



# **BUILDING A MEANINGFUL DAY**

## **A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**



INDIANA INSTITUTE ON DISABILITY AND COMMUNITY

**CENTER ON COMMUNITY  
LIVING AND CAREERS**

# **BUILDING A MEANINGFUL DAY**

## **A STEP-BY-STEP GUIDE**

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The Center on Community Living and Careers (CCLC) is one of seven centers located at the Indiana Institute on Disability and Community, Indiana University, Bloomington. The mission of the Center on Community Living and Careers is to promote partnerships between schools and support organizations to bring about positive changes in the lives of individuals and families as they live, work, and participate in their communities.



**2810 East Discovery Parkway**

**Bloomington, IN 47408-2601**

(812) 855-6508

[cclc@indiana.edu](mailto:cclc@indiana.edu)

[www.iidc.indiana.edu/cclc](http://www.iidc.indiana.edu/cclc)

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# Introduction

## Who should use this resource?

This guide can be used by individuals with disabilities, their families, and support staff to design meaningful activities that align with identified personal goals. Community rehabilitation programs can use this resource to reimagine day program services and collaborate with nearby providers. Tailoring activities to an individual's needs and preferences can foster a fulfilling and personalized experience.

To promote holistic well-being and goal attainment, it's essential to identify activities that encompass all aspects of life. Focusing on a few life domains may not fully address an individual's needs. Therefore, activities must include the cultural, emotional, environmental, intellectual, occupational, physical, social, financial, and spiritual global domains. These activities should also align with an individual's goals, interests, and preferences.

The activity topics listed in this resource are not exhaustive but serve as starting points. Each topic includes activities that span various life domains. These activities are designed to inspire creative thinking about community resources. **By reviewing and reflecting on these activities, individuals can explore how they might contribute to developing a personalized and meaningful daily routine.**

Competitive, integrated employment (CIE) is the primary and preferred option for individuals, as outlined in Employment First legislation and philosophy. While individuals may choose to work full-time, part-time, or not at all, employment is just one aspect of a fulfilling life. This resource aims to complement the benefits of meaningful CIE and offer a framework for those who decide not to pursue it.



## Animals

People love animals, all kinds of animals. People love animals, all kinds of animals. Some find spiders fascinating, while others adore polar bears. Animals are part of our planet, our communities, and, for many, our homes. Enjoy these activities alone or with friends, anytime. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- Beekeeping can be a rewarding hobby for adventurous people.
  - Read through [Beekeeping for Dummies: The Complete Guide to Simple and Successful Beekeeping](#).
  - Read The Honeybee Hobbyist's [Comprehensive Beginner's Guide](#).
- Bird watching can be fun.
  - Put a bird feeder up and watch the birds in your yard.
  - Download the [Merlin Bird ID app](#) to help identify birds in your area.
- Study animals and their behaviors.
  - Explore animal books at your local library.
  - Draw or color a picture of your favorite animal.
  - Join a discussion forum about animals.
  - Register for an animal care course.
  - Watch animal documentaries on television and streaming platforms like YouTube.
  - Take pictures of animals and use them to build a photo album.
  - Purchase a monthly or annual subscription for animal magazines.
  - Read books about animals. If needed, ask someone to read book sections to you.
  - Follow different zoos on social media.
- Build an ant farm.
- Butterfly watching can be fun.
  - Plant a butterfly bush in your garden.
  - [Create a butterfly garden](#).
  - Use an [identification guide](#) to recognize local butterflies.
- Take a behind-the-scenes tour at the local zoo.
- Play animal charades with a friend or family member.
- Purchase an aquarium for your favorite room in the house.

- Volunteer to:
  - Pet sit for a friend while they're on vacation.
  - Walk dogs at the local animal shelter.

## Explore Online Resources

- Browse the:
  - [National Geographic Explorer Classroom](#)
  - [National Geographic for Kids](#)
  - [Wildlife Explorers Resource Hub](#)
  - [Ocean Sanctuaries Virtual Dive Galleries](#)
  - [World Wildlife Fund's Ready-to-Go Model Lessons](#)
- [Teaching Toolkits](#) for download:
  - [Tiger Toolkit](#)
  - [Sea Turtle Toolkit](#)
  - [Polar Bear Toolkit](#)
- Play [Switch Zoo Animal Games](#)
- Attend virtual tours.
  - [Asian Gardens Zoo Tampa at Lowry Park](#)
  - [Bronx Zoo Virtual Tours](#)
  - [Cleveland Metroparks Zoo](#)
  - [Dine with Sharks](#)
  - [San Diego Zoo Walking Tour](#)
  - [Giants of the Savannah Dallas Zoo](#)
  - [Monterey Bay Aquarium Full Tour](#)
  - [National Aquarium Tour](#)
  - [Resources for 23 Virtual Zoo Trip Tours](#)
  - [Living Desert Zoo's African Safari \(Part 1\)](#)
  - [Zoo Tours](#)
- Watch live animal cams.
  - [Monterey Bay Live Animal Cams](#)
  - [San Diego Zoo Live Animal Cams](#)
  - [The Virtual Rainforest](#)
  - [The Wilds of Ohio: The Finale](#)



## Arts and Crafts

The beauty of arts and crafts is its flexibility. You can create in the comfort of your own home or join a community art project. Whether it's a sketching session or a weekend pottery class, you can gain a sense of accomplishment and well-being. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- [Arts and Crafts Lesson Libraries](#)
- [39 Arts and Crafts Ideas for Adults](#)
- [30 Simple Art Techniques](#)
- [Bubblewrap Stomp Painting](#)
- Candle making
- [Comb Painting](#)
- [Crayon Painting](#)
- Create:
  - Diamond Paintings
  - Geometric Tape Paintings
  - Drawings inspired by a theme of your choice, such as a friend, favorite thing, or character.
  - Digital art using [Jackson Pollock](#) or [Bomomo](#).
  - [Floral Tote Bags](#)
  - [Leaf Imprint Jewelry Dishes](#)
- [DIY Board Games](#)
- [DIY Stress Ball](#)
- [Fun Drawing Video Channel](#)
- [Fun Art Classes from Home](#)
- [Leaf Imprint Jewelry Dishes](#) created at home.
- Learn how to:
  - String Beads
  - Crochet

- Knit
- Origami
- Sculpt clay
- [Lunch Doodles with Mo Willems](#)
- [Macrame: How to Macrame for Beginners](#)
- Make a:
  - Card
  - Collage
  - Poster
  - [Windchimes from Recycled Objects](#)
  - Wreath
- [McHarper Art Tutorials](#)
- [Newspaper Flowers](#)
- [Ornament Making](#)
- Paint a:
  - Picture
  - [Rainbow Doormat](#)
  - Rock
- Paint-by-Number. You can purchase this or make your own.
- [Paper Flower Art](#)
- [Paper Mâché Bowl Making](#)
- [Paper Spinner Making](#)
- [Pinecone Bird Feeders](#)
- [Pressed Flower Lanterns](#)
- [Rolled Magazine Leaves](#)
- Seek inspiration from the [Crayola YouTube Channel](#) and the [Skillshare platform](#).
- Sculpt with clay or Play-Doh.
- [Sewing for Beginners](#)
- Sidewalk chalk art
- Weave a potholder or coaster.
- [Yarn Pumpkins](#)





## Cooking and Baking

Cooking is a cornerstone of healthy living. There are many activities to participate in based on comfort and skill level. You can experiment with a new recipe, cook with a friend, or plan a meal for your family. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

### Baking

- Baking is a fun and creative outlet. Try baking something new each week. Baking can be a fun and creative art! Plan one day a week to bake an item. That might be a cake, a pie, cookies, or your favorite bread product.
  - [20 Easy Recipes for Beginners \(cakes\)](#)
  - [How to Make a Simple, Plain Cake from Scratch](#)
  - [How to Make a Pie](#)
  - [How to Make Homemade Cookies](#)
  - [Bread Making](#)
- Big Batch cooking is a great way to connect with friends and neighbors.
  - Once a month, make a big batch of your favorite soup, bread, or another dish. Then, share your delicious creations with friends, neighbors, or family.
  - Show your appreciation for local heroes and first responders by sharing your big batch. Consider visiting the local fire station house, police department, or paramedics' office.
- Cake decorating is a creative way to impress your friends and family! Practice your skills monthly.
  - [How to Decorate a Cake](#)
  - [Cake Decorating Without Tools](#)
- Challenge yourself to taste one new baked item a month.
- Cookie decorating is creative, fun, and a great way to impress your friends and family! Practice your cookie decorating skills every month.
  - [Cookie Decorating Techniques](#)
  - [Beginner Cookie Decorating Tutorial](#)

## Cooking

- Cooking Club for beginner cooks, such as [Chop Chop Cooking Club](#) can be both a learning experience and a way to meet other people who share an interest in cooking. Research your local area to find a club near you. Your local YMCA might offer an option. There may also be online cooking classes you can consider taking.
- Cooking games for adults might be a fun way to learn more about cooking.
- [Easy Recipes for Beginners](#)
- Explore different cooking techniques such as sauteing or braising. Schedule time throughout the month to try each technique.
  - [What Exactly is Braising?](#)
  - [How to Sauté Almost Anything](#)
  - [How to Broil Foods](#)
- Research different cooking tools and what they are used for.
  - [List of Food Preparation Utensils](#)
- Research how to cook using the microwave.
  - [How to Use a Microwave: The Comprehensive Guide](#)
- Visit your local bookstore to browse the cookbooks.
- Watch a cooking video on YouTube. Then, practice what you see!
- Challenge yourself to taste one new cooked item a month.

## Additional Activities

- Cookbook making can be a long-term project with friends, neighbors, or family. Consider creating sections in your cookbook such as 'breakfast recipes,' 'finger foods,' etc.
- Create a menu for breakfast, lunch, and dinner once a week.
- Explore online recipes and select one new recipe to follow each month.
- Host a special or themed (i.e., Halloween, Cat Appreciation Month) cooking or baking day with friends, neighbors, or family members. After all the cooking is done, share the meal with everyone. Considering holidays and other monthly observances, you should be able to host at least one cooking/baking party a year.
- Invite friends, neighbors, or family over to try a new recipe.
- Learn how to read a recipe.
  - [How to Read a Recipe](#)
  - [How to Read a Cooking Recipe](#)
- Listen to music while you cook or bake.
- Make a shopping list, once a week, which includes ingredients you will need to prepare a meal for breakfast, lunch, or dinner.
- Mystery Basket Challenges can be scheduled once a month with a group of friends, neighbors, and family. Divide people into teams. Each team purchases a basket of ingredients, and a different team makes a dish. The best dish wins bragging rights!

- Pick one new food a week to learn about. Think of foods you have never tried before, or rare foods you don't normally buy such as kumquat or dandelion greens.
- Plan a potluck get together with friends, neighbors, or family. Each person, including yourself, will be responsible for bringing a baked or cooked dish.
- Pumpkin carving is an activity typically done in October. You can be very creative with this. You could host a pumpkin carving get-together with friends.



## Creating and Maintaining Friendships

Friendships are a vital part of our lives; they provide support, companionship, and a sense of belonging. You can use technology to stay connected, schedule virtual meetups, explore shared interests, and express appreciation for the people in your life. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself, enhance communication, and build trust.

### Maintaining Friendships

There's nothing like reconnecting with old friends who truly know you. While in-person visits are ideal, technology offers countless ways to stay connected. Try the strategies below to nurture your long-standing friendships.

- Say yes to friends who invite you to join them for fun outings or one-on-one activities like window shopping or walking.
- Facetime, Skype, Zoom, etc. with friends and family.
- Make game nights a regular tradition. Rotate hosting responsibilities among your friends to keep things fresh and fun.
- Host a:
  - Bucket list night then share your creation with friends.
  - Online dance class from your living room or other open space.
  - Movie night with friends.
  - Special occasions such as an Olympics watch party.
  - Spa day with friends.
  - Swap meets with friends. A different friend can host each time. Ask each person to bring things they no longer use or need such as a DVD movie, clothing, books, etc. Then, you swap!
- Keep an address book (paper and pen, or on the computer) with the names, addresses, phone numbers, and email addresses of friends. Place calls regularly to friends in that address book.
- Make yourself available. This can be done by trying to see friends regularly.
- Play Minute-to-Win-it challenges with friends through Facetime and Skype.
  - [Minute-to Win-it Games](#)
  - [More Minute-to-Win-it Games](#)
- Start a new hobby with an old friend.

- Visit with friends, family, or neighbors in person. Use a calendar to plan visits regularly with the people you most want to spend time with.
- Use a calendar to track special occasions like birthdays, vacations, or job interviews. When you notice a special day approaching, call your friends and let them know you're thinking of them.
- [Write a gratitude letter.](#)

## Creating New Relationships

- Attend community events. You might find community events listed online, in the newspaper, or on community bulletin boards. [Meetup](#) is another great resource to explore events that interest you.
- Create or join an online social group. Use platforms like Instagram, Facebook, WhatsApp, etc.
- Carefully consider joining an online dating community. If you prefer, online dating communities are catered to people with disabilities only.
- Explore [meetups](#) in your local community based on your interests.
- Go to a new place in your community. You might meet other people who share the same interests.
- Introduce yourself to a neighbor.
- Join a faith community. Faith communities are great places to build new relationships and stay connected.
- Join an in-person social group that interests you. Engage with posts and share your thoughts.
- [Practice small talk.](#)
- Take a walk in the neighborhood. When you meet someone, introduce yourself.
- Volunteer in your local community.

## Healthy Relationships

- Learn the [Characteristics of Healthy and Unhealthy Relationships.](#)
- Follow the [Guidelines for Healthy Social Connections.](#)
- Learn how [Love is Respect.](#)



## Cultural and Historical Sites

Exploring different cultural and historical locations in your community, state, country, or internationally is educational and eye-opening. If you are a history buff, this might be a great way to spend your time. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

### National Historic Landmarks

- [List of National Historic Landmarks by State from the National Park Service](#)
- [List of U.S. National Historic Landmarks by state \(click any state to explore landmarks located there\)](#)
- [Popular Historic Landmarks in Every State](#)

### Virtual Tours of Historical Sites

- [Anne Frank House online](#)
- [Army of Terra Cotta soldiers built to protect China's emperor, Qin Shi Huang, circa 210 B.C](#)
- [Franklin D. Roosevelt Presidential Library and Museum](#)
- [Gettysburg National Park Service](#)
- [Virtual Tour of the Statue of Liberty](#)
- [Visit Colonial Williamsburg](#)

### International Landmark Virtual Tours

- [Buckingham Palace Expedition](#)
- [Destination Machu Picchu](#)
- [Explore the Taj Mahal](#)
- [Great Wall of China](#)
- [Stonehenge Virtual Tour: Inside the Stones](#)
- [The Louvre Museum](#)

## Virtual Museum Tours

- [American Folk Art Museum](#)
- [American Visionary Art Museum](#)
- [Elbphilharmonie Germany](#)
- [Inhotim Brazil](#)
- [Metropolitan Museum of Art](#)
- [Mount Vernon](#)
- [Museum Batik Indonesia](#)
- [National Museum of the US Air Force](#)
- [National Museum of Women in the Arts](#)
- [Palace of Versailles France](#)
- [Smithsonian American Art Museum](#)
- [Smithsonian Virtual Tours](#)
- [The Barilla Collection of Modern Art](#)
- [The National History Museum](#)
- [Toledo Museum of Art](#)
- [Vatican Museums](#)
- [Whitney Museum of American Art](#)



## Exercise, Health, and Fitness

Physical activity and a focus on health and fitness are important for all of us. Each person needs at least 2 hours and 30 minutes of cardiovascular exercise a week. By prioritizing this, you can see positive changes in your mental, nutritional, and physical health. There are many ways to exercise and move your body; it doesn't have to be hard or boring. The more you exercise, the easier it becomes. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

### Mental Wellness

- Body scan
  - [Guided Body Scan Meditation](#)
  - [Mindfulness Exercise: Body Scan](#)
- Implementing breathing exercises.
  - [3-Minute Breathing Space](#)
  - [Belly Breathing Exercise Video](#)
  - [4-7-8 Breathing Exercise Video](#)
  - [Mindful Listening Guided Meditation](#)
- Daily affirmations can provide mental health benefits.
  - [25 Positive Daily Affirmations for Your Mental Health](#)
  - [How to Use Positive Affirmations for a Fulfilling Life](#)
- Goal setting, especially small goals every day, provides mental health benefits.
  - [Examples of Short-term Personal Goals to Start Implementing in Your Life](#)
- Gratitude journaling may be something you enjoy.
  - [Gratitude Journal: 35 Prompts, Templates, and Ideas to Start](#)
  - [The Gratitude Journal: Prompts, PDFs, and Worksheets](#)
- Healthy relationships matter.
  - [Setting Healthy Boundaries](#)
  - [Healthy Relationships When Living with a Disability](#)
  - [Sexual Health and IDD Resources](#)
- Meditation can provide mental health benefits. You can get started by exploring meditation



apps or following guided meditation videos.

- Meditation apps offering a free plan:
  - Shine
  - Healthy Minds Program
  - Aura
  - Smiling Mind
  - Oak
- Meditation guided through video.
  - [10-minute Guided Meditation for Positive Energy, Peace, and Light](#)
  - [5-minute Meditation You Can Do Anywhere](#)
  - [10-minute Meditation for Anxiety](#)
  - [10-minute Meditation for Stress](#)
  - [10-minute Meditation for Sleep](#)

## Nutritional Wellness

- Join nutritional challenges. For example, reducing your soda intake for a week.
- If you have a waiver, case managers can help you develop a healthier nutrition plan. Ask them to help you create better eating habits.
- Log your food on an app such as My Fitness Pal.
- Mayo Clinic offers [11 Tips for Healthier Eating Habits](#). Think about building these habits into your daily routine.
- Plan weekly snacks.
- Practice meal prep assistance. This includes learning to measure food and following a recipe.
- Review this [Printable Nutrition Information from Nutrition.gov](#) and [29 Nutrition Tips](#).
- Start a home garden, plant fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water– build this habit into your daily schedule.
- Take a nutrition course. Some might be offered at your local hospital, community center, or library. Online resources such as [The Definitive Guide to Healthy Eating in Real Life](#) are also available.
- Visit a farmer’s market and buy fresh produce.

## Physical Activity and Fitness

- [Balance Exercises for Beginners](#)
- Basketball
  - [How to Play the Game of Horse in Basketball](#)
- [Chair Yoga](#)
- [Chair Boxing](#)
- Cycling
- [Dance Videos from Dance People](#)
  - [Hip Hop Dance Moves](#)
  - Line Dancing

- [Deskercise](#)
- [Free 14-Week Online Wellness Program for Individuals with Disabilities](#)
- [Full Body Stretching for Beginners](#)
- Hiking
- Jogging
- Jumping Jacks
- Jump rope
- Kayaking
- [National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability \(NCHPAD\)](#)
- Play frisbee
- Push-ups
- [Racewalking](#)
- Running
- Sit-ups
- Skiing or snowboarding
- Snowshoeing
- Soccer
- [Special Olympics Fitness Videos](#)
- [Strength Training with Hand Weights](#)
  - Use resistance bands.
- Swimming
- [Tai chi](#)
- Volleyball
- Water aerobics
- Walking
  - Walk up and down the stairs in your home.
  - Walk laps at the local mall.
- Yoga and chair yoga
  - [Seated Yoga](#)
  - [Wheelchair Yoga](#)
  - [Yoga in My Wheelchair](#)
- [Workout at Home](#)
- [Virtual Hike Up Mt. Everest](#)



## Games

Playing games is a fun way to connect with others and explore new interests. Whether you prefer classic games or creating your own, there's something for everyone. Consider hosting a game night to strengthen your relationships with friends and family. You or a friend can take turns hosting these events. Games also offer educational benefits. You can improve problem-solving skills, critical thinking, and even spatial reasoning. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

### Board Games

- Checkers
- Chess
- Codenames
- Connect Four
- Mancala
- Monopoly
- Pictionary
- Rummikub
- Scrabble
- Snakes and Ladders
- Sorry

### Card Games

- Blackjack
- Crazy Eights
- Euchre
- Gin Rummy
- Go Fish
- Magic: The Gathering
- Phase 10
- Poker

- Solitaire
- Spades
- Uno
- War

## Dice Games

- Backgammon
- Boggle
- Bunco
- Dungeons and Dragons
- Farkle
- Left Right Center
- Liar's Dice
- Yahtzee

## Electronic Games

- Download free games on your cell phone, laptop, or tablet. Some of these games allow you to stream virtually with other players. However, be cautious when using a device for gaming, as some games cost money to play.
- Use [Meetup](#) to find organized gaming events in your local community. These might include card game nights, trivia nights, bingo playing, or many other types of leisure gaming.

## Other Games

- [Bottle bowling](#)
- [Cornhole](#)
- [DIY Jeopardy](#)
- [DIY Mad Libs](#)
- [Dominoes](#)
- [Escape Rooms](#)
- [Jenga](#)
- Jigsaw Puzzles
- [Ladder Toss](#)
- [Matching games](#)
- [Memory](#)
- [Pick up Sticks](#)
- [Scavenger hunts](#)
- [Scattergory Games](#)
- [Tic-tac-toe](#)
- [Twister](#)



# Money Management

Understanding money and finances is essential for everyone. The resources in this section can enhance your money management skills. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

## Learn About Money

- Play online games.
  - [Coin Identification Lesson](#)
  - [Counting Money](#)
  - [Counting with Coins](#)
  - [Credit Card Games](#)
  - [Interactive Debit Card Game](#)
  - [Practical Money Skills](#)
- Practice:
  - Adding up coins and dollar bills.
  - Paying for items using play money.
  - Counting money in board games like Monopoly.
  - Tracking your purchases.
  - Comparing prices.

## Basic Skills

- [Discover Banking and Money Management Apps](#)
- [Field Trip to a Bank](#)
- [Financial Football](#)
- Learn how to:
  - [Make A Budget](#)
  - [Save Money](#)
  - [Get a Debit Card](#)
  - [Save Money](#)

## Advanced Skills

- Calculate the costs of:
  - [Buying a Car](#)
  - [Saving for a Trip](#)
  - [Saving for College](#)
- [Dollars and Sense](#)
- [Free Finance Comic Books](#)
- [How Money Smart Are You?](#)
- [Learn about Credit](#)
- [PBS Credit](#)
- [Read About Saving Money](#)



## Music

You don't have to be musically inclined to enjoy music or musical activity. Music can help us relax, feel energized, and express emotions. Music can bring us back in time to a personal memory with others. Whether you play an instrument, or just enjoy listening, music is a fun activity to experience alone or with friends and family. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- Learn and practice body percussion.
  - [Body Percussion Interactive Lesson](#)
  - [Body Percussion Lesson/Activity](#)
- If you have a state waiver, a case manager can add music therapy to your plan of care. Ask your case manager about this option.
- [Connect with Garth Brooks](#).
- Learn music terms through glossaries. Glance through this [resource of terms](#).
- Host a:
  - Talent shows with friends, neighbors, and family. The talent show may be in-person or online.
  - Karaoke nights with friends, either in person or virtual.
    - [Karaoke Online](#)
- Join an online music community.
  - Experienced violinists can join [Trala on Discord](#).
  - To explore music genres, think about using [Discogs](#).
- Listen to music.
- Write your own music and songs.
- Mirror dancing to music is a form of exercise and a fun activity. Select a song to dance to, with one person being the 'leader.' The 'follower' must mirror their dance moves as well as they can.
- Play a musical instrument, whether it's a traditional one or something you've created yourself through an arts and crafts project.
  - [How to Play Piano \(Your First Piano Lesson\)](#)

- [Guitar Lessons for Beginners: Lesson 1](#)
- Play music-related games regularly throughout the month with friends, neighbors, or family, such as those listed below:
  - Name That Tune
  - Nintendo Wii Dance games (also great for exercise!)
  - Guess the Lyrics
  - Musical True or False
  - Name 5 Songs That Begin with the Letter
- Practice singing.
  - Sing along to songs on the radio.
  - Join your local church choir.
  - Find a [singing group in your area](#).
- Join virtual events.
  - [Rocky Mountain Virtual Music Festival](#)
  - [Stream Broadway Shows](#)
  - [Music-based Storytime for Children](#)
  - [Concerts \(live\)](#)
  - [3 Months of Free Guitar Lessons \(guitar, ukulele, bass\)](#)
  - [Tour the Rock and Roll Hall of Fame](#)





## Nature

Enjoy nature wherever you go! Explore your backyard, visit local parks, or gather a group for an outdoor adventure. Spending time in nature is both rewarding and relaxing. As the Greater Good Science Center at Berkeley found, nature can significantly improve your quality of life. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- Start bird watching.
  - [Identify Your Backyard Birds](#)
  - [Identify 84 Eastern USA Birds](#)
  - Install hummingbird feeders and watch the hummingbirds.
  - Join a bird-watching group (zoos have these). If you don't have one, START ONE!
  - Find books and videos to learn more about the birds in your area.
  - Use Cheerios and pipe cleaners to make bird feeders.
- Nurture houseplants, or plant a tree, flower garden, or vegetable patch every year. If space is limited, consider starting a community garden with neighbors.
- Check out bee collecting for making honey.
  - [How to Start Beekeeping In 2024](#)
  - Online courses are available and usually have a cost but may be worth your while ([one example](#)).
- Create a nature mobile to hang outdoors.
  - [Making a Nature Mobile](#)
  - [Nature Mobile Project](#)
- Eat outside when the weather permits.
- Gaze at the stars and constellations.
  - Download an app that will identify celestial bodies as you point it to the sky.
  - [How to Find Constellations](#)
    - [15 Famous Constellations You Can See in the Night Sky](#)
  - [What Are Stars and Constellations?](#)
- Schedule outdoor activities.
  - Camping.

- Hiking
- Picnics
- Meditate near a body of water. This could be a lake, ocean, swimming pool, or river.
- Try fishing and be sure to check if you need a fishing license.
- Local fruit picking events
- Join a local walking group.
- Join local harvest events and celebrations.
- Visit botanical gardens.
- Visit nearby zoos.
- Watch the sunrises and sunsets.
- Join your [Local 4H Fairgrounds](#) if you have one.
- Learn how to identify seashells and begin collecting them.
  - [How to Identify Shells](#)
- Learn more about plant species like mushrooms and edibles.
  - [How to Identify a Tree By Leaf, Bark, and Fruit](#)
  - [How to Identify Wild Plants](#)
- Learn about rock collecting and identifying different kinds of rocks.
  - [How to Identify Rocks](#)
- Learn how to identify insects.
  - [Insects & Bugs Vocabulary II](#)
  - Learn about insects through books or videos.
  - Learn how to take a picture of an insect with your cell phone, then identify the insect that way. You can always do a Google image search. There are insect identifier apps you can download to your cell phone like Google Lens.
- Learn more about space.
  - [NASA STEM Kids Virtual Events](#)
  - [Great Lakes Science Center](#)
  - [International Space Station](#)
  - Mars (360-degree view while learning about the planet and space exploration) - [360 Degree Views of Mars](#)
- [Nature and Habitats Resources](#)
- Spend time at your closest state park.
  - [Indiana Department of Natural Resources](#)
  - [Indiana State Park Map](#)
- Start a flower or leaf pressing hobby.
- Take photos of your favorite places in nature, then place them in a binder or collage.
  - [How to Press Flowers Fast: Quick Preservation](#)
  - [Learn How to Press Flowers in the Microwave](#)
- Start an aquarium.
  - [How to Set Up a Fishtank](#)
- Try mud painting.
  - [Mud Painting](#)

- [Mud Painting #2](#)
- Attend virtual tours.
  - [Virtual Farm Tours](#)
  - [Virtual Hawaii Tours](#)
  - [Virtual Trip to the Sun](#)
  - [Yosemite National Park Virtual Tour](#)
  - [National Park Virtual Tours](#)
  - [Mount Everest Trekking Tours](#)
- Volunteer at your local extension office if you have one.
- Watch cloud formations.
  - [Learn About the Types of Clouds](#)



## Self-Determination

Self-determination means taking control of your life. You can set your own goals, make decisions, and have a voice in all aspects of your daily life and future. This is also known as self-advocacy. Believing in yourself is empowering and unlocks endless possibilities. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- Create a [Personal Illustration \(Example on Pages 53-69\) or Portfolio](#) using the [Positive Personal Profile](#) approach.
- Connect with friends and family on Facetime, Skype, WhatsApp or Zoom.
- Create an online social group on Facebook, Instagram, LinkedIn, etc. Or join an online social group and interact with posts.
- Join an in-person social group that interests you.
- Lead an activity at church or a family gathering.
- Make a list of:
  - Things you'd like to accomplish.
  - Daily affirmations to say. Using the [MindTools Affirmations Toolkit](#).
  - Your strengths.
- Make a video speaking about your life and dreams for the future. Share it with others and your case manager.
- Set daily, weekly, monthly, and yearly goals.
- Schedule in-person visits with friends, family, and neighbors.

### LifeCourse Online Resources

- [LifeCourse Connect](#)
- [LifeCourse Connect Indiana](#)

- [Life Course Online Resources](#)
- [Quillo Connect: Connect with Others](#)
- Practice:
  - Making choices. For example, deciding to wear a red shirt or blue shirt to work.
  - Communicating your choices to others.
  - Requesting items at a restaurant or in a store.
  - Telling your story.

## **Practicing Self-Advocacy**

- [Adria's Notebook: Self-Advocacy Takes Practice](#)
- [I'm Determined Project](#)
- [NTACT Self-Advocacy Resources](#)
- [Self-Advocacy Course](#)
- [Self-Advocates of Indiana](#)
- [Self-Advocates of Indiana General Resources \(State and Local\)](#)
- [The Arc: Self-Advocacy](#)
- [The Ability Toolbox](#)



## Sports

You don't have to play sports to be interested in them. You can participate in a sport or be a fan of one. There are many ways to engage with sports, such as learning about different sporting events, following specific teams, or playing on a local team. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

- Ball tossing can become a competitive activity between two or more people. You can use a football, basketball, tennis ball, or another appropriate sports ball. Throw the ball back and forth while keeping score!
- Explore a [list of sports](#) and decide which ones look interesting to you. Choose a few that excite you. Watch these games on television through ESPN Sports Center, Fox Sports Live, or YouTube. If you have friends who follow the same sport, arrange a get-together so you can enjoy the sporting event with others.
  - Once you have identified a sport you are interested in, think about using cellphone apps like [Bleacher Report](#) or [Grantland](#) to learn more about the best players, different leagues, history of the sport, and game times.
- Hiking promotes cardiovascular health and muscle strength. Use your internet browser's search bar to locate hiking trails in your area. Just type "find a hiking trail near me."
- Running improves bone health and mental wellness. Use your internet browser's search bar to locate a running track in your area. Just type "find a running track near me."
- [Yoga](#) improves flexibility and body posture. Explore [adaptive yoga](#) and [chair yoga](#).
- If you are interested in being a Special Olympics athlete or following them, find a [Special Olympics chapter](#) closest to where you live.
- Unified Sports may be another way to participate in sports. Click this [unified sports link](#) to learn more.
- Trivia nights are a fantastic way to have fun, compete with friends, and meet new people. Your local community may host trivia nights. You can also [host your own trivia night at or home or a local venue!](#)

- Make predicting the winner a fun competition with friends. Use video clips to relive past races and predict the winners. Keep the score as you go. The player with the most correct predictions is the winner!

## Adapted Sports Resources

- Explore the availability of [adapted sports](#). Many sports can be adapted to accommodate the impacts of disability. These include basketball, boccia, cycling, fencing, football, goalball, weightlifting, judo, swimming, and archery.
- Find other adapted sports you can play even if you have a disability. You may find an organized team, or you can create a team in your community. These adapted sports might include:
  - [Bowling](#)
  - [Dance](#)
  - [Golf](#)
  - [Horseback riding](#)
  - [Paddling](#)
  - [Powerchair football](#)
  - [Sailing](#)
  - [Sitting volleyball](#)
  - [Snow skiing](#)
  - [Table tennis](#)
  - [Tennis](#)



## Story Time

Reading independently or being read to is a relaxing and educational way to spend free time. You can also read alone or with friends, such as in book clubs, which build social connections. Assistive technology has made reading even more accessible for people with disabilities. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

### Assistive Technology Resources

Remember that you can use assistive technology for reading-related activities. According to the [Glaucoma Research Foundation](#) (2024), assistive technology to help with reading include:

- [KNFB Reader](#) is a mobile app for blind, low-vision, dyslexic, and other print-disabled users that converts text to speech or text to Braille.
- [LookTel Recognizer](#) is a mobile app that uses advanced image recognition technology to identify everyday objects, allowing you to navigate surroundings independently.
- Eschenbach Optik of America and [Telesensory](#) offer portable magnifiers.
- [The American Federation for the Blind](#) houses a comprehensive list of assistive technology products, which may be used for reading-related activities.

### Audiobook Resources

Many free electronic, audiobook, and music options are available. Enjoying audiobooks can be a solitary or group activity. Explore the following resources.

- [Bookshare](#), [Project Gutenberg](#), and [LD Resources Foundation, Inc.](#), offer free online eBooks, including textbooks, for people with a documented reading disability.
- [HathiTrust](#) is a wonderful site for exploring historical or subject-specific information. Their website offers vast collections of material that is accessible to people with print disabilities. Users can request accessible text for any content.
- [Internet Archive](#) is an online non-profit library. Their [audio archive collection](#) is impressive!
- [LibriVox](#) offers free public domain audiobooks.
- [National Library Service for the Blind and Print Disabled](#) is a free service offering talking books, magazines, and musical material. Downloading books in Braille and Auto Reading formats is



available across a wide variety of topical content. This service is available through a website and mobile app and uses the acronym [BARD](#).

### Share Stories with Friends

- Host or join a virtual book club. Use platforms like Zoom, Skype, or Facebook Live to connect with friends, neighbors, or church acquaintances. Take turns hosting the book reading sessions.
- Use [Storyline Online](#) to select a book. These books are narrated by celebrity actors on YouTube. This platform is operated by the SAG-AFTRA Foundation.
- Visit [your community library](#) to browse through their book collections and discover other programs that align with your interests.
- You can also [find a book club in your local community](#).

### Tell Your Story

- Write stories. This is also an opportunity to create your own adventures, fairy tales, or other narratives.
- Gather around a fire with friends and share campfire stories.
- Participate in “Remember when” conversations with family.
- Share your personal story through a video, PowerPoint presentation, or verbal discussion.

### Practice Your Reading Skills

- Enroll in a reading course at your local library or college.
- Get personalized support and learn the basics from a reading tutor.
- Use YouTube videos for additional support.
  - [FatCatBooks'](#) video lessons to make reading fun!
  - [Jack Hartmann's videos](#) to practice letter sounds.
  - [Practice reading words](#).
  - [Practice with 3 letter words](#).
- Practice reading in your everyday life. Include road signs, labels, and directions.



# Technology

Technology offers opportunities to stay connected and engage with others, making it easier to maintain relationships and build new ones. Whether you use a computer, a smartphone, or an iPad, there are many ways to use technology for work and entertainment. Assistive technology and devices are designed to support daily living activities and can increase, maintain, or improve functional abilities. These technologies range from simple, low-tech solutions to advanced, high-tech options, and many are free. Select activities from the list below to create a meaningful week for yourself.

## Explore Assistive Technology

- [BridgingAPPS](#) contains information about assistive technology designed to meet a specific need. Browse their collection to learn more.
- [Explore AT](#) provides a free collection of information and resources on assistive technologies.
  - [Indiana Assistive Technology Act Project \(INDATA\)](#) offers device demonstration, device loaning, equipment reutilization, and recycled computer programs.
- [Explore Google's accessibility features and products](#) for resources that support cognitive, hearing, mobility, speech, and vision disabilities.
- [iAccessibility](#) is a collection of accessibility resources for Apple devices.
- [Job Accommodation Network](#) offers free consultations related to job accommodation for people with disabilities.
- [National Rehabilitation Information Center](#) provides assistive technology-related resources for home modification and universal design.

## Entertainment

- Go on digital field trips.
  - [Discovery Education Library](#)
  - [Virtual Disney Rides](#)
  - [Virtual Haunted Mansion](#)
  - [Power Plant Tour](#)

- Create a YouTube channel and make videos.
- Download social media apps to connect with friends or family.
- Download mobile and web games.
  - Console Games (Nintendo Wii, PlayStation, Xbox, etc.)
  - [PBS Kids](#)
  - Puzzle Apps

## Daily Routine

- Leverage voice-controlled personal assistants like Siri for hands-free tasks.
- Plan daily activities and appointments on a calendar.
- Track physical activity on a fitness app.
- Use a digital alarm clock to improve punctuality.
- Log daily food intake in a meal tracker app.

## Work and Professional Development

- Advertise your employment services on social media.
- Design and build a website for your business.
- Network with potential customers.
- Practice email etiquette by writing and sending professional emails.
- Use assistive technology to improve or maintain your work performance.



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