To be independent, young people must have confidence in their abilities and know how to use them in real-world situations. Independence grows by steps and begins with making small decisions that can turn into life-changing decisions. Your encouragement builds members’ self-confidence. By exercising independence, young people learn self-discipline and responsibility, better understand themselves, and become independent thinkers.

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<th>Best Practices for Independence</th>
<th>Ways Volunteers Can Promote Independence</th>
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| • For members enrolled in SPIN clubs, young people have an opportunity to do something they are personally interested in. | • Share your enthusiasm for the topic with your SPIN club members.  
  • Involve them in hands-on learning.  
  • Encourage them to ask questions, share what they are learning, and think about how they might use their knowledge in other areas of their lives. |
| • Young people need opportunities to practice independence in a safe environment. | • Involve young people in decision-making.  
  • Provide opportunities for young people to be responsible. There is a close link between independence and responsibility. Some examples are  
    • Getting supplies and equipment ready.  
    • Explaining directions to others who may need individual attention.  
    • Leading an activity.  
    • Demonstrating a process to others. |
| • Young people need your encouragement. | • Praise is a powerful motivator. We all like to know we are doing well. Use praise liberally.  
  • Encouragement is even more important when things are not going well. Encourage a young person who is struggling by offering suggestions or talking through their ideas for what might work. |