
Visual Supports for children with autism

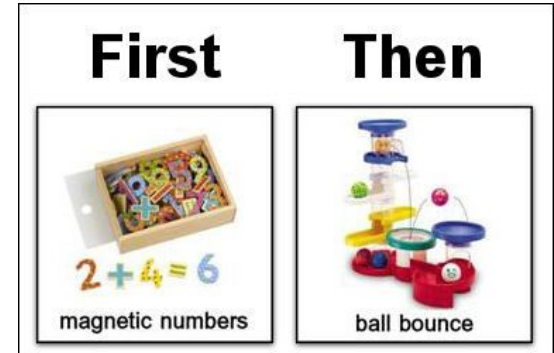
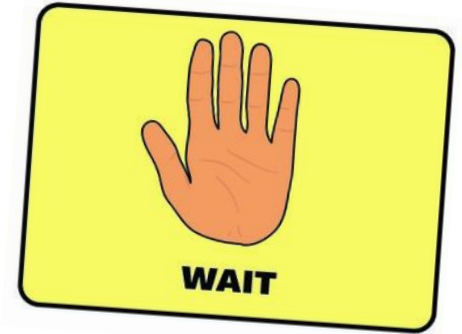
By Christy Taylor, Program Specialist YCUSD

What are visual supports

A visual support refers to using a picture or other visual item to communicate with a child who has difficulty understanding or using language. Visual supports can be photographs, drawings, objects, written words, or lists.

Two main purposes of visual supports:

1. To help parents communicate better with their child.
2. Help your child communicate better with others.





Why are visual supports important?

They help with three main things:

- ❖ **Interacting Socially**
- ❖ **Using Language**
- ❖ **Limited interests or repetitive behaviors**



First - Then Board

- A non-preferred task followed by a preferred task.
- Decide what task you want your child to complete first (“first”) and then what activity they can do immediately following (“then”).



Tip

This is helpful in teaching children to follow directions and learn new skills. It can motivate them to do activities they do not like.



First	Then
 <p>Work</p>	 <p>Play</p>

© 2011 All Rights Reserved

FIRST	THEN
 <p>cut hair</p>	
 <p>finished</p>	

First	Then
Math	iPad

Picture Dictionary

<u>First</u>	Then
 <p>Work</p>	 <p>apple</p>

Visual Schedule


- A representation of what is going to happen throughout the day or within a task or activity.
- Is helpful for breaking down a task that has multiple steps to ensure the teaching and compliance of those steps.




Tip

This helps to reduce anxiety and rigidity surrounding transitions.


good morning



awake




toilet




breakfast



grooming



get dressed



At Home Daily Schedule

- Breakfast 
- Academics 
- Outside Play 
- Lunch 
- Story Time 
- Rest Time / Quiet Time 
- Academics 
- Creative Time / Free Play 
- Outside Play 






©Booster & Builders ©2020






 go to the toilet	 brush teeth	 undress	 take a bath
 get into bed	 bedtime story	 take a shower	 put on night clothes
 goodnight kiss	 lights out	 wash face	 dry


go upstairs



night night!

ink saving Eco

- 1

pull down pants
- 2

pull down
- 3

sit on toilet
- 4

pee
- 5

finished

- 6

stand up
- 7

pull up underwear
- 8

pull up pants
- 9

flush
- 10

wash hands

Sample schedules for kids home from school:

School Closure Daily Schedule	
Quiet Play/Breakfast	
Morning Chores	
Organized Activities	
Outdoor Play	
Lunch	
Quiet Time	
Play	
Dinner	

COVID-19 DAILY SCHEDULE		
© Jessica McHale Photography		
Before 9:00am	Wake up	Eat breakfast, make your bed, get dressed, put PJ's in laundry
9:00-10:00	Morning walk	Family walk with the dog Yoga if it's raining
10:00-11:00	Academic time	NO ELECTRONICS Sudoku books, flash cards, study guide, Journal
11:00-12:00	Creative time	Legos, magnattles, drawing, crafting, play music, cook or bake, etc
12:00	Lunch	
12:30PM	Chore time	A - wipe all kitchen table and chairs. B - wipe all door handles, light switches, and desk tops. C - Wipe both bathrooms - sinks and toilets
1:00-2:30	Quiet time	Reading, puzzles, nap
2:30-4:00	Academic time	ELECTRONICS OK Ipad games, Prodigy, Educational show
4:00-5:00	Afternoon fresh air	Bikes, Walk the dog, play outside
5:00-6:00	Dinner	
6:00-8:00	Free TV time	Kid showers x3
8:00	Bedtime	All kids
9:00PM	Bedtime	All kids who follow the daily schedule & don't fight

Set Parameters

- This involves using visuals to set clear boundaries around items or activities and to communicate basic expected behaviors, like waiting.
- Examples include physical boundaries, limited availability, and “wait”.

Physical Boundary examples:



Limited Availability:



Tip

Decide the number of times or length of time that the item or activity is available. Indicate that through the visual, for example, 3 pictures of a juice box on the refrigerator to indicate that 3 juice boxes are allowed that day. After the item or activity has been used or done, cross out or remove one of the juice box pictures.

“Wait”



PLEASE
WAIT



I stop and listen



I can talk



Tip

Begin by presenting the symbol “wait” for a very brief time before your child can have a preferred item or activity. It may help to pair the “wait” symbol with a timer. Have your child trade the “wait” card for the item or activity. For example, when your child asks for a snack, hand the “wait” card to your child, set the timer for 10 seconds, and then praise your child’s waiting and trade the snack for the “wait” card. As your child learns to use visuals for setting parameters, gradually increase the length of time or the number of situations in which your child is expected to wait.



Resources on Autism Spectrum Disorders:

- ❖ **Autism Speaks** provides resources and support for individuals with ASD and their families (www.autismspeaks.org/)
- ❖ **Autism Focused Intervention Resources & Modules (AFIRM)** designed to help you learn the step-by-step process of planning for, using, and monitoring an EBP with learning with ASD from birth to 22 years of age
<https://afirm.fpg.unc.edu/afirm-modules>
- ❖ [Resources for Visual Supports](#)