

## Essential for Living Curriculum at LifeScape Specialty Schools

LifeScape uses the curriculum *Essential for Living* for all students in both schools—the Specialty School for children, and Pathways to Life (LifeScape’s transition-to-adulthood program for 18- to 21-year olds). *Essential for Living* is a communication, behavior, and functional skills curriculum, assessment, and skill-tracking instrument. It is designed for children and adults with moderate to severe disabilities.

### Who can benefit

*Essential for Living* is for learners of all ages, to acquire skills they will need as adults. It is especially adapted to individuals with limited skills, little or no speech, and/or severe problem behaviors. It is successful for students with autism spectrum disorders, intellectual disabilities, brain injuries, significant communication barriers, and for those with co-presenting diagnoses.

The curriculum emphasizes speaking skills, listener responding, daily living skills, tolerating specific situations, social skills, vocational skills, leisure skills, and reducing problem behavior.

### What makes *Essential for Living* different

Through continual assessments, *Essential for Living* recognizes and acknowledges progress that other programs may not measure. This attention to tracking provides a step-by-step roadmap for building functional skills, customized for the needs and goals of each student. As *Essential for Living* states, “Give us two weeks and your learners will have a curriculum for a lifetime.”

### Research-based

The curriculum is based on an extensive body of research literature from special education, along with concepts, principles, and empirically validated procedures from Applied Behavior Analysis (ABA) and B.F. Skinner’s analysis of verbal behavior. *Essential for Living* may be used in connection with other curricula, and skills taught are connected to the Common Core State Standards.

### A multidisciplinary approach

All staff who work with students have been trained to use *Essential for Living*. Besides all education staff, this includes speech, occupational, and physical therapists, behavior analysts and specialists, and providers of residential services. This multidisciplinary approach provides consistency for quicker and more permanent results.

For more information:

**Contact Admissions** at 605.444.9550 for details and referrals.

**Toll-free** 800.584.9294, Ext. 9550

**Visit** [LifeScapeSD.org/admissions](http://LifeScapeSD.org/admissions)

*The LifeScape Ambassadors provided a grant for the initial investment in the Essential for Living curriculum. The Ambassadors raise funds for initiatives, equipment, and other items to provide excellence in service and a higher quality of life for adults and children supported by LifeScape.*