Western Cape Government
Education
FOR YOU

Life skills every teen should learn

As parents, our purpose is to help raise teenagers who will thrive as well-rounded adults who are successfully independent, succeeding in their careers and dreams, and healthy. Considering World Youth Skills Day on 15 July, experts share the life skills every teenager should learn to flourish as they grow into young adults and beyond.

1. Good Financial habits

Financial wellness is essential for having a good relationship with money, and "if you want your young ones to grow up to be financially responsible adults, start teaching them the value of money from a young age", writes finance expert Enoch Omololu in a Forbes article.

Omololu recommends encouraging children to earn their own money, budgeting and saving by tagging them along on grocery store trips from a young age to model good money habits and helping them make responsible money decisions by allowing them to allocate an allowance for certain necessities.

2. The survival guide to 'adulting'

Doing taxes, getting a tough stain out of clothing, and knowing how to change a car's tyre – these are all examples of day-to-day skills every adult should have. Mental health treatment center, Newport Academy, explains that "the basics of cleaning, organization, and financial management… helps adolescents take responsibility… and set themselves up for success as they become more independent."

Moreover, basic household and organisational skills like grocery shopping and cooking, what cleaning products to purchase, how to do laundry, car maintenance, and paying the bills are all essential skills necessary for leading independent lives.

3. Self-care for a healthy body and mind

Everyday Health defines self-care as "anything you do to take care of yourself so you can stay physically, mentally, and emotionally well."

This includes physical self-care, such as regular exercise, cooking and eating a balanced diet, personal hygiene, and prioritising good quality sleep, and emotional self-care, such as mindfulness habits, social support, compassion and kindness, and asking for help when needed, lists Newport Academy.

Besides the fundamental self-care skills like making your bed and brushing your teeth daily, self-care looks different for everyone. Self-affirmations, making a cup of tea, or going for a manicure or a massage to destress – even if it seems indulgent – are all ways teenagers can learn to prioritise their physical and mental health.