

Tip Sheets

How to Use Visual Supports

While visual supports have been found to successfully support children with autism spectrum disorder and other special needs, visual supports can be used to benefit all young children regardless of development and ability.

Types of Visuals

Whole classroom daily schedules

Providers can use this at their morning meeting to let the children know the plans for the day. This can ease anxiety and help children think, plan, and refer to the schedule if they are unsure.

Behavior modification

Small pictures of the schedule and expected behaviors or classroom rules can be worn on a lanyard or put on a clipboard for an individual that needs reminders throughout the day. This is also a helpful way for children to communicate when words haven't yet been developed and/or a child is unable to access the words in the moment.

First/Then boards

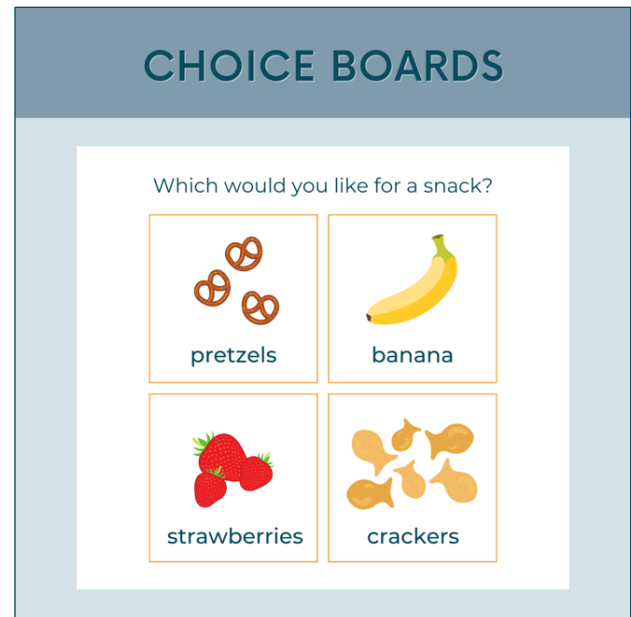
These can be used with children as young as toddlers. This is similar to the daily schedule, but you only show two visuals at a time. *First, clean up; then, snack.* It can also simplify the schedule for children that need more specific direction.

Daily expectations

Rules in the ECE classroom can have visuals for children to remember them. This is helpful for providers to teach and remind children.

Choices

Allowing children to make their own choices as often as possible gives children important social



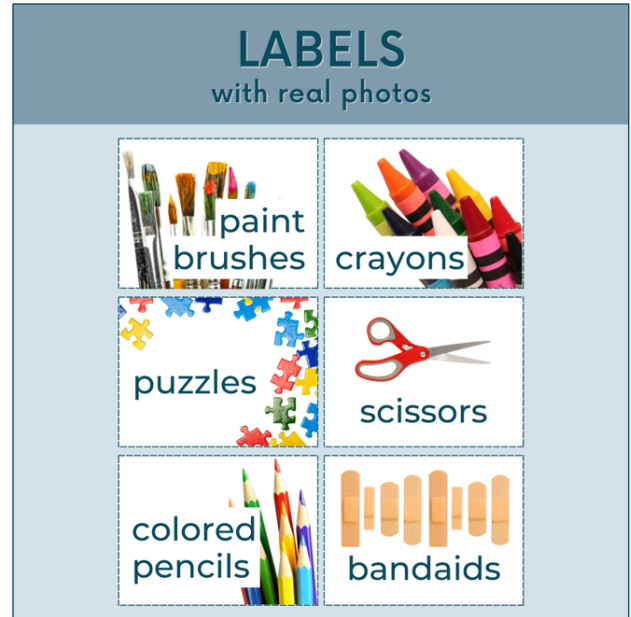
skills and builds autonomy. Children can make a choice like which leaning center or snack they would like by selecting the corresponding photo.

Labels

Labeling toy bins and shelves, cubbies, or learning centers with pictures can help children when they do not have letter or word recognition. It also gives children a sense of belonging.

Timers

Children have no concept of time. It is always important to warn children of upcoming transitions. However, "5 minutes left to play" may not be understood. Use a visual timer to show them what 5 minutes left to play looks like.



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