

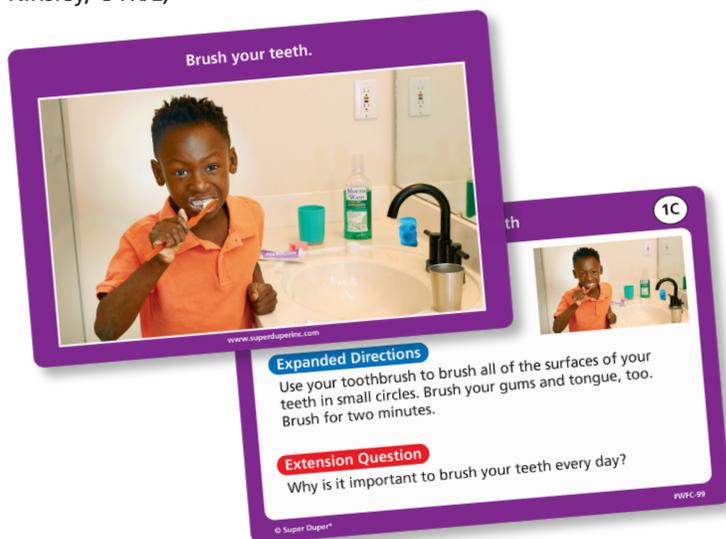
Handy Handouts®

Free informational handouts for educators, parents, and students

Activities of Daily Living (ADLs)

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(revised by Dani Kinsley, OTR/L)

Activities of daily living (ADLs) are everyday activities and functions that we do in order to lead independent, healthy lives. Other terms for ADLs are “self-care skills” or “life skills.” Basic ADLs include getting dressed, brushing teeth, using the toilet, bathing, and eating. More complex ADLs – also known as IADLs, or instrumental activities of daily living – include doing housework, making meals, shopping, driving, taking medication, planning social time, managing time, and managing money. Some individuals struggle with performing ADLs. Reasons they may find these skills challenging or difficult include deficits with motor skills, language, attention, or sequencing skills, or there may be issues with their behavioral needs, levels of motivation, or sensory systems.



Occupational Therapy for ADLs

Occupational therapists (OTs) are licensed and trained professionals who can assist individuals with gaining or improving their ADLs. The goal of occupational therapy is to empower individuals to participate in personally meaningful daily activities, or “occupations.” To help children or adults with ADLs, OTs use different strategies to help them practice the skills that will help enhance their daily lives and overall functioning. These therapy methods for day-to-day tasks include rehearsal (or practice) of skills, adaptive equipment (tools like button hooks or Velcro®), and compensatory (or helping/coping) strategies. OTs ensure that the individuals are able to accomplish ADLs in a safe manner in different settings within the home, school, and community.

Resource:

Cards and photos taken from “Webber® Activities of Daily Living Photo Sequencing Cards,” by Dani Kinsley, MS OTR/L, <https://www.superduperinc.com/webber-activities-of-daily-living-photo-sequencing-cards.html>

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