

*This edition of Building Bright Futures is focused on how the Center For Learning (CFL) Renovation Project is creating new space for the enhancement of our Life Skills Development Program. In keeping with our agency's core belief that children and adults with developmental disabilities have the right to realize their fullest potential and live as independently as possible, the creation of an expanded Life Skills program positions us to support that goal.*

## LIFE SKILLS DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

### What are Life Skills?

The phrase Life Skills development refers to a variety of skills that support students with disabilities to achieve their greatest level of independence through school and into transition. These skills can be categorized as:

- **Self-Care Skills** – Personal hygiene, including teeth brushing, toileting, bathing, dressing, meal preparation, cleaning, and laundry.
- **Functional Academic Skills** – Includes telling time, counting money, following directions, reading signs.
- **Social Communication Skills** – These include proper greetings, behavior supports, social context.
- **Self-Regulation Skills** – Broadly includes staying on task, communicating needs appropriately, etc.

For educators, one of the most crucial goals is to prepare students to become fully participating members of their communities. Students with significant challenges may not learn as quickly from modeling as their peers may and having this dedicated space allows for more intensive hand over hand training and prompting to allow practice to become successful.



*Facilities are available for teaching students how to do laundry.*

### Life Skills Development Room

Upon completion of the CFL Renovation Project, for the first time, there will be a space designed specifically for the teaching of Life Skills to our students. Within this new room will be a "mock" apartment, allowing staff to immerse students in a realistic, self-determined environment. The apartment setting will include a kitchen, laundry room, bathroom, and bedroom where students will learn independent living skills. Students with significant challenges do not learn quickly from modeling as their peers may, having this dedicated space allows for more intensive training.

The classroom will provide opportunities to focus on specialized curriculum, such as:

- Students will learn how to perform basic housekeeping tasks.
- In the kitchen, students will plan and prepare meals, and follow recipes.
- Students will have the opportunity to practice appropriate grooming and hygiene.
- Training on how to dress appropriately.
- Students will learn how to safely clean food preparation areas.
- Facilities will be available to teach students how to properly do laundry.

These are just a few examples of the exciting new teaching opportunities that are available to the CFL. The staff will be able to help our students learn how to use environmental controls and increase their participation in daily life.

*“Overall, our goal is for our students to be productive citizens and to be as independent as possible in their home, leisure and work life,” explains Cathleen Voyer, Aspire Vice President of Education Services. “Every aspect of this program is geared towards helping our students reach their highest potential.”*

*Top right: The interior office space is being studded.*

*Bottom: The exterior of the new Administration wing and the central entrance is quickly taking shape.*



**NEXT ISSUE:** *Includes information on the new Therapy Rooms and Health and Fitness Area.*