



# COFFEE CHAT #3- MAKING & USING VISUAL SUPPORTS: FACILITATION GUIDE AND ACTIVITY DETAILS



## SHARE VISUAL SCHEDULE EXAMPLES

Share some examples of different types of visual schedules (*provided in your Kit Box*) and review how they can be used to help facilitate routines and transitions.

The style of visual support and the visuals will depend on the needs and abilities of each individual child. Some children will benefit most from a very simple First-Then (ie- First Clean-up, Then Snack) and others may do well with a visual strip for a bedtime routine if that tends to be a routine they struggle with most at home.

For some visuals, it is helpful to add in an "All Done" pocket. This helps a child to know when a part of the routine is complete and prompts them as to what they are being asked to do next.

## CREATE A VISUAL SCHEDULE AND/OR FIRST THEN BOARD

Using materials provided, you can help parents create their own visuals to use at home.

Parents can choose which routines they feel would be most helpful to make and which style they feel would work best for their child.

Visuals should be laminated if possible and taken on/off using velcro.



## REVIEW SOCIAL STORY EXAMPLES & MAKE YOUR OWN!

A social story is a simple and effective tool for teaching kids how to do certain things, handle problem behaviors, master social skills, and navigate new or unfamiliar social situations. Social stories can be written about practically anything a child may be struggling with from problem behaviors, such as anger or biting, to daily living skills, such as how to brush your teeth or use the potty, to unfamiliar events, such as how to act at a wedding. A social story is meant to help explain expected social behaviors in a given situation.

*Review some of the social story examples provided and talk about how to create social stories using positive language and formatting as suggested on the handouts included in your Kit Box.*

Using the suggestions in the handouts provided, you can then help parents choose a routine they would like to create a social story about to help support that routine. They can include pictures of their child and are written in a way that a child can understand.

## SHARE HANDOUTS

*Make copies of the handouts included in your Kit Box.* These include NCPMI- Making a Scripted Story, Backpack Series- Visual Schedules & lots of Social Story examples & guidelines.



# COFFEE CHAT #3- MATERIALS LIST



## COFFEE CHAT #3 MATERIALS LIST

### MATERIALS NEEDED

- **Printed copies of invitation to distribute to guests**
- **Visual Schedule**- Have lots of copies of visual schedule pictures printed off (included in your kit). Parents can choose a home routine they find challenging and use cut out pictures to create a visual schedule. They will also need cardstock, Velcro (both sides), a stapler for attaching the "all done pocket" (optional) and laminator/mactac if available.
- **First/Then Board**- Using visuals provided in your Kit Box (or you can ask parents to bring in personalized photos they'd like to use ahead of time!) provide lots of copies of the First/Then board found in your Kit Box. These can be laminated or sealed using mactac. Attach photos using Velcro.
- **Creating a Social Story**- If you have computer and printer access, you can review social story examples and then help parents to type and print their own. If not, stories can simply be written to show proper formatting and parents can use these strategies to draft in session and create at home.
- **Printed copies of all handouts**



# Making a Scripted Story

**Scripted stories are a great tool to support your child.** Scripted stories can help your child understand what to expect during new situations or everyday routines and provide examples of what to do. You can make a scripted story at home and start using it with your child today.

## Creating a Story

### Step 1. Think of a situation or routine with your child

- ▶ Write out what you want your child to do.
- ▶ Jot down how you want it to go.
- ▶ List some ways that it might not go so well.

**For example:** *Clean up routine: play with favorite toys, need to eat dinner, clean up when asked.*

**Possible problems:** *Crying when asked to clean up.*



### Step 2. Add details to make complete sentences

- ▶ Write from your child's point of view using short and simple sentences.
- ▶ Focus on what you would like your child to do instead of the challenging behavior.
- ▶ Write about your child managing frustrations or challenges successfully.
- ▶ Put major steps or each major idea on a separate page.







**For example:** *Sometimes cleaning up is hard because I want to keep playing. I can ask for five more minutes, and my Mom or Dad will reset the timer.*

- ▶ End the story by noting the positive outcomes that result when the activity is completed.

**For example:** *I am a big helper when I clean up my toys! My Mom and Dad are proud of me when I am a big helper and clean up.*

### Step 3. Add pictures on each page

- ▶ Always try to use real photographs of your child, their friends, and family.
- ▶ If needed, you can use images or photos you find on the web or in a magazine.
- ▶ Print or assemble the story to use with your child.

<p><b>Cleaning Up My Toys</b></p>  <p><small>Photo Credit: © iStockphoto.com/ChallengingBehavior.org</small></p>	 <p>I like to play.</p>	 <p>Sometimes I play by myself. Sometimes I play with my brother, Devonte.</p>
 <p>I play with lots of different toys. Things like blocks, puzzles, and dolls.</p>	 <p>I can use the toys when I am playing. But when I am done playing, I need to clean up my toys. This keeps everyone safe. Leaving the toys on the floor is not safe. Someone could get hurt. It could break my toys.</p>	 <p>If I need help cleaning up, I can say, "Please help me."</p>

## Using a Scripted Story at Home

Congratulations on putting together a scripted story to help your child understand what to expect during everyday routines and new situations! Now you can put your scripted story to use.

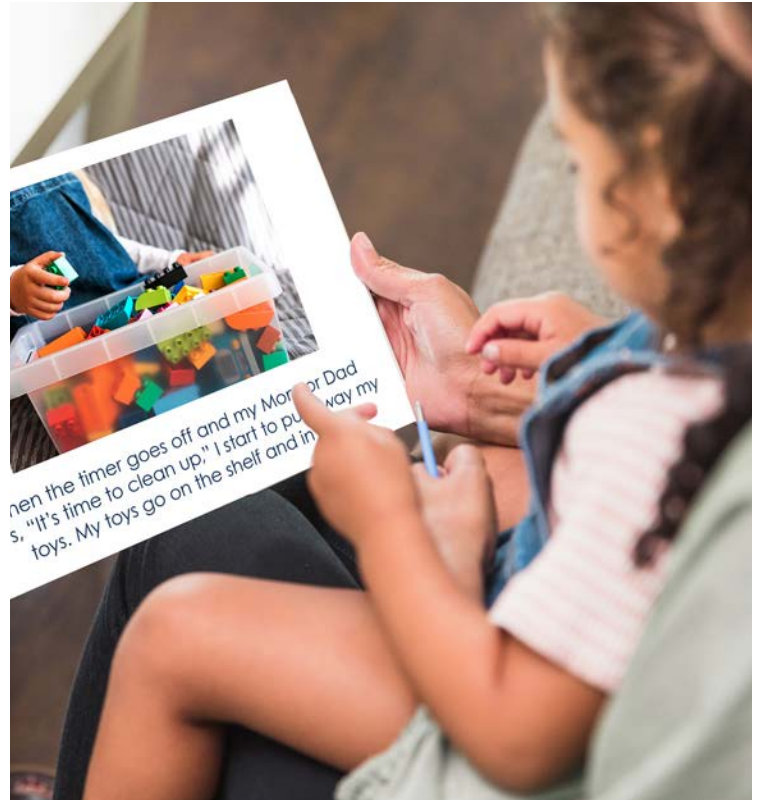
### Read the story with your child

- ▶ Talk about the important parts of the story.
- ▶ Encourage your child to ask questions.
- ▶ Read the story multiple times a day.

### Ask questions about important parts

**For example:** *“What do you do when the timer goes off?”*

- ▶ If your child knows the answer, let them know how great that is:  
*“Yes, that’s right. When the timer goes off, you need to start cleaning up. You remembered that from the story.”*
- ▶ If your child doesn’t know or gives an incorrect answer, go back to the story:  
*“Let’s look at that page again, here it says, ‘When the timer goes off and my Mom or Dad says, ‘It’s time to clean up,’ I start to put away my toys. So, what will you do when the timer goes off?’”*



### Celebrate your child’s effort and success

- ▶ Provide positive descriptive feedback when your child uses the skills from the story.  
**For example:** *“You started picking up your toys when the timer went off. I am so proud of you. You are such a big helper.”*
- ▶ Encourage your child to use the skills when needed.  
**For example:** *“We can play with the water toys, but be ready for the timer in a little bit, because we need to go shopping soon.”*

# Cleaning Up My Toys





I like to play.



Sometimes I play by myself.  
Sometimes I play with my brother, Devonte.





I play with lots of different toys.  
Things like blocks, puzzles, and dolls.



I can use the toys when I am playing. But when I am done playing, I need to clean up my toys. This keeps everyone safe. Leaving the toys on the floor is not safe. Someone could get hurt. It could break my toys.



When it is time to clean up,  
my Mom or Dad sets a timer for me and tells me,  
“Five more minutes of play.”



When the timer goes off and my Mom or Dad says, "It's time to clean up," I start to put away my toys. My toys go on the shelf and in bins.



Sometimes cleaning up is hard because I want to keep playing. I can ask for 5 more minutes and my Mom or Dad will reset the timer. I can also ask if I can save my toys for later. They might let me keep my block tower up to play with later.



If I need help cleaning up, I can say,  
“Please help me.”



Cleaning up my toys is a big job.  
I am a big helper when I clean up my toys.  
My Mom and Dad are proud of me  
when I am a big helper and I clean up.

# Clean up Story *Example*

## Cleaning Up My Toys



A photo of your child playing would be placed here.

Photos help your child become interested in reading the story with you.

The story describes the steps.

The story contains details that are specific to your child.

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The story is written as if your child is talking.

Add photos that are specific to each step of a routine, such as a photo of a timer and your child cleaning up.



I like to play.



Sometimes I play by myself.  
Sometimes I play with my brother, Devonte.



I play with lots of different toys.  
Things like blocks, puzzles, and dolls.



I can use the toys when I am playing. But when I am done playing, I need to clean up my toys. This keeps everyone safe. Leaving the toys on the floor is not safe. Someone could get hurt. It could break my toys.

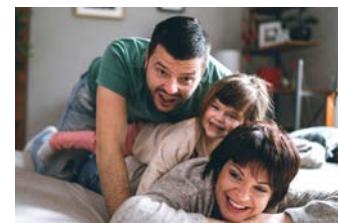


When it is time to clean up, my Mom or Dad sets a timer for me and tells me, "Five more minutes of play."



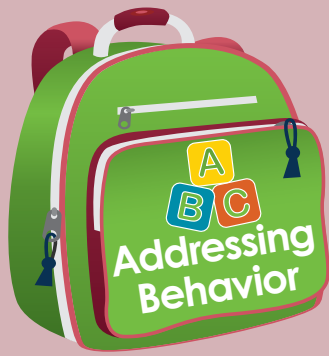
When the timer goes off and my Mom or Dad says, "It's time to clean up," I start to put away my toys. My toys go on the shelf and in bins.

A photo of your child cleaning up will help your child understand the goal.



Cleaning up my toys is a big job. I am a big helper when I clean up my toys. My Mom and Dad are proud of me when I am a big helper and I clean up.





# How to Use Social Stories to Teach Your Child New Skills and Expectations

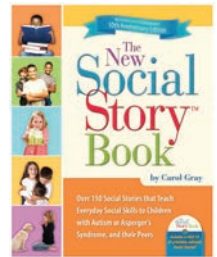
Brooke Brogle, Alyson Jiron & Jill Giacomini

Children love to listen to stories. Not only are stories used to entertain children, they can also be used as tools to teach new skills and expectations. Many parents read books to teach their children the alphabet or numbers, but stories can also be used to:

- Teach social skills, such as how to take turns.
- Teach clear behavior expectations for a time of day (e.g., quiet time) or event (e.g., road trip).
- Reinforce routines, such as getting ready for bed.
- Prepare for new experiences, such as the first day of school.
- Address a challenging behavior, such as hitting.

**Social stories™**, developed by Carol Gray of the Gray Center for Social Learning and Understanding, can be used to help children and adolescents understand social situations and expectations. Social stories are brief, simple stories that are created to show your child what to expect, and what is expected of him, during a specific activity. Social stories can include pictures of your child and are written in a way that he can understand. They also use positive language to show your child what he can do and provide healthy ways to deal with strong emotions. For example, a social story that teaches a new skill to replace hitting might say, "If my friend tries to take my toy, I can say 'Stop. This toy is busy.'" Social stories validate how your child feels, but also can show him how others feel. For example, "My friend feels sad when I hit him." When used for specific situations, social stories help children to make wise choices and give them the confidence to try new experiences.

Page 8: I can choose to play with something else.  
Page 9: I feel proud when I make wise choices!



- This type of social story helps your child to see that her problem is normal, teaches her words to help her express her feelings and gives her choices by telling her what she can do. In addition to helping her share with Ben, it will also help her to understand that she can make choices in other difficult situations.
- Social stories are very helpful to children when they go into a new situation. For example, if your child is going on an airplane for the first time, you can create a social story to provide him with clear expectations and help him understand all the things he can do at the airport and on the plane.
- There are many social stories already created that address issues such as hitting, safety, going to school, emotions and more. For a book list and free downloadable scripted stories for social situations, you can go to <http://challengingbehavior.fmhi.usf.edu/Implementation/Program/strategies.html>.

## Backpack Connection Series

### About this Series

The Backpack Connection Series was created by TACSEI to provide a way for teachers and parents/caregivers to work together to help young children develop social emotional skills and reduce challenging behavior. Teachers may choose to send a handout home in each child's backpack when a new strategy or skill is introduced to the class. Each Backpack Connection handout provides information that helps parents stay informed about what their child is learning at school and specific ideas on how to use the strategy or skill at home.

### The Pyramid Model

The Pyramid Model is a framework that provides programs with guidance on how to promote social emotional competence in all children and design effective interventions that support young children who might have persistent challenging behavior. It also provides practices to ensure that children with social emotional delays receive intentional teaching. Programs that implement the Pyramid Model are eager to work together with families to meet every child's individualized learning and support needs. To learn more about the Pyramid Model, please visit [ChallengingBehavior.org](http://ChallengingBehavior.org).

### More Information

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### Practice at School

Teachers create social stories to help children:

- Adjust to new experiences, such as saying goodbye to a parent at drop-off.
- Understand expectations, such as what we can do on our new playground.
- Learn social skills, such as how to share.

Teachers work together with families, and often read the same book at home and at school, to reinforce the skill or expectation.

### The Bottom Line

Reading stories to your child provides a time for everyone to relax. These moments are a perfect time to teach your child or talk to her about feelings. Social stories are a great tool you can use to teach your child expectations or new skills before she is expected to use them. When you read a book with your child again and again, she feels confident about making choices that help her to have a positive experience.

### Try This at Home

- Choose a situation that has been challenging for your child. For example, if your child and her friend Ben have been having problems with sharing when they play, you can write a simple social story to teach her how to share with him.  
Page 1: I feel excited when I go to Ben's house!  
Page 2: We play with trains, do puzzles and build towers.  
Page 3: Sometimes, we both want to play with the same train.  
Page 4: If we both want the same toy, I have choices!  
Page 5: I can find another train and ask Ben to trade.  
Page 6: I can get a timer and we can take turns.  
Page 7: I can ask my mommy for help.



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## SOCIAL STORY TIPS AND SAMPLE

Social expectations or the proper way to respond when interacting with others are typically learned by example. People with communication difficulties and/or behavior problems sometimes need more explicit instructions. Social stories are meant to help children understand social situations, expectations, social cues, new activities, and/or social rules. As the name implies, they are brief descriptive stories that provide accurate information regarding a social situation. Knowing what to expect can help children with challenging behavior act appropriately in a social setting. Parents, teachers, and caregivers can use these simple stories as a tool to prepare the child for a new situation, to address problem behavior, or even to teach new skills in conjunction with reinforcing responses. The following is an example of a social story explaining when it's appropriate to run.

### Running

I like to run. It is fun to go fast.  
It's okay to run when I am playing outside.  
I can run when I am on the playground.  
Sometimes I feel like running, but it is dangerous to run when I am inside.  
Running inside could hurt me or other people.  
When people are inside, they walk.  
Walking inside is safe.  
I will try to walk inside and only run when I am outside on the playground.  
My teachers and parents like it when I remember to walk inside.

### Writing a Social Story

*Begin by observing the child in the situation you are addressing. Try to take on the child's perspective and include aspects of his or her feelings or views in the story. Also, include usual occurrences in the social situation and the perspective of others along with considering possible variations.*

There are three types of sentences used in writing social stories:

1. Descriptive sentences: objectively define anticipated events where a situation occurs, who is involved, what they are doing, and why. (e.g., When people are inside, they walk.)
2. Perspective sentences: describe the internal status of the person or persons involved, their thoughts, feelings, or moods. (e.g., Running inside could hurt me or other people.)
3. Directive sentences: are individualized statements of desired responses stated in a positive manner. They may begin "I can try..." or "I will work on..." Try to avoid

sentences starting with "do not" or definitive statements. (e.g., I will try to walk in inside.)

A social story should have 3 to 5 descriptive and perspective sentences for each directive sentence. Avoid using too many directive sentences. They will be lost without adequate contextualization.

Write in first person and on the child's developmental skill level. Also remember to use pictures that fit within the child's developmental skill level to supplement text.

Reference:

Broek, E., Cain, S.L., Dutkiewicz, M., Fleck, L., Grey, B., Grey, C., et al. (1994). *The Original Social Story Book*. Arlington, TX: Future Education. [www.thegraycenter.org](http://www.thegraycenter.org)



# How to Use Visual Schedules to Help Your Child Understand Expectations

Alyson Jiron, Brooke Brogle & Jill Giacomini

Adults often use calendars, grocery lists, and “to do” lists to help complete tasks and enhance memory. Children as young as 12 months can also benefit from these kinds of tools and reminders. Often, children do not respond to adult requests because they don’t actually understand what is expected of them. When a child doesn’t understand what he or she is supposed to do and an adult expects to see action, the result is often challenging behavior such as tantrums, crying or aggressive behavior. A child is more likely to be successful when he is told specifically what he should do rather than what he should not do. A visual (photographs, pictures, charts, etc.) can help to communicate expectations to young children and avoid challenging behavior. Unlike verbal instructions, a visual provides the child with a symbol that helps the child to see and understand words, ideas, and expectations. Perhaps best of all, a visual schedule keeps the focus on the task at hand and negotiation about tasks is not provided as an option.



Visual schedules (activity steps through pictures) can be used at home to teach routines such as getting ready for school. These types of schedules teach children what is expected of them and reminds them what they should be doing.

When you create a visual schedule, the CHILD should be able to use the schedule to answer the following questions: (1) What am I supposed to be doing? (2) How do I know that I am making progress? (3) How do I know when I am done? (4) What will happen next?

## Try This at Home

- Include your child in the creation of the visual schedule as much as possible. Let your child draw the pictures or take photos of your child doing the activity. Children LOVE seeing themselves in photos. You can also ask your child’s teacher for help with creating a visual schedule.
- Remember! Following a visual schedule is a skill that children need to learn. You can teach your child how to do this by referring to the schedule often.
- Allow your child to remove the photo of an activity once the activity is done. We all loving checking things off our list!
- Choose a difficult time of day (i.e. getting ready for school, bedtime, etc.) to begin. Once it becomes routine, you can easily expand the visual schedule to include your entire day.

## Practice at School

Visual schedules are used to show a clear beginning, middle and end. Visuals empower children to become independent and encourage participation. At school, visual schedules can be used to show a daily routine, a sequence of activities to be completed or the steps in an activity. Visuals can also help a child remember classroom rules or other expectations without adult reminders.

## The Bottom Line


Visual schedules can bring you and your child closer together, reduce power struggles and give your child confidence and a sense of control. Visual schedules greatly limit the amount of “no’s” and behavior corrections you need to give throughout the day, since your child can better predict what should happen next.

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# Visual Supports for Routines, Schedules, and Transitions

## Introduction

Visual supports can help children learn new skills and prevent challenging behavior. Visuals help young children learn and follow routines by helping them understand what is happening “now” and what is going to happen “next.” Visuals serve as reminders for verbal directions and help children know exactly what is expected of them.

*Use the following visual cue cards and templates to develop visual supports that work for your child and family!*



## Visual Schedule



## Visual Schedules

Using a visual schedule at home provides young children with predictability (i.e., they know what activity or routine is coming and when) and consistency (i.e., the schedule of activities or routines is the same). Visual schedules help children know what their day will look like by letting them know when activities or routines will happen. These visual cards will make this process easy!

### Making a Visual Schedule

1. **Identify when you need a visual schedule.** A visual schedule might outline parts of a day, half-day, or an entire day. Pick the times of your day when your child might need extra support to engage in activities or cope with transitions.
2. **List the steps** you want your child to follow. For example, for a bedtime routine, you might list:
  - go to the bathroom
  - wash
  - put on pajamas
  - brush teeth
  - read a book
  - bed time

**TIP!** Structure the day so that fun activities follow ones that are challenging. You might put cleaning up right before going outside or brushing teeth right before reading books.

3. **Cut out the cards.** Optional: Print cards on cardstock, attach to thicker paper, laminate, or make cards sturdy by covering with clear tape or clear contact paper.
4. **Select the visual cards** for the schedule you want to create. *Don't see a visual you need? It's easy to make your own! See the page 4 for directions.*
5. **Get creative!** Use tape, Velcro, or magnets to post the visual cards in the order your child will do them. Families find that posters, file folders, or hanging pocket charts work great for visual schedules.

**TIP!** Schedules work best when children can see when they are done with an activity. Here are some ideas:

- Create a pocket at the bottom or end of the display that represents “finished” or “all done.” Place visuals in envelope or pocket when finished.
  - Make a schedule with visuals that can be removed.
  - If your schedule is a book format, turn the page.
  - Use a placeholder (like a clothespin or paper clip) that can move from visual to visual.
6. **Post the schedule.** Place the schedule at the child's eye level in a place where you go often (e.g., kitchen) to promote consistent use. Use the schedule as part of your daily routine!



## How to Use

- ▶ **Teach your child how to use the schedule** by explaining and demonstrating how to use the pictures.
- ▶ **Refer to the visual schedule** throughout the day (e.g., “We just got home, let’s go check your schedule to see what is next.”).
- ▶ **Talk about the schedule** (e.g., “Look, you just got dressed. Now it is time for breakfast!”).
- ▶ **Make it active!** Teach the child to indicate what is complete. You can have your child flip the card over or remove it from the schedule and put in the “finished” pocket depending on how your schedule is set up.
- ▶ **Celebrate!** Be sure to celebrate your success and the child’s success. Acknowledge and provide positive feedback to your child after activities or routines, especially ones that are not as fun (e.g., “You cleaned up! You must be feeling so proud!” or “Your teeth are so clean now. You are so healthy!”).

## First/Then Boards

First/Then boards can be used for a variety of reasons. They can be used to:

- ▶ Assist with transition from one activity to another. For example, “First clean up, then play outside.”
- ▶ Break routines into smaller steps. For example, “Go to the bathroom and wash hands, then brush your teeth.”
- ▶ Encourage children to complete tasks they might not enjoy in order to do a more enjoyable task. For example, “First brush your teeth, then you can have your tablet.”

### Making a First/Then Board

1. **Cut out the cards.** Optional: Print cards on cardstock, attach to thicker paper, laminate, or make cards sturdy by covering with clear tape or clear contact paper.
2. **Select the visual cards** that represent the activities you need. *Don’t see a visual you need? It’s easy to make your own! See page 4 for directions.*
3. **Make the boards.** Print the board templates provided on pages 5 and 6, or get creative and make your own!
  - Use a file folder, large (4x6) index card, or a piece of cardboard. You want it large enough to hold several of the visuals.
  - Divide board into two sections by making a vertical line to make a FIRST section and a THEN section. Label one section “First” and the other section “Then.”
4. **Attach cards.** If you are able, use small pieces of Velcro on the back of the pictures.
 

**TIP!** Velcro has a rough side and a soft side. Be sure you use the same side on all the pictures. Next, place a strip of opposite Velcro on both sides of the First/Then board.



## How to Use

- ▶ **Try it out!** As you use the First/Then board with your child, place a preferred activity or item on the “then” side of the board. This will increase the likelihood that the child will complete the activities on the “first” side of the board. See the examples below:



- ▶ **Flip the picture over**, as each activity is completed, to indicate that the activity is “finished.” If you place a strip of Velcro on the front of the picture card, you can flip it over and stick it to the board.
- ▶ **Celebrate!** Acknowledge and provide feedback to your child after they complete the “first” activity and are moving to what is coming next (e.g., “You washed your hands and now we get to eat our yummy snack! What a big kid!” Or “You put on your pajamas and now we get to read a book together. Thanks for being such a great bedtime helper!”).

## Making Your Own Visual Cards

*Don't see a visual you want  
or a visual that matches your activity?  
It's easy to make your own!*

1. **Identify the steps** in your routine that are missing visual cards.
2. **Using the blank cards** provided on page 9, you can:
  - draw a picture
  - attach a photo
  - cut out and attach a picture from a magazine

**TIP!** In addition to the visuals that we have provided, you might want to add more specific visuals that can help your child. For example, if your child receives speech therapy, take a picture of your child’s speech therapist and use it instead of the visual we have provided. If your child rides a bus to school, take a picture of a bus that you can use with the visual for going to school.

3. **Label the visual.** Write on the template or if using the electronic template, type in the name of the routine. For example, if you drew a picture of going for a walk, then label the picture, “go for a walk.”
4. **Cut out** the new visual and it add to your visual schedule or first-then board.

**TIP!** Remember, the more specific the visual is to your child and your daily routines, the more likely you will be able to teach the steps and your child will follow the routine.





**First**

**Then**

**First**

**Then**

**Then**

**First**

**Wash**



**Go to the Bathroom**



**Brush Teeth**



**Wash Hands**



**Get Dressed**



**Put on Pajamas**



**Outdoor Play**



**Indoor Play**



**Learning**



**Read a Book**



**Screen Time/TV**



**School/Childcare**



**Stop**



**All Done**



**5 More Minutes**



**Wait**



**Medicine/Treatment**



**Therapy**



**Meal**



**Snack**



**Sit at Table**



**Lie Down**



**Rest**



**Bed Time**



# Clean Up



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# ◆ COFFEE CHAT #3- INVITATION

Positive  
Solutions  
for  
Families



## MAKING & USING VISUAL SUPPORTS

### DISCUSSION POINTS

Join us as we talk about how visual supports can help your child learn and follow routines.

Using visual supports like visual schedules and social stories at home provides young children with predictability and consistency.

### DATE AND PLACE

Join us at the daycare

### ACTIVITIES



#### CREATE YOUR OWN VISUAL SCHEDULE

We will provide all the supplies you need to create your own visual schedule to use at home



#### MAKE & TAKE SOCIAL STORY

You choose the topic & we help you create a social story to use at home with your child