Visual Support Strategies

When I see I understand

Tammy Dupre, AT Support Specialist

The learner will recognize the benefits of visual strategies.

The learner will identify visual tools for the environment, behavior, schedules and class activities.

The learner will be able to select the appropriate visual tool which will support student success and independence.
Visual Tools Test

- Do you have a calendar to help you organize information?
- Do you make to do lists?
- Have you ever pointed to a picture on a menu to show something you want?
- Have you ever used the “easy to follow picture instructions” when assembling something?
If “yes” Then………

You need Visual Tools

to help you organize

your life, make choices

and accomplish a task.
Benefits of Visual Strategies

- Decreases challenging behavior
- Decreases anxiety
- Increases calmness
- Teaches how to accept change
- Increases understanding
- Increases flexibility
- Increases independence
Who Benefits

- Autism
- Communication Disorder
- Behavior Disorder
- Learning Disability
- Auditory Processing Disorder
- Developmental Delay
- Mental Impairment
Why Do They Function Better?

- Difficulty with:
  - Establishing attention
  - Shifting attention
  - Regaining attention
  - Background noise
Primary Function

- Receptive communication tool
- Gives information
- Increases comprehension
- Increases understanding of tasks, activities and the environment
- Teaches skills to become independent
Visual Tools for the Environment
Visual Tools for the Environment

- Gives boundaries
- Creates orderliness and gives stability
- Helps with structure and predictability
- Helps to function more independently
- Increases students reliability
- Enables students to become more responsible
Tools for the Environment Examples

- Label school supplies
- Feet by locker
- Picture on their locker
- Square boundary for sitting on floor/bench/bus
- Line to indicate where to line up
- Label areas in class (work/quiet areas)
Universal “No”

- Put over item they can not have
- Put on back of door
Visual Tools for Behavior
Visual Tools for Behavior

• Communication breakdown = behavior problems
• Give students a visual representation of what they are doing and what they should be doing
Visual Tools for Behavior

- I am working for ........
Managing High Interests

- Teaches them an appropriate time to do the behavior
- Insert “talk time” or “free time” into schedule
- Example:
  - Talking about movies
Managing Perfectionism

• Provides a clear visual indication of the degree of difficulty
• Decreases anxiety and shut down
Teaching Self-Regulation

• Insert behavior into the schedule
• Example:
  • hitting – hit on punching bag
  • Talking about certain topic
  • Throwing – throw blocks in bucket
Individual Visual Schedules

Louisiana Accessible Educational Materials
Individual Visual Schedules

- Visual representation of activities and in what order
- Helps to organize & predict activities/events
- Teaches flexibility and how to adapt to change
- Helps to shift attention from one activity to another
Individual Visual Schedules

- Helps to get through undesirable activity if they see something they like is next
- Teaches passing of time
- Provides breaks to teach self-regulation
- Increases independent functioning
Designing an Individual Schedule

- Visual representation system
- Size of visual representation
- Set up of schedule
- Choices
- Length

- Location
- Transitions
- How to indicate “all done”
- Change
- Clock vs. activity
Visual Representation System

- Real object
- Miniature objects
- True object based icons (T.O.B.I’s)
- Photographs
- Real drawings
- Line drawings
- Written word
Visual Representation System

• May use different visual representations for different activities
Size of Visual Representation

Large - hang in room

- Small - portability
Schedule Set-Up

First / Then

Left to right

Top to bottom

Combination

Must consider visual and motor skills
Choices on Schedule

• Provide choices between activities
• Gives students a sense of control
Length of Schedule

- Visual, cognitive or motoric issue
Location of Schedule

Ability to have visual access at all times whether it is portable or not
Transitions To & From Schedules

- To the schedule – work toward independence (poker chip, card)
- From the schedule to the activity – pull off activity from schedule and bring with them
- Only give visual, physical prompts – NOT AUDITORY
How to Indicate “all done”

• For some students there needs to be an all done symbol or envelope
Changes on a Schedule

• Indicate changes by placing a symbol/word by the activity or placing the universal “no” symbol over the activity.
Schedule by Clock vs. Activity

- Younger students by activity
- Older students by time or clocks

Cole's Day

1. 8 o'clock
   Science, room 125 (Ms. Davis)

2. 10 o'clock
   Math, room 73 (Mr. LeBlanc)

3. 12 o'clock
   Lunch

4. 1 o'clock
   English, room 136 (Ms. Collins)

5. 2 o'clock
   Social Studies, room 79 (Ms. Green)
Visual Schedule Examples

- Object schedule
- Dry erase board
- 3-ring binder
- Clip board
- Manila folder
Activity Schedules

Making a Jack-o'-Lantern

1. Draw design
2. Cut lid
3. Scoop out inside
4. Draw on pumpkin
5. Cut out pieces
6. Put in candle
7. Put on lid
Activity Schedules

- Step-by-step instructions on how to complete a task
Activity Termination Cards

- Gives time to process
- Can use with a timer
Break Cards

- Helps decrease anxiety
- Teacher vs. student card
“Wait” Cards

• Visual representation that they have to wait
• Can use with timer
Emergency Cards

• Helps them prepare for what is going to happen
• Decreases anxiety
Helping Hand

• Reminder to ask for help
• Teaches initiation of communication
Visual Tools for Academics
Class Assignments

• Provide visual expectations of a task
• Provide step-by-step visual instructions
• Provide visuals to start and stop a task
Examples

Homework Checklist

- Get homework out of green folder
- Place in tray on teachers desk
- Return to seat
- Copy homework assignment onto calendar
Examples

Highlight directions or details

Addition and Subtraction Worksheet

1. 14  
   3

2. 23  
   12

3. 45  
   22

4. 50  
   22

5. 36  
   12

6. 28  
   15
Things To Remember

Direct Instruction → Consistent Use → Independence
Resources

This training will provide participants with visual support strategies to address the unique learning needs and challenging behaviors of some students with disabilities.

**Agenda**

- Benefits of Visual Strategies
- Visual Tools for the Environment
- Tools for Behavior
- Creating Individual Visual Schedules
- Visual Representation Systems
- Symbol, Location and Position
- Transitions
- Indicating Changes
- Terminations Cards
- Handling Breaks and Free Time

**Objectives**

- The learner will recognize the benefits of visual strategies.
- The learner will identify visual tools for the environment, behavior, schedules and class activities.
- The learner will be able to select the appropriate visual tool which will support student success and independence.
Questions

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