

# SAHK

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**Introduction:** In addition to difficulties in acquiring the required skills, students with cerebral palsy (CP) often lack confidence and competency in instrumental daily-living tasks (e.g., cooking, shopping and travelling). There is strong evidence that contextual-learning and task-specific training are effective for functional gain for individuals with CP, reinforcing the fundamental role of meaningful and intended learning within the Conductive Education (CE) context.

**Aim:** This study aims at developing and evaluating a “Living Skill Training Program” by using a Contextual Learning Approach, to increase the students’ skills, confidence and competency in independent living, in a special school under the CE system.

**Methods:** Ten students with CP, aged 16-20 years with mild intellectual disabilities and functioning at GMFCS level II-IV, were recruited. The program was jointly developed and implemented by CE-trained special teachers and therapists.

Participants were divided into “Cooking” and “Community-Dining” groups based on their functioning levels. Participants of the Cooking group planned their recipe and budget, commuted to wet market for ingredients, followed by cooking and table setting. They would eat their own cooked dishes, followed by dish washing and tidying up. For the Community-Dining group, participants should find their way to pre-determined restaurants, learn to properly ordering food in their own way and finish their lunch there. All participants reviewed their performance during evaluation sessions and revise their planning accordingly.

Components of the Program were permeated into other curriculum areas and therapeutic sessions. For instances, training of communication skills were organized during Chinese Language lesson and speech therapy while budgeting was revisited in Mathematics lesson.

**Results:** Improved cooking, self-management and organization skills with heightened responsibility were observed in the Cooking group. Two participants demonstrated improved leadership in guiding their classmates. For the Community-Dining group, all demonstrated improved confidence in communicating with strangers and actively sought help from them. Better problem solving and more independence to commute and dining in restaurants were found.

**Conclusion:** Cross-discipline collaboration for contextual and task-specific living skill training in a structured curriculum and rehabilitation can effectively facilitate students’ self-determination for independence and community integration.



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