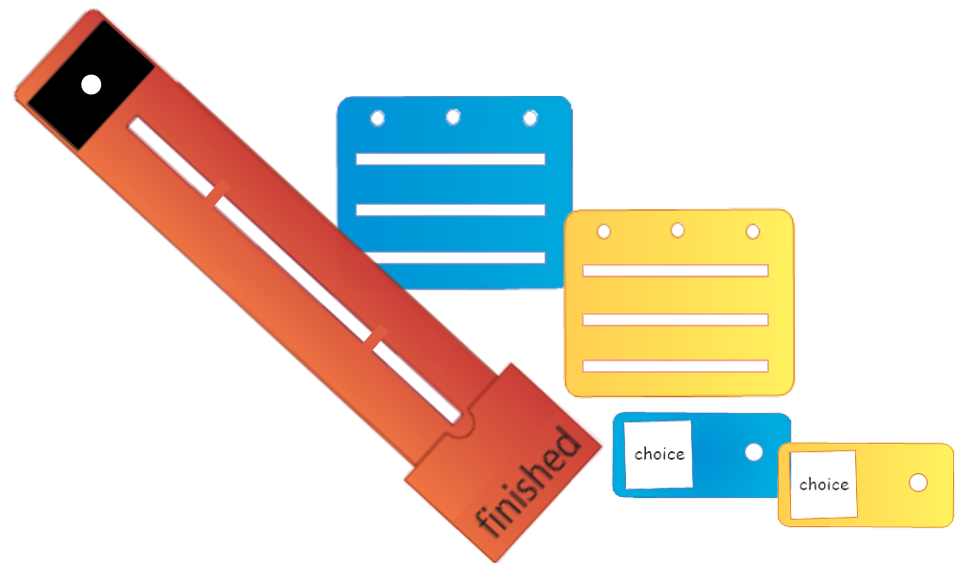


Visual Schedule Kit



Scanning pictures vertically, rather than horizontally, is an easier task for most students. For this reason, our visual schedule is designed to go from top to bottom. The schedule will hold 10 to 15 pictures. If a student's day involves more activities than this, the schedule can be arranged for morning activities and rearranged for afternoon activities.

At the top of the visual schedule is a black rectangle. This is called the "stimulus box" and is where the picture of the current activity is kept.

At the bottom of the visual schedule is the "finished box." This is where the student puts pictures representing completed activities. This eliminates the need for the student to remember what activity he just completed.

Why Teach Schedule Following?

We all use a variety of visual tools to help us organise our time and track our appointments. To keep up with the many activities we need to do - today, this week, or this month - we use a date book or a "To Do" list, rather than depending on our memory. Children also like to know what activities are expected of them and when those activities will occur. Therefore, we need to teach our students to refer to visual reminder systems to help them track their activities.

Usage Guide

As many of our students use pictures to communicate with us (expressive), we suggest that the pictures for the schedule (receptive) be a different size than those the student uses. Typically, the schedule pictures are bigger than the student's expressive pictures.

Single Picture Direction Following

Each activity that we expect a student to participate in, or items we want him to get, can be represented with a picture. Before we expect the student to organise his entire day by responding to a series of pictures, however, we must first teach him what each individual picture means.

As we want the student to follow the picture schedule without our assistance eventually, we must not use verbal prompts when teaching single picture direction following. We give a picture to the student and draw his attention to it, but we do not name the activity, location or item. This assists us in achieving the long-term goal of having the student respond to being given a picture by going to the represented activity, location or item.

Offering Choices

Just as we all find choice to be a powerful reinforcer, we think it is important to give our students opportunities to make choices. These choices could be activity-based, job-based, or reinforcer-based. We depict these in a variety of ways on our schedules. We might have two pictures side-by-side on the schedule, indicating "Choose between these two." If we want to offer more than two choices, we use a separate plastic "choice card" that corresponds, by colour, with an activity board. This indicates that the student should choose between the several items represented by the pictures on the activity board. Students typically choose a picture from the activity board, put it on the corresponding choice card, and then complete the activity.

Usage Guide

When the student independently responds to the pictures representing all the activities of his day, we then teach him to transition from one activity to another by organising the pictures into a schedule. As the student can already respond to single pictures, the new lesson is teaching the student to progress from one activity to another. The general sequence the students learns is:

- 1) Go to schedule
- 2) Remove top picture
- 3) Put picture on "stimulus box"
- 4) Complete the activity
- 5) Return to the schedule
- 6) Move the picture from the "stimulus box" to the "finished box"
- 7) Remove top picture
- 8) Put picture on "stimulus box" ...

We teach this sequence using physical prompting with "backward chaining." We make sure that at the end of each activity a natural cue signals to the student that the task is over (e.g., a timer rings, a meal ends, a video finishes). This cue becomes the student's signal to return to the schedule to find out what the next activity is.

Other products available for schedule following:

The Pyramid Approach to Education, 2nd Edition, Andy Bondy PhD

Schedule Picture Set

PICS for PECS Picture Set (download or CD)

For more information on teaching schedule following, see *The Pyramid Approach to Education* available from www.pecs-unitedkingdom.com or the PECS Training Manual, given to every PECS L1 workshop delegate