



Adapting the LIFE Program © for a New IADL: Supporting Self-Efficacy in Young Adults with Down syndrome (DS)

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Background:

- Young adults with DS often face decreased activity, anxiety, depression, and reduced self-efficacy once structured support ends (Moran et al., 2022; Danon et al., 2024; Merzbach et al., 2024).
- Traditional transition programs focus narrowly on cognition only and/or employment, lacking holistic or integrated approaches.

Literature Review:

- DS impacts multiple systems, causing cognitive delays, sensory differences, & health issues (Antonarakis et al., 2021; Lorenzon et al., 2023).
- Executive functioning (EF) is affected, complicating daily activities, especially during life transitions (Fogel et al., 2020; Garcia-Pintor et al., 2023).
- DS characteristics vary greatly; no single intervention fits all (Grieco et al., 2015; Lorenzon et al., 2023).
- Living Independently Is For Everyone (LIFE) program © helped young adults with DS improve their shopping skills, reduce caregiver reliance, and build autonomy (O'Neill & Gutman, 2020).
- Metacognitive strategies target EF challenges by teaching individuals to plan, monitor, and adjust their actions (O'Neill & Gutman, 2020).

Objective:

- Adapt the LIFE program © using a multifaceted approach.
- Evaluate improvement in participation, self-efficacy, and independence

Methods:

A **quality improvement project** using a mixed methods approach (quantitative/qualitative) for the Club DREAMS Life Skills Program.

Phase 1: Holistic Needs Assessment

- Interviews, surveys, occupational profile (6x participants, ages 18-27, DS)
- Wellness Workshop/Life Skill Selection (Meal Prep/Cooking)

Phase 2: Pilot Program (8-weeks)

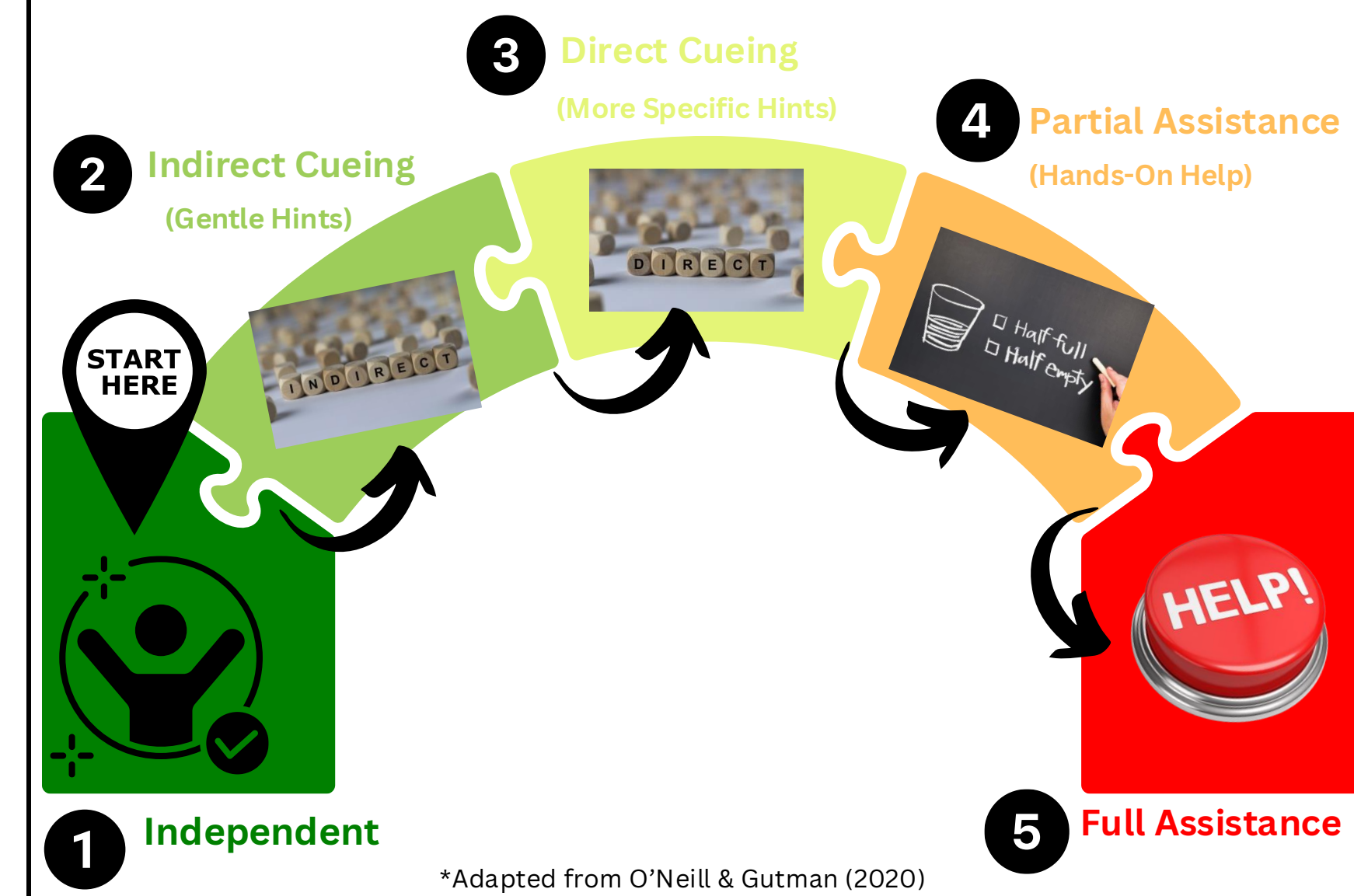
- Alternate Group-Individual format
- Using Metacognitive Strategies
- Pre/Post Assessments/Performance evaluation

Phase 3: Collaborative Wrap-Up & Sustainability

- Caregiver training/coaching & Staff Training Video
 - Video features participants
- Feedback from all stakeholders



Metacognitive Strategies:



Conclusion:

- Results suggest a multifaceted adaptation of the **LIFE program** © may address critical gaps in transition support for young adults with DS.
- Strengthening **self-efficacy** can improve participation and overall quality of life for this population.
- Future quality improvement cycles could refine these methods and explore scalability across community-based settings or other life skills using this protocol.

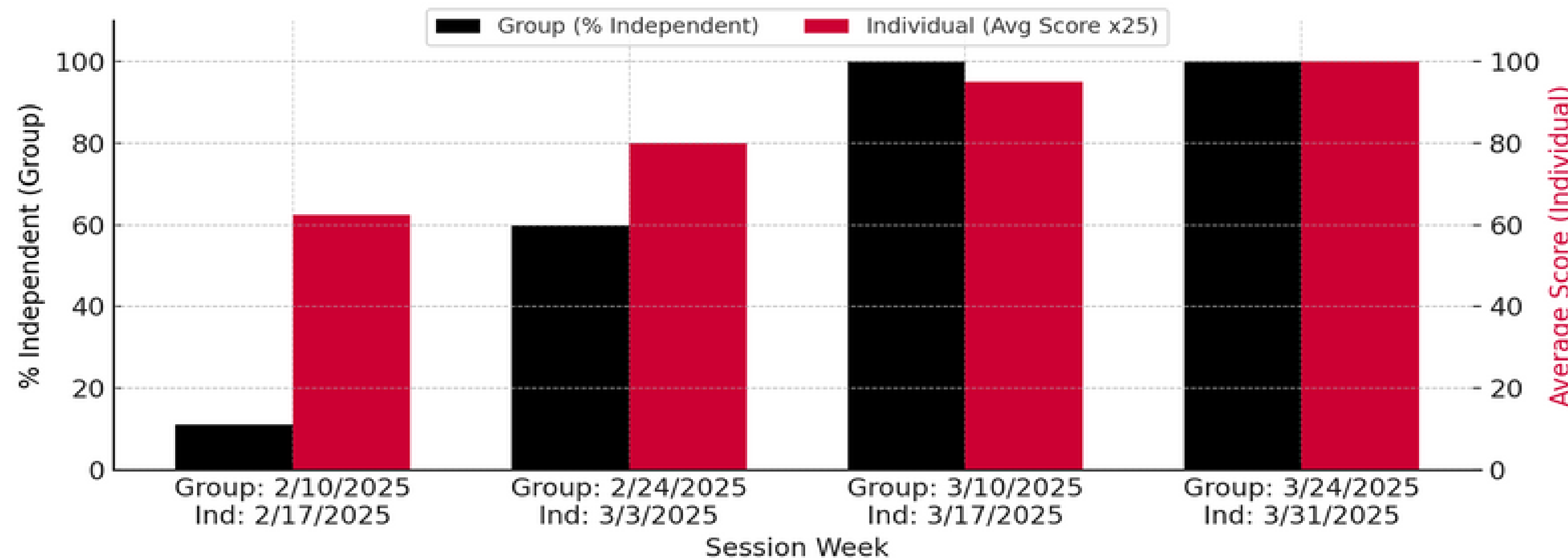
References:



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Results

Figure: Improved Performance Over Time



Qualitative Feedback/Themes

- Confidence & Independence:** "Fear of stovetop and oven disappeared"; "Capable"; "Able to figure things out"; "Helped believe in their own abilities" What did you like most? "Cooking for self"
- Transformative Role of OT:** "Personalized"; "Focused on strengths"; "So valuable to have a trained OT doing this"
- High program satisfaction:** "Very Valuable!"; "Fun!"; "Wish we could keep going"; "Would love to do this again"
- Effectiveness of Visual & Metacognitive Supports:** "Easy to use"; "Great strategy"; "Very likely to use"; "Helpful"

Table: Improved Self-Efficacy

Date	Total Avg Score (out of 40)
2/24/25 (Pre)	30.18
4/3/25 (Post)	33.22 (+3.04)