

Increased Skills in  
Community Integration  
for Young Adults  
Attending the  
University of  
Tennessee FUTURE  
program

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THE UNIVERSITY OF  
**TENNESSEE**  
HEALTH SCIENCE CENTER

# Objectives

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## Objectives Today:

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1. Increase knowledge about post-secondary education for young adults with intellectual and developmental disabilities
2. Gain understanding of young adults' perceived challenges in increasing their community integration
3. Determine ways Speech Language Pathologist can support teens and young adults' skills in community integration.

What is the FUTURE  
Program?

# The FUTURE Program

- Postsecondary Education Program
- University of Tennessee FUTURE students are young adults with Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities who are integrated into campus life.
- The FUTURE students audit regular college classes pertaining to their interests, take life-skill courses (e.g., digital literacy, career and life planning), participate in campus and community internships, and have been given the opportunity to live in on-campus housing.
- <https://futureut.utk.edu/>

## UT Hearing and Speech Center and the Future Program Partnership

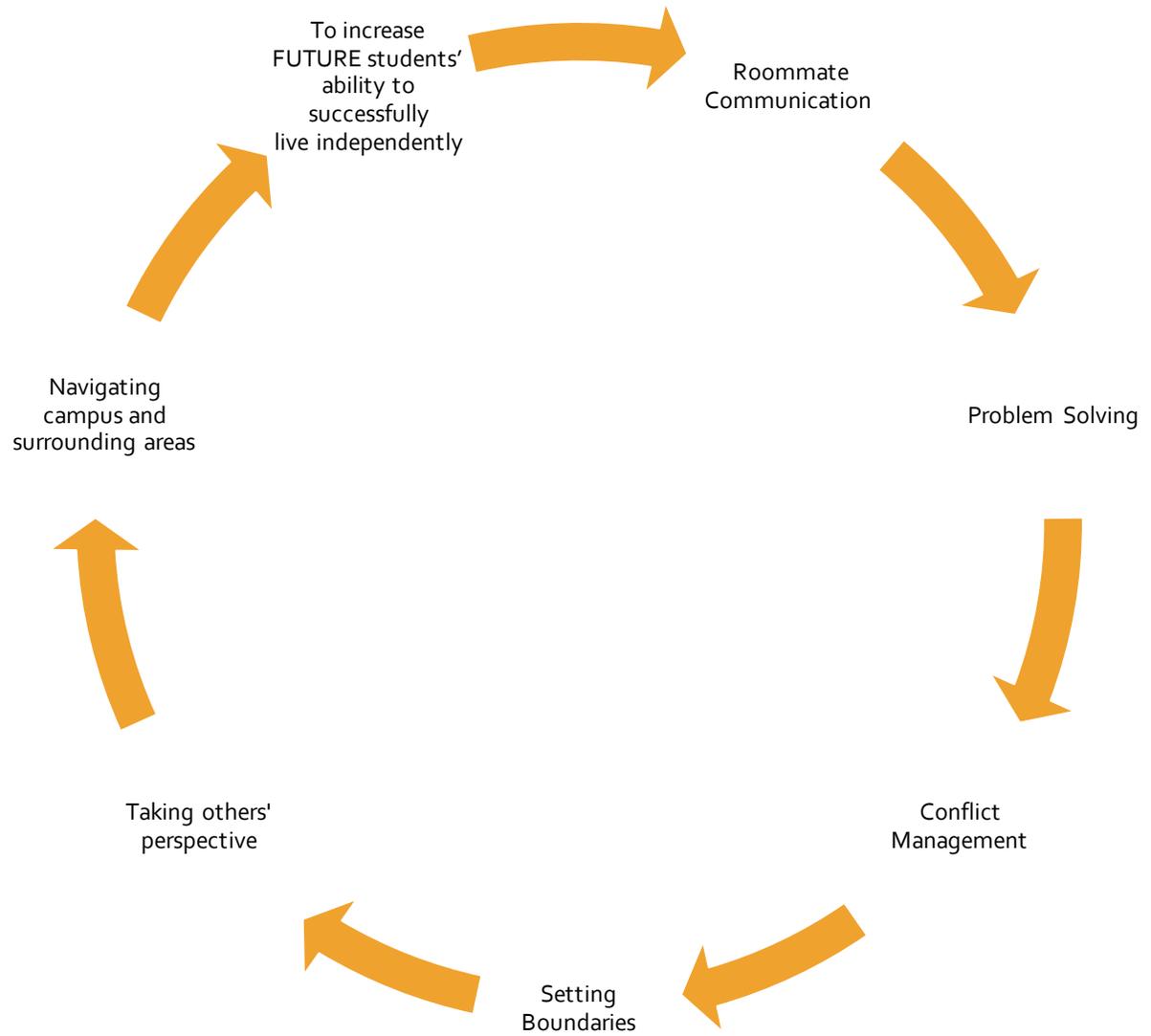
- UTHSC's Department of Speech Pathology began a partnership with the FUTURE program in 2016. We began screening all the students and have been able to provide speech and language treatment to many through the years.
- Soon after, UT Hearing and Speech Center became an internship site for 1-2 FUTURE students per semester. Our internship was unique and became known as a "therapeutic internship." The Speech Pathology graduate students provided work in areas such as: verbal problem solving and soft skills important to workplace communication. As word spread, there was potential for another area to partner.

Meet a **FUTURE**  
student

# Independent Living and FUTURE Students

- As students began taking advantage of the on-campus housing offered in 2020, The Director of FUTURE and the Independent Living Coordinator requested assistance.
- Independent Living Coordinator's role -to teach life skills to the students living on campus or are living away from their parents for the first time and generally facilitate their adjustment.
- Several instances of roommate disputes - constant arguing and miscommunication.
- It became evident that students needed practice and strategies to engage in active listening and solving conflicts

# FUTURE Student challenges with Independent Living and Community Integration



# Community Integration Program Development

Typically, the Hearing and Speech Center provides services to clients through acquiring a doctor's referral, obtaining insurance authorization and billing insurance for provision of services. Our goal was to develop a program for the FUTURE students engaging in on-campus living.

Located a mini-grant through the University of Tennessee Health Science Center's Office of Equity, Inclusivity and Diversity. We applied, it was granted, and this allowed us clinical release time to have a 12-week program led by SLP graduate students.

This program allowed for training of Speech Pathology graduate students in increased understanding of how to engage and teach young adults who have intellectual and developmental disabilities using interactive hands-on activities. (Medical Model vs. Social Model)

Navigating the Strip

Mon. 20 Sep.

Going to a doctor's appointment

Mon. 4 Oct.

Dealing with an emergency – part 2

Mon. 18 Oct.

Solving conflicts with roommates – part 2

Mon. 1 Nov.

Mon. 27 Sep.

Field trip to the strip

Mon. 11 Oct.

Dealing with an emergency – part 1 – what is an emergency?

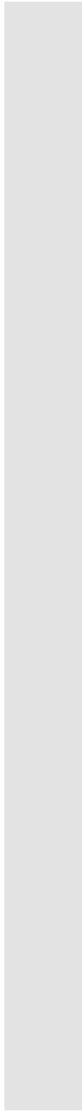
Mon. 25 Oct.

Solving conflicts with roommates

# Benefits of Community Integration Program

## Independent living coordinator for the FUTURE program

- "I think that this program is beneficial for our independent living students for several reasons. One, our independent living students have a way to talk and a space to mitigate through conflict resolution and relationships that they have with their mentors, with themselves, their peers - Just things that occur naturally in the environment that we live in. "
- "Some things that the students really enjoyed were learning how to do medical stuff. Even just talking about that was interesting. A lot of them were like, I didn't know about a medical insurance card or things like that, which is cool. For so many reasons, that's important in their life now and then in the future when their parents might not be around to do that for them. "
- "Something else that a lot of them liked were the skits and we had. I think that was one of my favorite nights where we two of the students kind of spontaneously come up with their own skit to show the class of a roommate conflict that they have. And so that was cool. It was a fun way to experience it and talk about some resolutions as a whole group about what they could do to move forward. "



# Roommate Conflict Video

Takeaways:  
How can SLPs  
support teens  
and young  
adults with  
Community  
Integration?

- Team approach (group work)
- Validate communication
- Adult Language level/alter and modify as needed
- Leave judgements and expectations aside
- Acting out situations and role play
- Make it fun and functional
- Future students learn from challenges
- Teaching through conversation
- Build on personal experiences
- Build on strengths and interests
- Talking about difficult situations
- Discuss successes



Exploring plans after FUTURE

Thank you!!

- We would like to thank and acknowledge our SLP graduate clinicians, the FUTURE program, and the FUTURE students for their participation, knowledge and energy for this project.
- We look forward to continuing our partnership with the FUTURE Program.

# Questions?

## Contact Us

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