



CHILDREN'S ADMINISTRATION  
DIVISION OF CHILDREN AND FAMILY SERVICES

**LIFE SKILLS INVENTORY**  
**INDEPENDENT LIVING SKILLS ASSESSMENT TOOL**

**INSTRUCTIONS**

**In order to accurately complete the IL assessment, please involve the youth, the Children's Administration social worker, the foster parent or relative caregiver, and any other persons knowledgeable about the skills of the youth.**

**Scoring** should be based on the lowest level of completion.

The level of attainment for each youth completing this assessment is the lowest level where they satisfactorily complete the required number of questions. Youth may be highly competent in some areas, but have limited basic knowledge in others. Having basic knowledge in each area is important for long term success, and plan development should be focused on filling gaps in youth knowledge.

**Completing Category O**

It is important for all youth to have a basic knowledge of options for pregnancy prevention. It is not the goal for all youth to reach "Exceptional" in this category, unless the youth (either male or female) is or will shortly be in a parenting role. Abuse and neglect issues are not specifically assessed, but competence at the "Intermediate" level should help youth avoid CPS complaints.

**Time frames for completion**

All youth should be assessed at age 15 to 16. Once you have completed the IL assessment on a youth you do not need to repeat the assessment. All further reporting will be based on the goals of the youth, and their skill level will be indicated by the progress achieved in attaining goals. If the youth remains on the same goal, the skill level doesn't change.

**COVER SHEET**

NAME OF YOUTH:

CAMIS PERSON ID:

DATE OF BIRTH:

PERSON(S) INVOLVED IN LIFE SKILLS ASSESSMENT AND DATES OF ASSESSMENT

DATE

	CATEGORY	DATE SKILL ATTAINED			
		BASIC	INT.	ADV.	EXCEL
A	Money Management/Consumer Awareness				
B	Food Management				
C	Personal Appearance and Hygiene				
D	Health				
E	Housekeeping				
F	Housing				
G	Transportation				
H	Educational Planning				
I	Job Seeking Skills				
J	Job Maintenance Skills				
K	Emergency and Safety Skills				
L	Knowledge of Community Resources				
M	Interpersonal Skills				
N	Legal Skills				
O	Pregnancy Prevention/Parenting and Child Care				

**Category A: Money Management and Consumer Awareness****Basic - Must know 3 of 5 to advance to the next level of accomplishment:**

- Knows values of coins and currency.
- Can make a transaction at a local store and count change.
- Has an understanding of the difference between "luxuries" and "necessities" in food, transportation, clothing, housing.
- Understands the difference between "sale price" and "regular price".
- Can identify one way to save money on purchases.

**Intermediate - Must know 4 of 6 to advance to the next level of accomplishment:**

- Can open a checking or savings account.
- Can write checks/make withdrawals and make deposits.
- Can record banking transactions (either checking or savings).
- Can budget allowance to last for a week. (Shows some understanding of the concept of saving).
- Understands the difference between gross wage and take home pay.
- Can use a calculator to add, subtract, divide and multiply.

**Advanced - Must know 4 of 6 to advance to the next level of accomplishment:**

- With assistance can make out monthly budget covering regular expenses for independent living.
- Shows some "sales resistance" to "something for nothing" advertising and "low weekly payment" credit plans.
- Can read monthly bank statements, compare balances, make adjustments as necessary (deduct service charges, check fees, adjust for differences in the balance).
- Can comparison shop using unit pricing information.
- Understands the responsibility of filing tax forms. Knows the information that is required for filing taxes and knows where to go to get assistance in filing taxes.
- Knows how to clip and use coupons.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3 to be rated as exceptional:**

- Budgets for unanticipated emergencies, seasonal bills, etc.
- Understands buying on credit, loans, interest, and late payment penalties.
- Understands payroll deductions, taxes, FICA, insurance.
- Can complete a short tax form.
- Can balance a checkbook.
- Has regular savings program.

**Category B: Food Management****Basic - Must know at least 3 of 4:**

- Washes hands before eating and preparing food.
- Can order in a cafeteria or fast food restaurant.
- Can describe food pyramid and foods that contribute to a healthy life style.
- Knows name and use of cooking utensils.

**Intermediate - Must be able to do 5 of 8:**

- Can order a meal from the menu in a restaurant
- Can fix a breakfast for one
- Can fix a lunch for one
- Can fix a dinner for one
- Can make out a grocery shopping list
- Can use cooking utensils effectively and safely (knives, grater, can opener, potato peeler, egg beater, etc.)
- Can use kitchen appliances effectively and safely
- Can use acceptable table manners

**Advanced - Must know 5 out of 7:**

- Stores perishable items under refrigeration.
- Recognizes signs of spoilage in food.
- Can follow the instructions for preparing canned or frozen foods.
- Can plan weekly menu of nutritious meals.
- Can shop for a week's menu and stay within a food budget.
- Can set the table properly.
- Can carry out a grocery-shopping trip (selecting items on the shopping list and paying the cashier).

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3:**

- Prepares recipes from a cookbook.
- Can adjust recipes to feed more or less people than called for in the recipes.
- Understands how to use dates on food packages to prevent spoilage. (see next page)

**Category B: Food Management (continued)****Exceptional - Must know at least 3: (continued)**

- Prepares and eats a balanced diet.
- Understands and can use unit pricing to comparison shop.

**Category C: Personal Appearance and Hygiene****Basic - Must be able to do 4 of 4:**

- Can dress self (including underwear, socks, and tied shoes) in a reasonably acceptable fashion.
- Can bathe self.
- Knows how to use soap, shampoo, deodorant, shaving cream, other common personal products appropriate to sex.
- Brushes teeth regularly.

**Intermediate - Must be able to do 3 of 3:**

- Showers or bathes regularly.
- Keeps hair clean and neat.
- Dresses in reasonably clean clothing.

**Advanced - Must be able to do 4 of 6:**

- Can read clothing labels and determine which clothes are to be dry cleaned, hand washed, and machine-washed.
- Can sort and machine-wash clothes at a Laundromat using appropriate temperatures, amounts of soap, bleach, etc.
- Can dry clothes in a dryer using appropriate settings.
- Knows the cost of and can budget money for special hair and nail care (i.e., permanents, braiding, manicures, etc.).
- Can iron clothes.
- Can sew on buttons and make minor clothing repairs.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Can hand wash items following the instructions on the label.
- Knows appropriate clothing to wear for almost all occasions.
- Knows approximate cost of dry cleaning and can arrange for dry cleaning.

**Category D: Health****Basic - Must know 5 of 6:**

- Can open childproof container.
- Knows not to take someone else's medication.
- Knows that drugs, alcohol, and tobacco may be harmful to your health.
- Knows parts of the body and sexual functioning.
- Knows how pregnancy occurs.
- Knows how and where to get emergency health care.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Can recognize and describe symptoms of colds, flu, and other common health problems.
- Knows what to do for a minor cut, a minor burn, a splinter.
- Understands the risks of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases.
- Understands the risks of drug and alcohol abuse.

**Advanced - Must know 9 of 13:**

- Can take own temperature using an oral thermometer.
- Can nurse self through cold or flu.
- Recognizes/makes correct use of "over the counter" drugs for pain, stomach upset, diarrhea, fever, cold/allergy.
- Can call a doctor or dentist and schedule an appointment.
- Can read a prescription label correctly and follow the instructions.
- Can take medication without supervision.
- Knows how to dispose of drugs in a safe manner.
- Knows how to use what is included in a First Aid Kit.
- Knows how to obtain a copy of personal immunization records and medical history.
- Knows methods of birth control and how to obtain birth control devices.
- Knows how to prevent the spread of sexually transmitted diseases.
- Has selected a doctor, dentist or clinic for regular health care.
- Understands the importance of medical insurance.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Is conscious of diet, exercise, good eating habits, and other preventative health measures.
- Can determine when to go to an emergency room and when to make an appointment with the family doctor or clinic.
- Has obtained medical insurance.

**Category E: Housekeeping****Basic - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Can wash dishes adequately using soap and hot water.
- Can change a light bulb.
- Can make a bed.
- Knows how to dispose of garbage.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 5:**

- Can use vacuum cleaner properly and change bags.
- Can change bed linen.
- Knows how to prevent sinks and toilets from clogging.
- Knows how to sweep floor and stairs, wash wood and linoleum floors, wash windows, dust, polish furniture, clean toilet, clean bathtub and sink.
- Knows appropriate cleaning products to use for different cleaning jobs.

**Advanced - Must know 5 of 7:**

- Knows how to stop a toilet from running.
- Knows how to use a plunger to unstop a toilet or sink.
- Can defrost the refrigerator, if necessary.
- Can clean a stove.
- Knows how to conserve energy and water.
- Perform routine house-cleaning to maintain the home in a reasonably clean state.
- Uses drawers and closets appropriately for storage.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3:**

- Knows what repairs a landlord should perform.
- Can do minor household repairs.
- Is able to contact the landlord and request repairs.
- Can change a fuse or reset a circuit breaker.
- Can measure a window for shades or curtains.
- Knows how to get rid of and avoid roaches, ants, mice, etc.

**Category F: Housing****Basic - Must know 2 of 2:**

- Understands the concept of renting.
- Knows how to access emergency shelter.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Can read want ads for vacancies.
- Understands basic terms (lease, sub-let, utilities, studio, efficiency, security deposit, reference, etc.).
- Can calculate the costs associated with different types of housing.
- Can describe pros and cons of choosing a roommate.

**Advanced - Must know 6 of 9:**

- Can identify type of housing that is within budget and meets current housing needs.
- Can calculate "start up" costs (Utility deposits, connection fees, security deposit, first month's rent, purchase of furniture and all other household items).
- Can complete a rental application.
- Can ask the landlord about the available apartment to determine if it meets their needs.
- Knows to inspect the apartment to make sure appliances work and that the landlord has supplied accurate information about the apartment and the neighborhood.
- Shows some concern for the rights of other residents with regard to property and noise.
- Understands the consequences if the rights of other residents are not respected.
- Understands the implication of the security deposit.
- Knows the role of a landlord.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Demonstrates the ability to get along with other residents and the landlord.
- Knows how to get help if there is a conflict with the landlord.
- Can access emergency assistance for utilities.

**Category G: Transportation****Basic - Must know 3 of 6:**

- Can ride a bicycle safely.

**Category G: Transportation (continued)****Basic - Must know 3 of 6: (continued)**

- Understands and uses seat belts.
- Familiar with any form of public transportation available.
- Knows the nearest public bus stop to your home.
- Knows amount of money required for bus fare.
- Knows the nearest town with bus services.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 6:**

- Aware of consequences of driving without a license and insurance.
- Has successfully completed a Driver's Ed class.
- Knows how to call a taxi and provide information needed. Knows the approximate cost of taking a taxi.
- If given instructions, can make public transportation journey involving several transfers.
- Knows requirements for foster parent reimbursement for providing transportation.
- Can give directions.

**Advanced - Must know 4 of 5:**

- Can arrange routine transportation to work or school.
- Knows what is required to get a driver's license.
- Has driver's permit.
- Can fix a bicycle.
- Can read a map.

**Exceptional - Must know 2 of 3:**

- Knows how to do basic car maintenance.
- Can estimate cost of owning and operating a car for a month/year including tabs and insurance.
- Has a driver's license.

**Category H: Educational Planning****Basic - Must know 2 of 2:**

- Has a realistic view of his/her chances for completing high school.
- If high school graduation is not realistic, understands what a GED is and how to obtain one.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Can fill out forms to enroll in an educational program.
- Has a general idea of what education is needed for the job he/she wants.
- Can discuss educational/vocational plans with teachers/counselor.
- Is aware of educational resources available in the community.

**Advanced - Must know 4 of 6:**

- Knows how to obtain school transcripts.
- Is aware of current educational credits and standing.
- Has an appropriate educational plan for the job selected.
- Understands educational/skill requirements for job selected.
- Is aware of the cost of higher education/vocational training.
- Knows the difference between a loan and a grant.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3:**

- "Shops around" to find the best educational resources.
- Knows where to find and how to access adult education or vocational training in the community.
- Knows how to obtain financial aid/scholarships for additional education.
- Understands future prospects and probable living standards relative to levels of education and specialized skills.
- Is able to identify the connection between course work and vocational goals.

**Category I: Job Seeking Skills****Basic - Must know 2 of 2:**

- Has reasonable idea of the types of jobs available to him/her.
- Knows what the minimum wage is.

**Intermediate - Must know 4 of 5:**

- Can fill out a standard job application form.
- Can read the want ads and find appropriate leads.
- Can complete a mock interview giving appropriate answers to potential questions.  
(see next page)

**Category I: Job Seeking Skills (continued)****Intermediate - Must know 4 of 5: (continued)**

- Can make appointment for a job interview.
- Knows appropriate clothing to wear for the interview.

**Advanced - Must know 6 of 8:**

- Can write a resume.
- Has a completed job application/fact sheet to take on a job interview.
- Knows to prepare for a job interview.
- Can complete a job interview.
- Knows the function of and can contact the public employment agency.
- Knows the function of and understands that private employment agencies charge fees.
- Can identify ads placed by private employment agencies.
- Can contact temporary employment services.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Has a resume.
- Can follow up an interview with a letter.
- Is able to maturely weigh the advantages of one job over another.
- Understands legal discrimination and where to seek help if discriminated against illegally.

**Category J: Job Maintenance Skills****Basic - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Dresses for work appropriately.
- Reports to work on time.
- Knows job responsibilities and how to complete job tasks.
- Knows to contact employer when not able to go to work.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Know how to read a pay stub.
- Knows appropriate way to talk to supervisor.
- Knows what behaviors will get a person fired immediately.
- Knows how to ask for help with a problem on the job.

**Advanced - Must know 4 of 5:**

- Knows if eligible for sick time, vacation time, or personal time.
- Knows what a grievance procedure is.
- Know what to do to get a raise.
- Knows where and when not to talk with co-workers.
- Has a plan for handling anger when angry at supervisor, co-workers, or customers.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3:**

- Can implement anger management plan in majority of cases.
- Knows how to use company grievance procedure to resolve disagreements.
- Knows companies "unwritten policies" and can function within them.
- Knows how to ask for a raise.
- Knows what to do to be eligible for promotion.
- Knows legal rights as an employee.

**Category K: Emergency and Safety Skills****Basic - Must know 4 of 5:**

- Knows functions of police, ambulance and fire department. Can reach each by calling the appropriate number.
- Is trained to evacuate the residence in case of fire.
- Knows proper way of disposing of smoking materials, if smokes.
- Knows how to lock and unlock doors and windows.
- Knows how to check smoke alarm and how to replace battery.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 5:**

- Understands basic fire prevention (No smoking in bed, using gas stove to heat, excessive use of extension cords, frayed electrical cords, etc.).
- Knows how to use a fire extinguisher.
- Knows that improperly used appliances can cause fires.
- Can recognize the smell of a gas leak. (see next page)

**Category K: Emergency and Safety Skills (continued)****Intermediate - Must know 3 of 5: (continued)**

- Knows what to do, and whom to call if she/he smells a gas leak.

**Advanced - Must know 2 of 3:**

- Knows the different methods for putting out different kinds of fires.  
 Knows how to properly store cleaning materials.  
 Can usually determine when professional medical help is needed.

**Exceptional - Must know 2 of 2:**

**\*Youth may have their cards, but completion of the other areas is important. The rating should be based on the lowest area where they have completed the skills.**

- Has completed First Aid training.  
 Has completed CPR training.

**Category L: Knowledge of Community Resources****Basic - Must know 4 of 5:**

- Knows how to get emergency information by telephone.  
 Knows whom to contact if injured or sick.  
 Knows where nearest supermarket or shopping district is located.  
 Knows how to access emergency food and shelter.  
 Knows how to access crisis line.

**Intermediate - Must know 3 of 5:**

- Knows where nearest Laundromat is located.  
 Knows where personal bank is located.  
 Can use the yellow pages to obtain information.  
 Knows location of nearest CSO.  
 Knows location of nearest post office and how to use it.

**Advanced - Must know 3 of 5:**

- Knows whom to contact if utilities disconnected, or heat goes out.  
 Knows where and how to register for selective service.  
 Knows where the nearest state employment office is located.  
 Can obtain a copy of birth certificate and a duplicate social security card.  
 Has awareness of "specialized" resources: mental health counseling, consumer counseling, VD clinics, student aid offices, tenant groups, animal control, public recreation, etc.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Knows who elected representatives are and how to contact them.  
 Has obtained a library card.  
 Knows what the Better Business Bureau does and how to contact it.

**Category M: Interpersonal Skills****Basic - Must know 5 of 5:**

- Can respond to introductions and answer simple questions.  
 Can identify one friend.  
 Look others in the eye and shakes hands if other person offers.  
 Can make "small talk" (face to face).  
 Communicates with at least one person weekly.

**Intermediate - Must know 4 of 6:**

- Can make introductions, including approaching others to introduce self.  
 Is aware of boundary issues.  
 Is not harmful to others.  
 Can ask for help.  
 Can explain feelings.  
 Can identify relationships that may be hurtful or dangerous.

**Advanced - Must know 8 of 13:**

- Can identify personal strengths and needs (with assistance if necessary).  
 Accepts invitations from others to be involved in social activities.  
 Make arrangements with peers for social activities. (see next page)

**Category M: Interpersonal Skills (continued)****Advanced - Must know 8 of 13: (continued)**

- Knows where to get help if unable to resolve interpersonal conflicts alone.
- Has some ability to resolve conflicts with others.
- Refrains from physical violence as a means of solving interpersonal conflict.
- Has practiced how to say "no" to a peer who is trying to persuade him/her to do something wrong.
- Can develop a realistic plan with appropriate steps identified to achieve goals.
- Can carry out plans with some assistance provided.
- Can describe the "best possible" outcome if the goal is achieved and the "worst possible" outcome if the goal is not achieved.
- Can describe the relationship between actions and consequences.
- Has "good" table manners (can use knife, fork, spoons, napkin appropriately).
- Avoids hurtful or dangerous relationships.

**Exceptional - Must know at least 3:**

- Labels and expresses anger or other strong feelings appropriately, "talks out" problems.
- Has demonstrated the ability to say "no" to peers.
- Can develop and carry out a personal plan for goal achievement without supervision.
- Can anticipate, with limited input from others, what consequences might be associated with different choices.
- Knows when and how to send written thank-you notes.
- Can close a relationship or say "good bye" in a healthy manner.

**Category N: Legal Issues****Basic - Must know 2 of 2:**

- Has the phone number of someone to call if arrested or victimized.
- Understands generally what actions are against the law and what the consequences are.

**Intermediate - Must know 4 of 7:**

- Knows personal rights if arrested.
- Knows what the function of a lawyer is.
- Knows legal age for buying alcohol and tobacco products.
- Understands the meaning of "legal age" in legal terms (what you can do, what you cannot do).
- Knows how to read a contract.
- Has understanding of dependency process.
- Knows how and where to register to vote.

**Advanced - Must know 3 of 4:**

- Knows the responsibility to register for selective service, if male.
- Aware of availability of free legal services.
- Understands the consequences of signing a contract or a lease.
- Knows the legal penalty for all of the following:
  - Buying, possessing, selling, and smoking marijuana and other drugs
  - Buying and drinking beer and alcohol underage
  - Trespassing
  - Shoplifting
  - Burglary
  - Possession of stolen property
  - Traffic violations

**Exceptional - Must know at least 2:**

- Show good citizenship and an understanding of the rights and responsibilities of a citizen.
- Is registered to vote.
- Knows where to go to vote.
- Knows the difference between "felony", "misdemeanor", and "violation".

**Category O: Pregnancy, Parenting and Child Care****Basic/Pregnancy - Must know 6 of 6: (All youth complete this part)**

- Knows resources for birth control.
- Knows location of family planning office.
- Knows options for birth control.
- Knows options for pregnancy. (see next page)



**Category O: Pregnancy, Parenting and Child Care (continued)**

**Basic/Pregnancy - Must know 6 of 6: (All youth complete this part) (continued)**

- Knows dangers of drugs, alcohol, and tobacco during pregnancy.
- Knows what adequate pre-natal care is.

**Intermediate/Parenting and Child Care - Must know 10 of 10: (Pregnant or parenting teens)**

- Knows where to obtain pre-natal care.
- Knows not to leave child without supervision.
- Can provide appropriate supervision for child.
- Is comfortable being alone with child.
- Knows how to bathe child and change diapers.
- Knows how to access community resources (WIC, PHN).
- Knows how to engage child in appropriate play (reading, singing, drawing, building things, etc.).
- Knows the available options for regular childcare.
- Selects appropriate people to periodically baby-sit with child.
- Knows where to go for help if child is sick.

**Advanced - Must know 5 of 6: (Pregnant or parenting)**

- Can select toys appropriate for child's age and developmental level.
- Can discipline without using extreme measures (hitting, screaming, withholding necessary food or care).
- Can make arrangements for regular childcare.
- Takes child to childcare on time. Picks child up from childcare on time.
- Spends "quality" time with child each day (talking, playing together, listening to the child, etc.).
- Knows where to go for help with parenting.

**Exceptional**

- Knows what behaviors are appropriate for the child's age and developmental level.
- Knows the costs and benefits of each child care arrangement available.