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## Adults with Developmental Disabilities' Personal Hygiene

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Running Head: ADULTS WITH DEVELOPMENTAL DISABILITIES' PERSONAL  
HYGIENE

Adults with Developmental Disabilities' Personal Hygiene

Petra Rocha-Martinez

A Capstone project for the Bachelor of Arts in Human Development and Family Studies

## Adults with Developmental Disabilities' Personal Hygiene

### **Introduction**

Adults with intellectual disabilities often lack personal hygiene skills such as teeth brushing, hand washing, hair combing and washing, as well as "regular" showering. Although, there are various reasons for this, which may include, the lack of ability (physical or mental), attention, memory, behavioral or sensory problems, personal hygiene for adults is a vital life skill to possess to be successful in life. In order to address this issue, I created a two-day lesson for adults with intellectual disabilities receiving services through Community Life Services in Watsonville, California, which intends to increase this population's knowledge on personal hygiene and the importance of correctly performing it on a regular basis.

### **Needs Statement**

Adults with intellectual disabilities may have difficulties maintaining their personal hygiene such as teeth brushing, hand washing, hair combing and washing, as well as regular showering. Personal care tasks may also include hair care, applying deodorant, dressing and undressing without assistance, and using proper hygiene methods for toileting. Given that individuals with Intellectual disabilities typically have general mental abilities that affect functioning in intellectual and adaptive functioning (American Psychiatric Association, 2020), they may have trouble accomplishing personal hygiene activities without support for community interactions and may require constant reminders and modeling behaviors. Personal hygiene is a basic activity of daily living, which is considered a care activity for basic needs, and is a common goal for individuals with intellectual disability to live as independently as possible.

Some health challenges that affect adults with developmental disabilities from maintaining their personal hygiene are: mental capabilities, behavior problems, mobility problems, and visual and hearing impairments (Developmental Disabilities & Oral Health 2020). Mental capabilities may have an impact upon how well someone can follow directions. Behavior problems can complicate personal hygiene care when it causes the person to be uncooperative. Mobility problems may require a person to use assistive equipment (i.e wheelchair, walker, etc.) and special assistance from an adult, such as a caregiver.

Adults with intellectual disabilities often struggle to wash their hands properly, a common hygiene skill. Adults with intellectual disabilities can be taught to properly wash their hands using various methods. One method is using images with step-by-step visual instructions (Saloviita, 2000). Written memory aids and visual cues (i.e., picture instructions) can be useful when teaching adults with intellectual disabilities about daily living activities (Saloviita, 2000).

Adults with intellectual disabilities often have poor oral hygiene. These individuals may lack the ability in consequence of having poor memory or lack of attention span. Health challenges that may affect an adult with developmental disabilities oral hygiene include, mental capabilities, behavior problems, mobility problems, gastroesophageal reflux, and visual and hearing impairments (Developmental Disabilities & Oral Health, 2020). Adult's mental capabilities vary from individual to individual, but can affect how well they can follow prompts given from personnel or caregivers while at the dentist's office or at home. Behavior problems such as anxiety may cause a person to be uncooperative during dental treatment or teeth brushing. Mobility problems may require

assistive equipment which may need special arrangements and extra assistance while brushing their teeth. Gastroesophageal reflux can affect people with central nervous system disorders, which may cause teeth to be sensitive or display signs of erosion. Visual and hearing impairments may also be present in people with developmental disabilities, which can complicate the process of properly brushing the teeth.

Another personal hygiene skill that adults with developmental disabilities lack is proper showering. Cognitive-behavioral training which includes images with step-by-step visual instructions and written memory aids and visual cues can be beneficial when trying to improve an adult with developmental disabilities showering pattern (Saloviita, 2000). Cognitive-behavioral training is proven to be fast and effective (Saloviita, 2000). When using this method it is also important to use verbal praises with the participants for them to know they are doing a good job at the specific personal hygiene task.

Given that the hygiene skills of adults with intellectual disabilities are of concern, I have created a two-day interactive lesson on hygiene habits for the adults with intellectual disabilities receiving services through Community Life Services in Watsonville, California. I will be modeling, teaching and showing the participants what good personal hygiene looks like and the importance of maintaining personal hygiene, in order to increase their knowledge and change the way they perform their current personal hygiene habits.

## **Theory**

The learning theory that applies to my project is Bandura's Social Learning Theory which includes learning through observation, imitation and modeling. Factors that influence human behavior include the environment in which a person is raised, genetics, culture and the community. This means that your parents, family, friends, teachers, classmates and people you are around can influence how you behave. This is particularly important when working with adults with developmental disabilities because depending on who they are around and how they are contributing to their daily routines is how they are going to learn how to perform various tasks. For example, if these adults with developmental disabilities depended on helping caregivers/adults when they were children/adolescents, then it will be no different once they reach adult age. On the other hand, if these adults with developmental disabilities were independent and received some support and guidance when they were children/adolescents, then when they reach adult age they will be able to perform the same activities independently or with some support and guidance. This theory is linked to my project because in my project I will be teaching personal hygiene methods by modeling to them how to properly perform each. The participants will learn by observation when they view each of the videos that I will be showing. Each participant will then demonstrate how to correctly perform the personal hygiene task by imitating what they just observed in each video.

### **Consideration of Diversity**

My project will be conducted at Community Life Services in Watsonville, California. The ethnic composition of the participants ought to reflect that of the city of Watsonville. According to Applied Geographic Solutions (AGC, 2020), Watsonville

consists of 10.93% White, 0.49% Black, 0.24% American Indian, 3.02% Asian, 0.03% Pacific Islander, 0.11% Other (Non-Hispanic,) 0.83% Multirace and 84.33% Hispanic. I would expect that the participants would especially reflect three ethnicities, such as, that of White, Asian and Hispanic. As a result, it is possible that the participants may not represent the entire community of adults with developmental disabilities.

The participants will have to be English proficient enough to understand the lesson and learn about the subject since I will be conducting the lessons in English. This project is geared towards adults with intellectual disabilities with high intellectual and adaptive functioning.

### **Learning Outcomes**

I intend to provide a two day lesson to adults with intellectual disabilities that receive services through Community Life Services.

By the end of my project, participants will be able to:

1. Identify at least three important personal hygiene habits
2. Distinguish personal hygiene habits from non-hygienic ones, by circling the appropriate on a sheet of paper provided
3. Indicate one hygiene habit in which they will personally engage

### **Method**

#### **Day 1**

First, I reminded the participants of my name and then I explained to them why I had gathered them. Then I handed out a sheet that served as a pre-test, which consisted of a list of 15 hygiene tasks and participants were asked to place a

checkmark on the box that shows how often they should complete each task, which included: all the time, once or twice daily, once in a while or never. After the pre-test, I provided a brief discussion on the importance of personal hygiene. Then, I showed the video: <https://youtu.be/jQ2e0KH5WrI>. Then, I led a discussion on what personal hygiene tasks are and why it is important to perform each of them.

## **Day 2**

The first thing I did today was show the video: <https://youtu.be/l6XGE-Xuq3M>, which shows how to properly wash your hands, shower and brush your teeth. Then, I led a discussion of what they had comprehended from the video and asked them to demonstrate what they had learned. After that, I provided the participants with three personal hygiene checklists they could use to make sure they are performing each personal hygiene task and to monitor how often they are performing them. Then, I handed out a sheet that served as a post-test, which consisted of a list of 15 hygiene tasks and participants were asked to place a checkmark on the box that shows how often they should complete each task, which included: all the time, once or twice daily, once in a while or never. Then, I provided a worksheet where each participant distinguished personal hygiene habits from non-hygienic ones by circling the appropriate. Lastly, I provided a print of a pledge to maintain personal hygiene where each participant would place their name and indicate one personal hygiene habit in which they would engage in. Then they would take this printed pledge home to serve as a reminder that they took the pledge to maintain personal hygiene.

## **Results**



Results could not be completed due to COVID-19

**Discussion**

Discussion could not be completed due to COVID-19

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*Table 1*

✕

# HYGIENE - HOW OFTEN?

🔍
📄
🔖



**Place a checkmark  
under how often  
you think you  
should complete  
each of the  
hygiene tasks on  
the list!**


**ALL THE TIME!**

**ONCE OR TWICE DAILY!**

**ONCE IN A WHILE!**

**NEVER!**

1	BRUSHING YOUR TEETH				
2	PUTTING ON DEODORANT				
3	WIPING WELL AFTER USING THE TOILET				
4	CLIPPING YOUR FINGERNAILS				
5	WEARING DIRTY AND SMELLY CLOTHES				
6	CHANGING YOUR UNDERWEAR				
7	TAKING A BATH OR A SHOWER				
8	LETTING PEOPLE SMELL YOUR BODY ODOR				
9	CLEANING OUT YOUR EARS				
10	WASHING YOUR HAIR AND KEEPING IT NEAT				
11	WEARING STINKY SHOES				
12	WIPING YOUR BOOGERS ON YOUR SHIRT				
13	COVERING YOUR MOUTH WHEN COUGHING				
14	BITING OFF AND CHEWING YOUR FINGERNAILS				
15	WASHING YOUR HANDS WHEN THEY'RE DIRTY				



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Table 2

# Personal Hygiene



Task	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat	Sun
Brush teeth in the morning	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash face	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Get dressed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brush hair	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Change clothes when dirty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Wash hands after going potty	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Use tissue to sneeze/blow nose	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Clean ears	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Brush teeth before bed	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Table 3

Hygiene Checklist		
Example Task /	Task	Picture
	Shower	
	Brush Teeth	
	Comb/Brush Hair	
	Put on Deodorant	
	Wear Clean Clothes in Good Repair	
	Shave if Necessary	
	Change Feminine Hygiene Product Every 2-3 Hours if Needed	

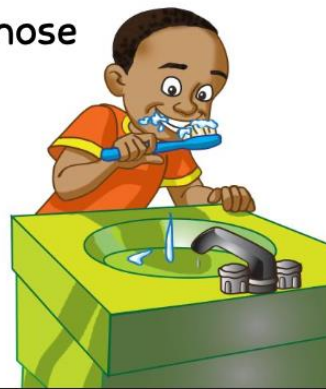
Figure 1



## Daily Hygiene Checklist

- Brush my teeth in the morning
- Wear clothes that don't smell
- Make sure my shoes don't smell
- Use deodorant
- Wash my body and clean everywhere
- Make sure that my hair is neat
- Cover my mouth when I cough or sneeze
- Wipe well after using the bathroom
- Brush and floss before bed
- Wash my hands before eating
- Keep my nails trimmed
- Use a tissue to blow my nose

**HYGIENE IS VERY IMPORTANT!  
YOU WANT TO MAKE SURE THAT  
YOU'RE KEEPING YOURSELF CLEAN  
AND HEALTHY EVERY DAY.**






✕

# HYGIENE - HOW OFTEN?

🔍
📄
🔖



**Place a checkmark  
under how often  
you think you  
should complete  
each of the  
hygiene tasks on  
the list!**


**ALL THE TIME!**

**ONCE OR TWICE DAILY!**

**ONCE IN A WHILE!**

**NEVER!**

1	BRUSHING YOUR TEETH				
2	PUTTING ON DEODORANT				
3	WIPING WELL AFTER USING THE TOILET				
4	CLIPPING YOUR FINGERNAILS				
5	WEARING DIRTY AND SMELLY CLOTHES				
6	CHANGING YOUR UNDERWEAR				
7	TAKING A BATH OR A SHOWER				
8	LETTING PEOPLE SMELL YOUR BODY ODOR				
9	CLEANING OUT YOUR EARS				
10	WASHING YOUR HAIR AND KEEPING IT NEAT				
11	WEARING STINKY SHOES				
12	WIPING YOUR BOOGERS ON YOUR SHIRT				
13	COVERING YOUR MOUTH WHEN COUGHING				
14	BITING OFF AND CHEWING YOUR FINGERNAILS				
15	WASHING YOUR HANDS WHEN THEY'RE DIRTY				



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Summary Sheet to achieve Learning Outcome 1

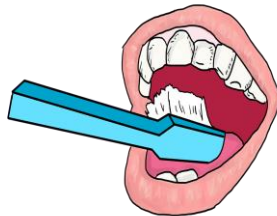
Summary Sheet

List three personal hygiene habits

- 1. \_\_\_\_\_
- 2. \_\_\_\_\_
- 3. \_\_\_\_\_

Appendix C

Distinguish personal hygiene habits from non-hygienic ones, by circling the appropriate to meet Learning Outcome 2



Appendix D

Pledge, Write Your Name and Indicate one personal hygiene habit in which you will engage in

Learning outcome 3



# Adults With Developmental Disabilities' Personal Hygiene

By: Petra Rocha

## Need Statement

- Adults with intellectual disabilities may have difficulties maintaining their personal hygiene such as teeth brushing, hand washing, hair combing and washing, as well as "regular" showering.
- Adults with intellectual disabilities often struggle to wash their hands properly
- Reasons may include, the lack of ability, attention, or memory or proper instruction

## Bandura's Social Learning Theory

- Learn through observational learning, imitation, and modeling
- Interactions between behaviors, personal factors and the environment
- Behavior- complexity, duration, skill, etc
- Environment- situation, roles, models or relationships
- Person-cognition, self-efficacy, motives and personality

## Learning Outcomes

**By the end of my project, participants (adults with intellectual disabilities) will be able to ...**

1. Identify at least three important personal hygiene habits
2. Distinguish personal hygiene habits from non-hygienic ones, by circling the appropriate on a sheet of paper provided
3. Indicate one hygiene habit in which they will personally engage

## Methods:What? Whom? Where?

- 2 day lesson plan
- 4-5 adults with developmental disabilities

- Community Life Services, Watsonville CA

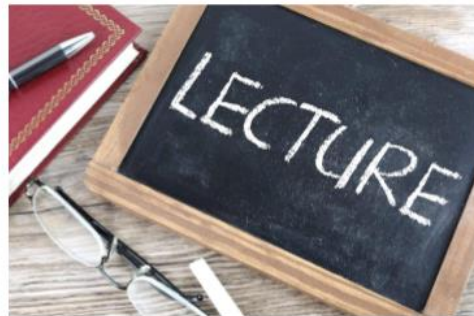


## Day 1

**HYGIENE - HOW OFTEN?**

Place a checkmark under how often you think you should complete each of the hygiene tasks on the list!

	ALL THE TIME	SOME OF THE TIME	SOMETIMES	NEVER
1 BRUSHING YOUR TEETH				
2 PUTTING ON DEODORANT				
3 WASHING HALL AFTER USING THE TOILET				
4 CLIPPING YOUR FINGERS/NAILS				
5 WASHING DIRTY AND SMELLY CLOTHES				
6 CHANGING YOUR UNDERWEAR				
7 TAKING A BATH OR A SHOWER				
8 LETTING PEOPLE SMELL YOUR BODY/FEET				
9 CLEANING UP YOUR HOME				
10 BRUSHING YOUR HAIR AND COMbing IT NEAT				
11 WEARING STRIPY SHOES				
12 WASHING YOUR HANDS ON YOUR SHIRT				
13 CHANGING YOUR NAILTY UNDER CLOTHING				
14 BRUSHING AND COMbing YOUR HAIR/HAIR				
15 WASHING YOUR HAIR WHEN THEY'RE DIRTY				



Pre-Test

Importance of Personal Hygiene

Discussion



## Day 2



Hygiene Habits for Kids - Compilation - Handwashing, Personal Hygiene and Too...



Video

Comprehension Discussion/Worksheets

Post-Test/Pledge

## Results

Results could not be completed due to COVID-19

## Discussion

Discussion could not be completed due to COVID-19

## Thank You



**Questions or Comments**