



HOME AND CLASSROOM RESOURCES

-RESOURCES TO HELP FOSTER INDEPENDENCE IN ANY CHILD AND DEVELOP COMMUNICATION
IN BOTH FULLY-VERBAL AND LESS-VERBAL CHILDREN-

Level: 1+ **Theme:** Home and Classroom Tools **Topic and Filename:** Choice Boards_Visual Schedules_Cards Set
Context: neurotypical toddler, preschooler, or special needs individual who may be pre-K age or may be older
Duration: intermittent throughout sessions/days, will vary; to be used over span of 1+ year

VISUAL SCHEDULES

-INTRODUCTION-

A visual schedule is useful for all children, but especially provides a way for the child with special needs to handle transitions in between daily activities, even if they are routine ones. Over time, any child can memorize the schedule after learning it visually, which can help manage expectations and may reduce frustrations with transitions.

A visual schedule also teaches independence over a period of time, and is useful for teaching schedules at home, in the classroom and sequences on outings. One should start off with a short two-step sequence (see “My ‘First, Then’ Board” information below) and then can move on to the longer “My Visual Schedule,” while still using the other board as a reward board.

Visual schedules can range from typical class timetables, to very detailed steps to teach an action like washing hands.

Printing multiple copies of the “My Visual Schedule” and “My First, Then” Boards and keeping them at home, school and in child’s backpack for outings, is a great way to create consistency and awareness of sequences for the child.

Also saving the relevant board (photo/screenshot of the page) on parent/teacher’s phone/tablet can ensure there is always a familiar visual schedule available on the go, whether one is on a field trip, at a restaurant or at the masjid.



Disclaimer: *This document and its associated graphics file are an educational support tool and not intended as any behavioural therapy tool; if a child is undergoing Applied Behaviour Analysis or any other program, please consult their IEP/Behaviour Protocol and BCBA/SLP/healthcare professional for usage and application of such resources.

Language Skills Addressed: Beginning sounds of choices cards; sentences using “First ___ then ___”

Skills and Strategy Focus: Association of card image to real object/action and word association; sequencing of events/activities; managing transitions from one event to next with expected change due to visuals

Selected Level 1 Outcomes and Specific Objectives:

Listening: Student will listen for instructions to select card and place on board and understand sequence

Reading: Student may begin to recognize the words on the cards

Speaking/Signing: Student will point at/select card, and may learn to approximate or say the name/sound of the choice card words, and “first” “then” depending on ability

Fine Motor/Gross Motor: Student will pick up laminated card and attach and detach velcro, using pincer grip with some force to remove from board; point at desired card

Assessment: Teacher and parent/caregiver will make anecdotal notes on card sounds/words, independence, behaviour during transitions both at home and in class

Follow-up: Parents/caregivers should use the same file’s boards and cards at home and implement visual schedules for daily routines i.e washroom, coming back from school, majlis routine etc.; parent and teacher should meet monthly to discuss progress in independence and waiting for reward/next event; Adults may also add a second row to “My Visual Schedule” board, for detailed steps of a routine like using toilet

1. MY “FIRST _____, THEN _____” BOARD

-A MINI VISUAL SCHEDULE-

The “First, Then” Board is a type of short visual schedule that can be used for two consecutive items, to create the awareness of a simple sequence; it can also be used as a simple reward system. Note: Expanded reward and token systems will be provided with detailed instructions on the website in future insha’Allah.



SPECIAL EDUCATION

-PLANNING-

Materials:

- Adhesive Velcro dots/cut up adhesive hook and loop fastener tape
- Laminator, or self-laminating sheets
- **Select "Fit to Page" with landscape mode in print setup:** 1+ printout each per child, of the page "My First, Then Board" printed and laminated, with Velcro dots/hook (rough side) tape applied on labeled spots; filename is "[Choice Boards Visual Schedules Cards Set.pdf](#)"
- 1 printout per child, of "My Choices" pages from same file at al-m.ca/SpecEd, laminated and cut up into the square cards; Velcro dots/loop (soft side) tape applied to back of each square; cards may already have been prepared for "My Choice Board"
- Optional: Visual timer like hourglass, kitchen timer, phone timer, within sight but out of reach of students

Mini-Visual-Schedule Suggested Procedure:

1. To use as a short visual schedule, adult should put two consecutive events (using the square My Choices cards; remember the custom template can also be used to make your own) in the boxes on the board, ignoring the bottom row of four choice squares.
 - a. Note: If child is unfamiliar with the My Choices cards, refer back to Choices Board Lesson Plan on how to introduce each card one at a time.
2. Using hand-over-hand (until child is independent), adult should narrate the First Then sequence to child, pointing at each word and card in the sentence.
3. During the first event, adult should point at the board to remind child of what will happen afterwards.
4. After first event is done, say "All done" "*khatam*" or whichever completion phrase family is using, and use hand-over-hand (until child is independent) with child to remove first card, and point at next event.

Mini-Reward-Board Suggested Procedure:

1. To use as a reward board, place the less desired activity/schedule event card (using the square My Choices cards; remember the custom template can also be used to make your own) in the "First" box and four preferred item/activity choice cards in the row below (only choose ones that can be granted immediately, not after a while).
 - a. Note: If child is unfamiliar with the My Choices cards, refer back to Choices Board Lesson Plan on how to introduce each card one at a time.
2. Let the child choose a reward from four preferred item/activity choice cards that are in the row below; use hand-over-hand (until child is independent) to help child remove selected card and stick it after "Then" box.
3. During the first activity, point at the board to remind the child of what preferred item/activity they will be getting afterwards. This is especially useful on outings when a longer visual schedule may not be possible.
4. After first event is done, say "All done" "*khatam*" or whichever completion phrase family is using, and use hand-over-hand (until child is independent) with child to remove first card, and point at reward.



2. MY VISUAL SCHEDULE BOARD

-PLANNING-

Materials:

- Adhesive Velcro dots/cut up adhesive hook and loop fastener tape
- Laminator, or self-laminating sheets
- Select “Fit to Page” with landscape mode in print setup: 1+ printout each per child, of the page “My Visual Schedule” Board printed and laminated, with Velcro dots/hook (rough side) tape applied on labeled spots; filename is “[Choice Boards Visual Schedules Cards Set.pdf](#)”
- 1 printout per child, of “My Choices” pages from same file at al-m.ca/SpecEd, laminated and cut up into the square cards; Velcro dots/loop (soft side) tape applied to back of each square; cards may already have been prepared for “My Choice Board”
- Optional: Visual timer like hourglass, kitchen timer, phone timer, within sight but out of reach of students

Suggested Procedure:

1. Adult should put four consecutive events/steps (using the square My Choices cards; remember, the custom template can also be used to make your own) in the boxes on the board
 - a. Note: If child is unfamiliar with the My Choices cards, refer back to Choices Board Lesson Plan on how to introduce each card one at a time.
2. Using hand-over-hand (until child is independent), adult should point to each card, narrate the First Then sequence to child, pointing at each word and card in the sequence.
 - a. e.g. “First, we will pray [point at ‘pray’ card] then we will eat [point at ‘eat’ card].”
3. During each event, adult should point at the board to remind child of what will happen afterwards.
4. After each event is done, say “All done” “*khatam*” or whichever completion phrase family is using, and use hand-over-hand (until child is independent) with child to remove card, and point at next event.
 - a. Optional: add small slider/frame shape/image of favourite character etc. laminated with soft Velcro attached on back, and have child use it to mark progress on board.
5. Have child physically touch the schedule and refer back to it regularly; over time the child will memorize it.



Additional Follow-Up: Read through schedule out loud with child, having them sound out words over time, and/or point at card depending on ability for reading and speech practice. However, when using as a schedule in daily routine, parent/caregiver or teacher should not keep repeating themselves after giving instruction involving visual schedule, after it has been used for sometime

Example: A visual schedule has been created for “Take off shoes, take off jacket, drink water, go to potty.” So after schedule has been introduced thoroughly weeks ago, and they have said the step(s) once today at this time, the adult should not saying the step/event out loud again if child is not following instruction, one should simply point at schedule for child to physically reference. Avoid repeating yourself after giving first instruction, point at board and encourage child to go over to schedule and refer to it independently.

Schedule Samples

As mentioned earlier, a second row can be added to Visual Schedule after child has advanced; Here is a sample 2-row detailed schedule (underlined words have existing cards)— I walk to a majlis; I take off my shoes; I sit in the majlis; I do matam; I stand for ziyarah; I eat in the majlis; I put on my shoes...

Other possible schedules that can be done based on existing cards in file (and can also download more card from other sources, or create own using blank template on last page of file)

- washing hands
- using toilet
- weekend plan
- birthday party
- visiting someone
- going to the doctor
- going to the dentist
- going to Juma
- playing with friends

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