Talking points:**
- Now that you know the seven topics that make up independent or interdependent living, I'm going to play a video about Hannah where she shares some of her experience with independent living.
 - As you listen to Hannah, see if you can identify one of the independent living topics she brings up.



Video: Hannah's story

Instructions: Play the video.

Continued next page »

Lesson 2:

In(ter)dependent living topics (cont.)



DISCUSSION

An in(ter)dependent living story

Instructions: Ask students to raise their hand if they know an independent or interdependent living topic that Hannah brought up.

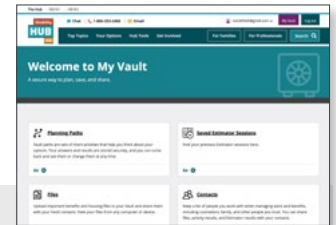
- Answers:**
- **Daily life:** Nothing in this segment.
 - **Community living:** Living in her own apartment.
 - **Money:** Working in jobs that match her skills and interests, getting a degree.
 - **Healthy living:** Maintaining close relationships with friends and family.
 - **Safety:** Nothing in this segment.
 - **Recreation:** Staying involved in community activities, going to church.
 - **Advocacy and supports:** Getting advice from her family when making big decisions, asking for help when she needs it and advocating for accommodations.
-

Lesson 3: My Vault's In(ter)dependent living activities



LENGTH: 25-30 minutes

- OBJECTIVE:**
- Students can name at least one tool/activity that will help them move toward in(ter)dependent living.
 - Students have a My Vault account.
 - Students can do planning activities in My Vault (with or without support).



My Vault online tool

PREPARATION:

Before doing this activity:

- 1. Familiarize yourself with My Vault and how to use it to support students.** Review information on the Disability Hub MN website—you'll find an overview about [My Vault](#) and information about [using My Vault to support people](#).
- 2. Create your own My Vault account.** If you don't already have one, create your own professional My Vault account. With a professional account, you'll have access to additional sharing and collaboration features. Learn more about [how to create a professional My Vault account](#).
- 3. Introduce families to My Vault.** You can use this flyer: [My Vault: An introduction for families](#) (PDF) to let families know you'll be helping their student create their own My Vault account and do planning activities.
- 4. Determine if students will have access to a computer, tablet, or smartphone during the lesson** to create their own My Vault account and complete Vault activities.
 - **If students WILL have access to a device with an internet connection,** ask students if they have a personal email address, not their school email, to use for creating a My Vault account. If they do not have a personal email account, ask families for their support in getting a personal email for the student.
 - **If students will NOT have access to a device with an internet connection,** make copies of the following activities for students to complete in class while you demonstrate the activities through your My Vault account:
 - [My Housing Ideas](#) (PDF)
 - [Housing Needs and Wants](#) (PDF)

INTRO

- Talking points:**
- Let's take a look at a tool and some activities you can use to start creating your vision for in(ter)dependent living.
 - This tool is called My Vault. My Vault is a personal, online account you can use to explore options around work, understand benefits, store and share files, and plan for your future. My Vault is free, private, and secure. The account is yours to use for all the planning in your life, no matter if you're in or out of school or what agency or organization you're working with.
 - My Vault is a tool of Disability Hub MN. Disability Hub MN is a resource network that helps people find information, explore their options and plan for their future. The Hub is a resource you can use now and after you graduate from high school. You can use their website to find information and planning tools, and they also have experts who can answer questions and help you figure things out. You can reach out to a Hub expert by phone at 1-866-333-2466, and by chat or email on their website, disabilityhubmn.org.
- Continued next page »*
- **Optional:** Show students the [Welcome to My Vault](#) video (3 min, 52 seconds)

Lesson 3: My Vault's In(ter)dependent living activities (cont.)



ACTIVITY

Create a My Vault account

Talking point: I'm going to walk through how to create your own My Vault account.

- Instructions:**
- Ask students if they already have a My Vault account. Any students who already have an account can skip this activity and wait to start the next.
 - If students have a computer or device with an internet connection and a personal email address, ask students to open an internet browser.
 - Project your computer screen. Open an internet browser and go to disabilityhubmn.org
 - Demonstrate how to create a My Vault account using the step-by-step instructions in Disability Hub MN's [My Vault: How to create an account](#) (PDF) guide. If students are using a computer or device to create an account, go slow so they can follow you.



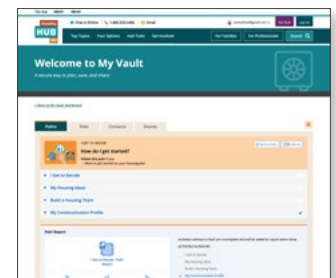
My Vault: How to create an account guide

- Talking points:**
- Now that you have a My Vault account, you'll see on the dashboard there are Planning Paths, Files, Saved Estimator Sessions, and Contacts.
 - Let's look at how you can do some of the Housing activities in the Planning Paths area.

ACTIVITY

Overview of My Vault's "I Get to Decide" path activities

- Instructions:**
- On the My Vault dashboard, click **Planning Paths**. On the next screen, scroll down to the Housing Paths area, click on the first box that says "**I Get to Decide: How do I get started?**"
 - If students are following on a computer or device, go slow and check in with students as you go.



My Vault's "I Get to Decide" path

- Talking points:** There are four activities in this Housing path:
- The first one is **I Get to Decide**. This lets you learn about your right to choose the place you want to live.
 - The next activity is **My Housing Ideas**. In this activity you can think about where you live now and set goals for the future. We'll be doing this one together.
 - The third activity is **Build a Housing Team**. Here you can make a list of the people who can help you with housing.
 - The last activity is **My Communication Profile**. In this activity you can make a one-page profile about how you like to communicate.

Continued next page »

- At the bottom of this section there is a Path Report, which combines the results from all these activities into one report that you can download or share with people you add to the Contacts area of your My Vault account.

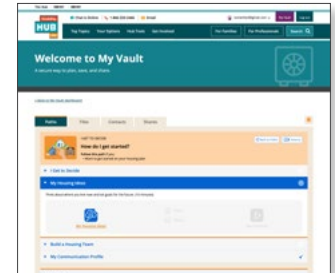
Lesson 3: My Vault's In(ter)dependent living activities (cont.)



ACTIVITY

Complete My Vault's "My Housing Ideas" activity

- Talking points:**
- Let's take a few minutes to complete the activity "My Housing Ideas".
 - First, click on the My Housing Ideas activity.
 - Then, click on the blue icon to open the activity.
 - We'll each fill in our answers to the questions, and then you can download or share the results from the activity with people who support you, like your parents, case managers or others who help you.
 - Let's take a few minutes to complete this activity.



"My Housing Ideas" activity

- Instructions:**
- Walk students through each question.
 - When students get to the end of the activity (the "My Housing Ideas: Report" screen), click on the View/Download PDF icon so students can see the information entered in the activity shows up on the PDF.
 - Click on the Share icon to show how you can share an activity with someone in the Contacts area of their My Vault account.

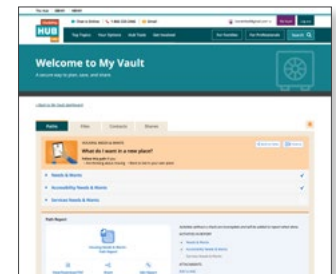


ACTIVITY

Overview of My Vault's "Housing Needs & Wants" path activities

- Talking points:**
- Let's take a look at another My Vault Housing path.
 - If we go back to the Planning Paths page, you'll see there is another Housing path called "Housing Needs & Wants: What do I want in a new place?"

- Instructions:**
- Starting from the previous activity screen (My Housing Ideas), click the dark green "Paths" tab above the activities.
 - On the next screen, scroll down to the Housing Paths area, click on the box that says "Housing Needs and Wants: What do I want in a new place?"
 - If students are following on a computer or device, go slow and check in with students as you go.



My Vault's "Housing Needs and Wants" path

- Talking points:**
- There are three activities in this Housing path: **Needs & Wants, Accessibility Needs & Wants, and Service Needs & Wants.**
 - All three of these activities work the same way – you click on the blue icon to open the activity, fill your answers to the questions, then download or share the results from the activity.

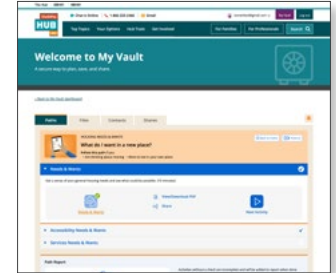
Lesson 3: My Vault's In(ter)dependent living activities (cont.)



ACTIVITY

Complete My Vault's "Needs & Wants" activity

- Talking points:**
- Let's take a few minutes to complete the "Needs & Wants" activity.
 - First, click on the "Needs & Wants" activity.
 - Then, click on the blue icon to open the activity.
 - We'll each fill in our answers to the questions, and then you can download or share the results from the activity with people who support you, like your parents, case managers or others who help you.
 - Let's take a few minutes to complete this activity.



"Needs & Wants" activity

- Instructions:**
- Walk students through each question.
 - When students get to the end of the activity (the "Report: Your Housing Needs & Wants Checklist" screen), click on the View/Download PDF icon so they can see the information entered in the activity shows up on the PDF.
 - Click on the Share icon to show how you can share an activity with someone in the Contacts area of their My Vault account.



- Talking point:**
- As you can see, there are many activities in My Vault's Housing paths that you can use to learn about yourself and help you think about and communicate with others about where you want to live and your ideas about in(ter)dependent living.

CLOSING

Talking points:

- By learning about and developing your in(ter)dependent living skills you can do more of the things you want in life.
- You don't have to wait; you can begin learning about these skills now!
- Make sure you share the activities you do in your My Vault account with your family and others helping you plan.