

# **Holding On and Letting Go: Developing Independence in Your Teen and Young Adult Child**

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- Introductions
- 4 stories
- If you've met one, you've met one...
- What's a mother (or father) to do
- Discussion

# Holding on and letting go

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- Introduction
- How old is your child?
  - ☐ Younger than age 14
  - ☐ 14-17
  - ☐ 18-22
  - ☐ Over age 22

# Introductions

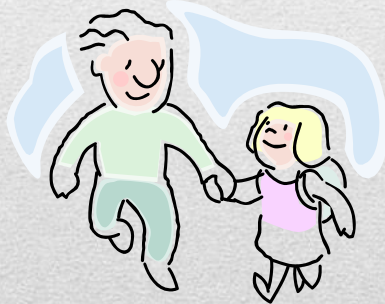
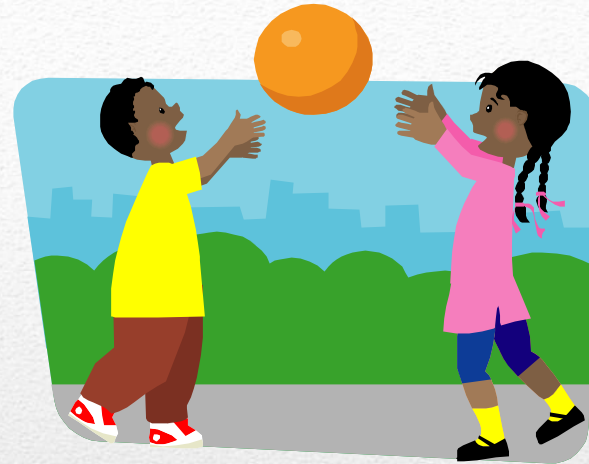
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# Sheldon grows up

4





# 4 stories

- AS is a developmental delay.
- People with AS learn explicitly what neurotypicals learn intuitively.
- At age 18, adults with disabilities are still adults with the same rights (and responsibilities) as other adults.
- “When you’ve met one person with Asperger Syndrome— you’ve met one person with Asperger Syndrome!”

Stephen M. Shore, Ed.D.

Author, Professor, Musician, Adult on the Autism Spectrum

# If you’ve met one...

6



- It's a process
- It doesn't end



# If you've met one...

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# Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy

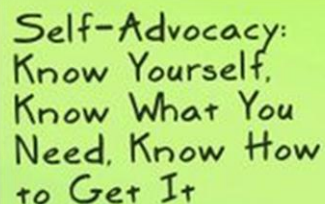


## So What's a Parent to Do?

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# Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy



Self-Advocacy:  
Know Yourself,  
Know What You  
Need, Know How  
to Get It

- Successful adults are able to understand the issues that are problematic for themselves and to respond appropriately.
- Parents need to help their transitioning adults to understand the nature of their challenges and the kinds of supports that they require.

## So What's a Parent to do?

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# Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy



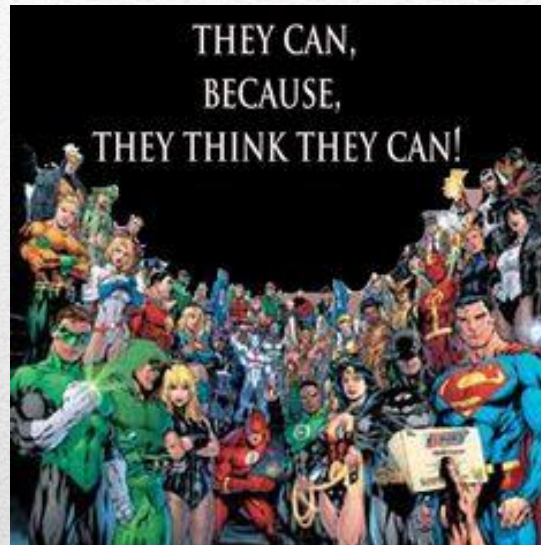
- Strategic Partial Disclosure

## So What's a Parent to do?

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# Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy



- Denial and Disclosure

## So What's a Parent to do?

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## Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy



- “Nothing About Us, Without Us!” ASAN

# So What's a Parent to do?

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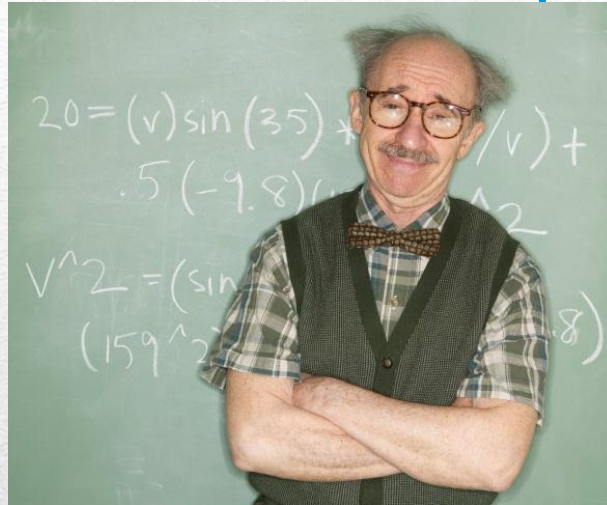


- How would you describe the role you play in your child's life right now:
  - ☐ Helicopter parent doesn't begin to describe it
  - ☐ I check in every day and do his/her laundry
  - ☐ It's a balancing act- reaching out and holding back
  - ☐ I'm there when s/he calls
  - ☐ There is no room for me in my child's life

## Poll #2

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Hire a “disinterested third party”



- Bring in the professionals: life skills coaches, employment consultants, academic supports
- Preserve the parental relationship

# So What's a Parent to Do

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# Hire a “disinterested third party”

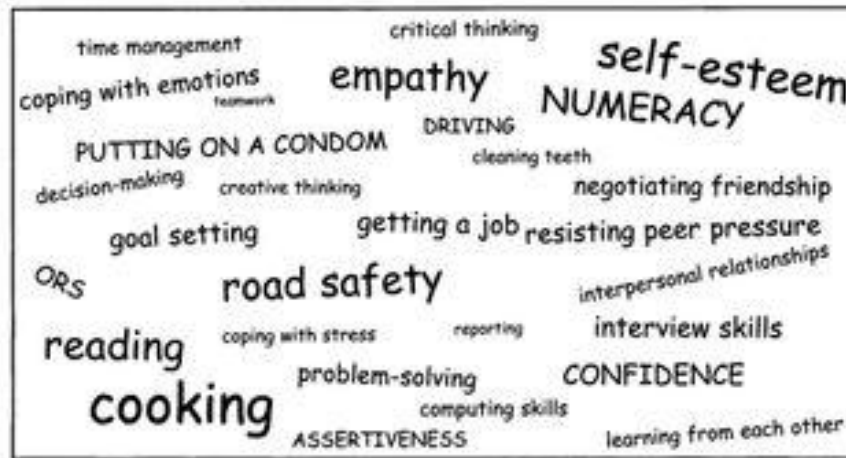
- Example:



## So What's a Parent to Do

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# Explicit instruction in life skills



- Teaching by Modeling
- Talking/showing/doing

## So What's a Parent to Do?

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# Explicit instruction in life skills

- Example:



- Repeat for cooking, cleaning, paying bills, refilling prescriptions

## So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Respect the Adult



- Once he is over 18 he is technically an adult.
- Consult with the individual on preferences and perspectives.

# So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Respect the Adult



- If the individual is able to do something herself, allow her to do it herself.

# So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Respect the Adult

- Example:



# So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Respect the Adult

- Example:



# So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Respect the Adult

- Example:

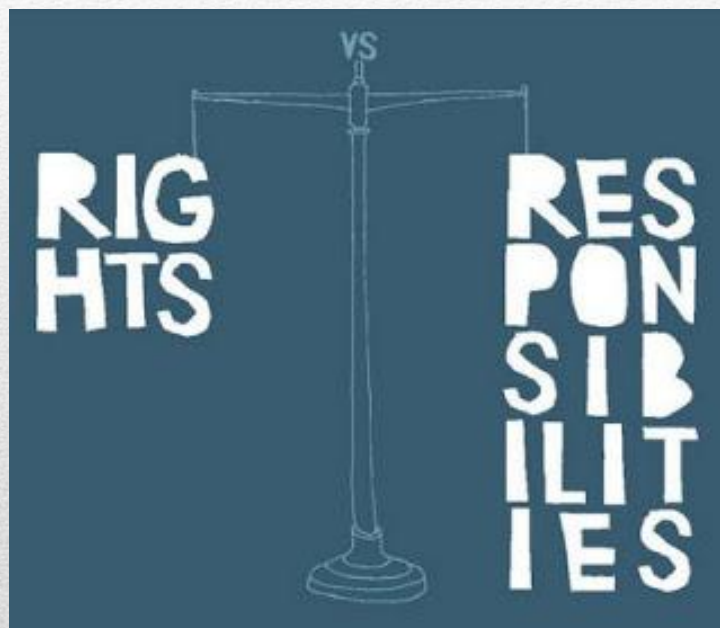


# So What's a Parent to Do?

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## Balance Rights and Responsibilities



# So What's a Parent to Do?

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# Balance Rights and Responsibilities

What a Clean Bathroom Looks Like	
Trash can is emptied.	
Toilet is scrubbed inside.	
Toilet is wiped down on the outside, including the base.	
The mirrors are shiny, no spots	
The sink is scrubbed clean.	
The counters are wiped down.	
The floor is swept and/or mopped.	
The soap container is at least half full.	
There are fresh towels.	
The shower or tub has been scrubbed.	
There is soap and shampoo in the shower or tub.	
The dirty laundry is where it belongs.	

- Prepare your child for adult life experientially, not theoretically.

## So What's a Parent to Do?

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# Balance Rights and Responsibilities



- Create opportunities for your adult child to build skills around adult living and independence.
  - Contributing to the household
  - Reasonable standard

## So What's a Parent to Do?

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# Balance Rights and Responsibilities



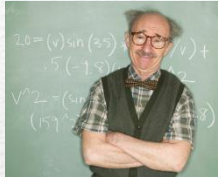
## So What's a Parent to Do?

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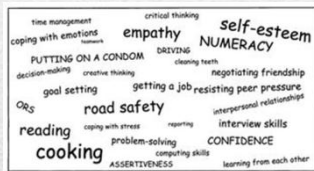


Self-Advocacy:  
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Know What You  
Need. Know How  
to Get It

Build Self-Awareness and Self-Advocacy



Hire a “Disinterested” Third Party



Teach by Modeling



Respect the Adult



Balance Rights and Responsibilities

# So What's a Parent to Do?

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**Do Not** push the baby bird out of the nest



Support, Prepare, Train, Practice



Contact AANE

**Bottom line:**

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# Questions and Discussion

