

Adaptive & Life Skills IEP Goals — Preschool & Pre-K

14 measurable goals written to IDEA standards. Replace [student] and [date]; adjust criteria to the student's baseline.

Self-care goals at this age should track how much physical prompting is fading, not just whether the step got done — a student who needs hand-over-hand help for handwashing is on a different trajectory than one who just needs a verbal reminder.

SELF-CARE & HYGIENE

1. [student] will wash and dry their hands independently following a visual sequence, with 80% accuracy across 4 of 5 trials.
2. [student] will complete a simple toileting routine (pull pants down/up, flush, wash hands) with no more than 1 physical prompt, across 4 of 5 opportunities.
3. [student] will use a tissue to wipe their nose and dispose of it independently, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
4. [student] will put on and take off a simple clothing item (jacket, shoes) with 80% independence, across 4 of 5 trials.

EATING & MEALTIME

5. [student] will use a utensil to self-feed for the majority of a meal, with no more than 1 physical prompt, across 4 of 5 observed meals.
6. [student] will open a familiar food or snack package with minimal adult help, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
7. [student] will clean up their own space after eating (throw away trash, push in chair) with 1 or fewer reminders, across 4 of 5 observed opportunities.

ROUTINES & CLASSROOM RESPONSIBILITY

8. [student] will follow a picture or visual daily schedule with no more than 1 redirection per transition, across 3 consecutive observations.
9. [student] will put away personal belongings (backpack, coat) in the designated spot independently, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
10. [student] will complete a simple 1-step classroom job with adult supervision, in 4 of 5 opportunities.

SAFETY AWARENESS

11. [student] will stop and wait when hearing “stop” from an adult during an outdoor or transition activity, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
12. [student] will identify unsafe items or actions (hot, sharp) when shown a picture, with 75% accuracy across 4 of 5 trials.
13. [student] will hold an adult's hand or stay within a designated boundary during a walking transition, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.
14. [student] will indicate, using a word, sign, or gesture, when they need help with a self-care task, in 4 of 5 observed opportunities.

Using These Life Skills Goals at Preschool & Pre-K

Track the fade, not just the finish

Note how much physical or verbal prompting a self-care step still needs — that's the number that actually shows progress.

Break a routine into its smallest steps

Handwashing has 5 or 6 discrete steps; a single “completes handwashing” goal hides which one is still hard.

Requesting help is itself a life skill

A student who indicates “I need help” with a task is practicing independence, even while still needing support.

Safety awareness starts with recognizing, not avoiding

Identifying a hot stove as unsafe in a picture comes before reliably avoiding a real one — teach the recognition step explicitly.

Every criterion here (4 of 5, 80%) is a placeholder — set the real numbers from this student's own baseline, tracked step by step.

Tired of rebuilding these forms every year?

IEP Goal Writer also drafts your PLAAFP and progress notes from the same student profile — free to try at iepgoalwriter.pro