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00:00:00 [Music]

00:00:03 Announcer/Bill

Welcome to Real Life Science, where we share clear and simple summaries of scientific research to help you understand how these findings can make everyday life better. Today, we explore a study about one -on -one travel training that helps people with disabilities travel more independently using buses and trains. For many, public transit is routine, but for some, it creates real challenges that affect their access to work, health care, and community activities. Let's see how practical instruction can build confidence and skills for safer travel in the real world.

00:00:35 Narrator/Belinda

For many people, getting on a bus or train is routine. But for older adults and individuals with disabilities, transportation can be a major barrier, limiting access to work, healthcare, and community life.

Access to transportation is a key social determinant of health. Yet about one in four U .S. adults experience transportation insecurity, meaning they lack safe, reliable ways to get where they need to go. This can lead to missed care, difficulty maintaining employment, and increased social isolation.

Kessler Foundation researchers recently partnered with a local travel training organization to conduct an outcomes assessment of their program that helps people with disabilities use public transportation on their own, safely and confidently. Travel instruction programs are offered through schools, transit agencies, and community -based organizations across the U .S. First, we'll look at the travel training program itself and what participants learned during their personalized lessons. The program evaluated in this study is New Jersey Travel Independence Program, known as NJTIP at Rutgers. The study included adults with disabilities who completed

their one -on -one travel training program in New Jersey between 2017 and 2024.

They received personalized instruction on how to plan trips, read schedules, safely board and ride transit, solve problems during travel, and advocate for themselves. After finishing the program, participants completed follow-up surveys to share how often they continued using transit after training.

Now let's take a closer look at the results from this study and how the training helped people use transit after completing the program.

The study results show that more than half of the participants reported using transit after graduation, with approximately three out of every five participants reporting transit use 12 months after graduation. They used transit for a variety of everyday activities, such as work, medical appointments errands and social outings *"This training gave me confidence... I'm about to take a boat cruise all by myself"* one participant said.

For those who stopped using transit the reasons were usually not related to skill instead changes in daily routines or life situations played a larger role.

Next we'll discuss why this research is important for quality of life and community connections transportation is more than getting from place to place it is a key part of staying connected and maintaining quality of life.

*"I feel like it's independence... My mom doesn't have to drive me everywhere"*, another participant explained.

This study shows that travel training can provide lasting benefits by helping people build practical skills and confidence. It also highlights that long -term transit use depends not only on training, but also on life circumstances and access.

Improving how these programs are evaluated, especially by measuring outcomes like confidence, autonomy,

## One-on-One Training Helps People with Disabilities Travel More Independently

### Transcript

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and community participation, can help strengthen services and expand access for more people.

We'll share some practical ideas on how you or someone you know might get started with travel training.

- Look for travel training programs in your area.
- Practice new routes with support before traveling alone.
- Start small and build confidence over time.
- Use transit tools like schedules or apps to plan trips.

Finally, learn where you can find more information about this research and the travel training program. This study, "*Outcomes of an Individualized Travel Instruction Program, to improve access to public transit among people living with disabilities*", was presented at the 2026 National Academy's Transportation Research Board annual meeting.

The lead researcher is [Lauren F. Murphy, PhD](#), research scientist in the [Center for Outcomes and Assessment Research](#) at Kessler Foundation. [Visit NJTIP](#) to learn more about the program.

The contents of this presentation were developed under a grant from the National Institute on Disability, Independent Living, and Rehabilitation Research.

00:03:55 [Music]

00:04:32 Announcer/Bill

Thanks for joining us on Real Life Science. This study highlights that travel training can give people with disabilities the skills and confidence to get around more easily, helping them stay connected and independent. If you want to learn more or know someone who could benefit, consider looking for travel training programs in your community. Remember, science helps us improve everyday decisions about care, work, and living. Stay curious and keep exploring.