

Visual Supports

What are visual supports?

Visual supports can be pictures, words, tangible objects, or other items to represent directions, routines, transitions, verbal requests, and more. Adults often use visuals such as grocery lists and calendars to help them remember tasks and complete them.

Visuals are universal supports that ALL children can benefit from. Visual supports can be created in a variety of formats, including books, posters, games, slideshows, apps, and videos.



Why are visuals important?

Visual supports provide structure, predictability, and help create a sense of safety for children and families. When using a visual schedule, children learn about what is happening “now” and what is going to happen “next.” Visuals also support verbal directions and expectations to help children know exactly what is expected of them, which also nurtures participation and independence. Visuals may

reduce conflicts as children gain confidence and a sense of control over their day. This can lead to increased positive interactions with adults and help children to stay regulated throughout the day.

Visual supports also help children learn new social, play, motor, problem solving, adaptive (i.e., getting dressed), organizational, emotional, and academic skills.

Types of Visuals

- Family Photos
- Visual Schedules
- First/ Then
- Choice Boards
- Classroom Expectations
- Transition Cues
- Scripted Stories
- Problem Solving Kits
- Calming/ Regulation Strategies
- Emotions Faces
- Organizational (labels on materials, names on cubbies, etc.)
- *And many more!*

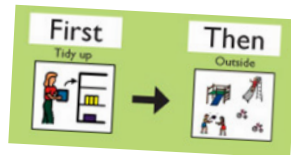
Using Visuals

With visual supports you can:

- Create daily/weekly schedules with visuals blocks of time
- Show sequential steps in a task such as a bedtime routine or getting dressed
- Demonstrate units of time
- Make a “to do” list
- Aid communication for those who are non-verbal or English Language Learners
- Offer Choices
- *And much more!*

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Examples of Visuals



Educators can use visuals to support ALL children by:

1. Posting them where the children will always be able to see and reach them
2. Pointing to the picture(s) as you explain what will be happening
3. Using the visuals to prepare the children for any unexpected changes or difficult transitions
4. Nurturing the children's use of visuals (i.e., "Sam, you are doing such a great job looking at the schedule to see what's next")
5. Consistently practicing with the children so they are prepared throughout the day
6. Individualizing visuals as needed (i.e., first/then tools, representing child's home language, creating personalized visuals for home environment, etc.)

For more information on using visual supports:

Routine Cards

https://challengingbehavior.cbcs.usf.edu/docs/Routine_cards_home.pdf

Visual Supports

www.do2learn.com

