

Unlocking Independence:

HOUSEMATES THRIVING IN TECH-ENABLED HOME



As the first SHIFT Accredited Technology First organization in Pennsylvania, Mainstay is committed to providing the latest technology and advanced remote supports to create a safe and accessible environment for people with ID/A.

Since 2020, Chris, James, and Robert have become more than simply housemates living together in a Mainstay home – they have developed friendships built on trust, support, and shared interests.

Embracing remote supports in their day-to-day lives has helped all three men gain new skills for independence, both at home and in their community. Thanks to household technology features like an automatic stove shutoff, motion sensors, and emergency alert buttons, Chris, James, and Robert have each taken on increased responsibilities in their home.



For instance, Robert checks in with the remote supports provider each night to report on the status of himself and his housemates, ensuring that all is well in their home. If an issue arises, a staff member who is close by will respond and be on site within minutes as needed. Together, the men have each other's backs and always prioritize one another's well-being, even picking up responsibilities if someone's away from the house.

Technology not only allows the housemates to take on more responsibilities, but it also means they can

advocate for themselves and live on their own terms. In the past, if one of the men fell asleep in his favorite chair or spot on the couch while watching TV, a staff member would wake him up and encourage him to move to bed for the remainder of the night. But now, the men get the opportunity to make these kinds of decisions for themselves.

Sharing a house isn't the only thing this trio has in common. They share a passion for art and a love for Pittsburgh sports. They have enjoyed many Penguins and Pirates games together – and they hope to attend a Steelers game in the future. James participates in a day program and is working with a Job Coach as he seeks employment, and Chris has worked as a school custodian for 11 years where he loves to interact with the students and staff.

We're thrilled to see Chris, James, and Robert thriving with self-determination and independence as they continue to adapt to the ever-changing landscape of technology, and we can't wait to see how technology can continue to help them – and others that Mainstay supports – to increase their independence.

