

Visual Supports and Schedules/Transitions

Miss Allison and Miss Colleen

The image features a dark gray background with faint, concentric white circles. In the center, there is a bright blue speech bubble with a white outline. Inside the bubble, the words "Visual Supports" are written in a white, rounded, sans-serif font. The bubble has a small tail pointing downwards.

Visual Supports

What are visual supports and why are they important?

- Visual supports are a way for communicating with your child using pictures and drawings instead of using words.
- Most children at this age are visual learners, meaning that they learn best by looking and watching.
- Processing language quickly can be hard for some children at this age. When you say a word or a sentence to a child, the words are available only for that brief moment. For children with difficulty processing language, that moment may not be enough time to make sense of the message or hold on to the message in order to use it. However, when you present information visually it can be there for as long as the child needs it.

How can you provide visual supports?

- You can provide visual supports to your child when presenting choices. Instead of saying "Do you want juice or milk?", you could visually hold up a choice board with the pictures of juice and milk or show them the actual choices and have them point to the one they want.



You can use
visual supports to teach
your child a new skill or
prepare them for a new
event through social
stories.



Going to the



Grocery Store



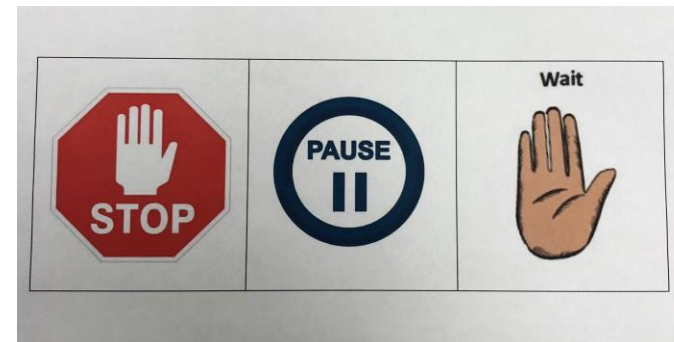
Today, we are going to the grocery store. First, we will get into our car and drive to the store.



When we get there we will get a grocery cart or basket to fill with food.

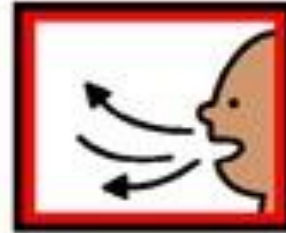
You can use visual supports to teach a child to stop, wait, or pause.

- You can use a visual STOP sign to indicate activities that are unavailable at a particular time or for unsafe activities/areas, such as when you are cooking on the hot stove.
- When presenting the symbol for “wait” it may help to pair the use of the “wait” symbol with a timer. For example, when your child asks for a snack, hand your child the “wait” card, set the timer for 10 seconds, and then praise your child’s waiting and trade the snack for the “wait” card.
- You can also put a pause sign on activities that you need to come back to or finish later. This reassures the kids that they do not have to completely give up the activity, but that it will still be there for them later.



You can use visual supports on calming down techniques.

Calm Down



Take a deep breath.



Count to 5.



Sit in chair or beanbag.

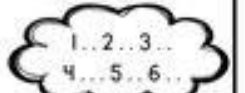
I Can Calm Myself

Take deep breaths

Smell the flowers



Blow out the candle

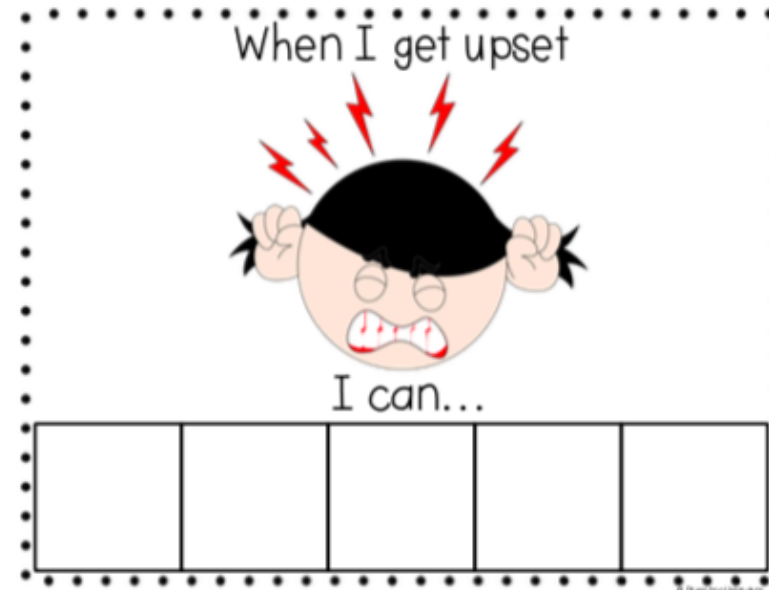


Count slowly

Relax my body



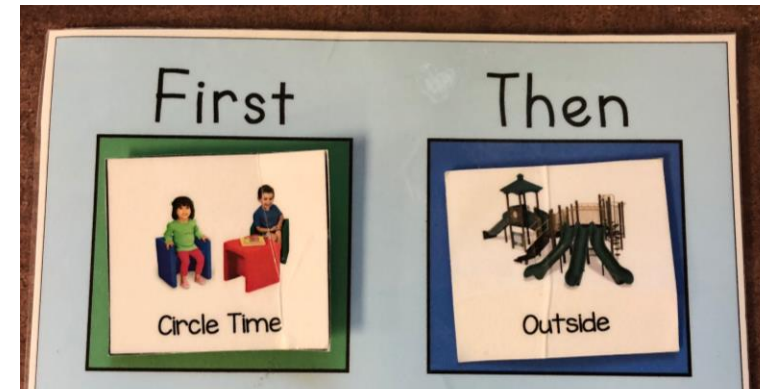
You can use
visual supports
to teach your child
how to self-soothe
when upset.



ask for a break 	ask to swing 	take a deep breath 	get a fidget 	use my words 
look at a book 	draw a picture 	do a puzzle 	go to my safe spot 	ask to take a walk 
swing 	count to 10 	push a cart 	ride in a wagon 	ask for help 

You can use visual supports through First Then Charts.

- First Then charts can be used to help encourage your child to complete a non-preferred activity by showing them that once completed, a preferred activity will follow.

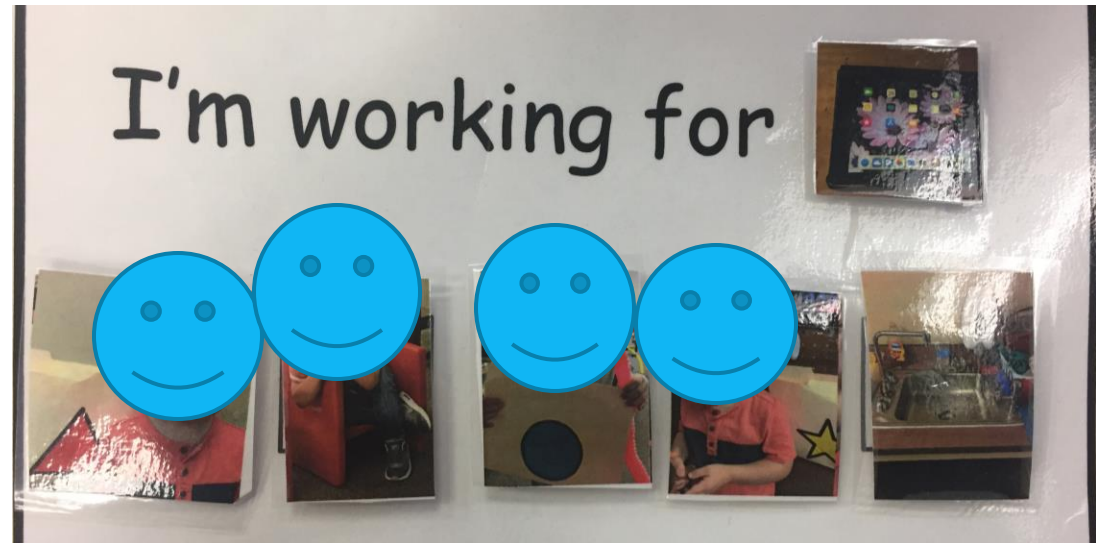


You can use visual supports as a positive reinforcement system.

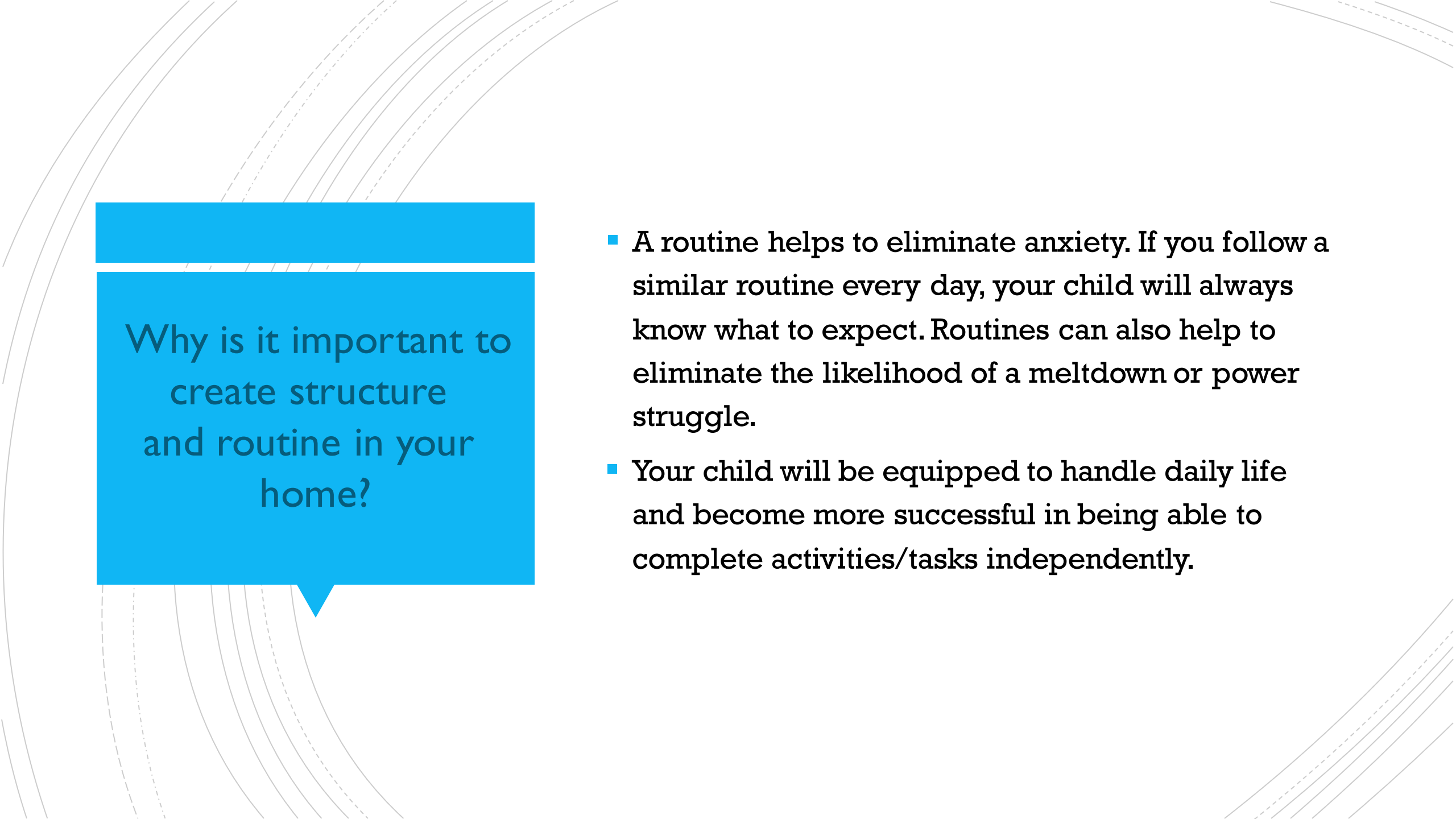
- If there is a skill you would like to have your child learn, such as sharing toys with their sibling, you would start by letting them select a reward using a choice board.
- Then show your child that he or she will need to earn 3 or more tokens before they will be able to receive a reward. So in the case of sharing, they will need to share the toys three times before they will get to play with their chosen reward.



You can use visual supports to show your child what needs to be done before they can earn a positive reinforcement.



Schedules and Transitions

The background of the slide features a series of thin, curved lines in light gray and white, creating a sense of motion and depth. These lines are more prominent on the left side and fade towards the right.

Why is it important to create structure and routine in your home?

- A routine helps to eliminate anxiety. If you follow a similar routine every day, your child will always know what to expect. Routines can also help to eliminate the likelihood of a meltdown or power struggle.
- Your child will be equipped to handle daily life and become more successful in being able to complete activities/tasks independently.

At school, we use visual schedules to help create routines for our students that show the order of events for the day.

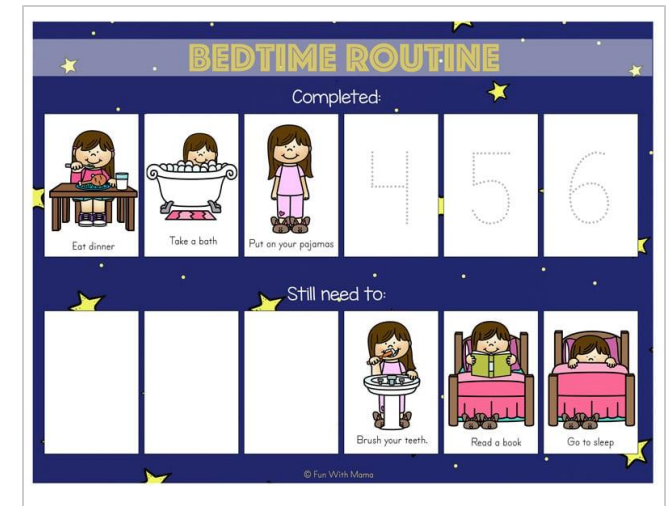
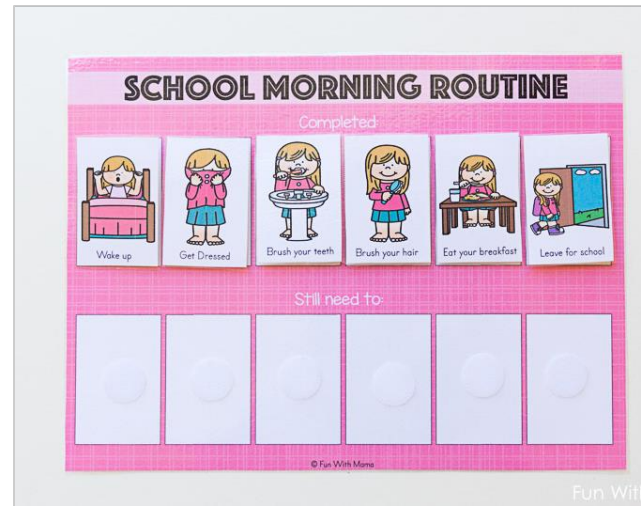
- Visual Schedules are picture representations of what is going to happen next. They help children understand and anticipate the future.



Visual schedules can vary based on the needs of the child. Some students need schedules for their entire day, while others just need a schedule to help them rotate through an activity like centers.



Here's some ideas
for schedules you
can use at home.



- If you google visual schedules, you can find lots of resources as well as free printables!

The background of the slide features several thin, curved lines in light gray and white, creating a sense of motion and depth. A solid blue rectangular box is positioned on the left side, containing the main heading text.

Here's some helpful tips when creating a schedule.

- When creating a schedule, it helps to strategically place a non-preferred activity before a preferred activity. This helps to balance the schedule out and allows for an easier transition from one activity to the next.
- You can use a visual schedule to tell children about an unusual event that is going to happen in their day so that they are not surprised when it happens. If you normally go to the park every day after preschool, but today you are going to the doctor's office, you can add that change to their schedule and show your child the change in routine so that they are better prepared.
 - We call this an "oops day." You can tell your child show your child how the day will be a little different because it is an "oops day."

The background of the slide features several thin, curved lines in a light gray color, some solid and some dashed, creating a modern, abstract design. On the left side, there is a large blue speech bubble with a white border. Inside the bubble, the text 'Additional helpful tips:' is written in a white, sans-serif font. The bubble has a small tail pointing towards the bottom left.

Additional helpful tips:

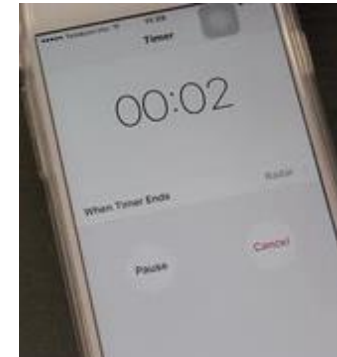
- Remember that like any new concept, a visual support is something that you will need to teach to your child.
- Try not to get frustrated if the visual strategy does not work on the first try or if your child seems frustrated during the first few times you walk them through the visual. This is common and should reduce over time.
- Be consistent. Use the visual support in the same way each time, especially when you are first demonstrating what the visual support means. That way, your child knows that the visual carries the same message each time you present it.

If your child is still struggling to transition from one activity to the next here are some strategies you could use to help them.

- Allow them to hold a preferred item/object as they transition.



- Sing one of their favorite songs as they transition.
- Set a timer.



- Provide a verbal countdown from 5-1, using your hands to countdown.

Additional Resources

APPS:

- Visual Schedules Lite



- Visual Schedules and Social Stories



- Countdown Timer



- Google images! You can find pictures of everything and there are a lot of free printables for various visual support strategies.



Any Questions?

Resources:

- *<https://www.autismspeaks.org> - Visual Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorder
- *<https://www.cdd.unm.edu/autism/> - Visual Supports for Children with ASD



Thank you!