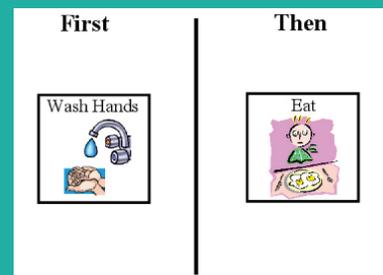


How to Make a First/Then Board

1. A First/Then board can be used to communicate a sequence of events or to reinforce completion of a non-preferred activity. A First/Then board can be used in a variety of ways:
 - Assist with transition from one activity to another.
 - Assist in completing non-preferred tasks by reinforcing with a preferred activity.
 - Breaking a large schedule or sequence of events into smaller steps.
 - First/Then boards can be broken down into two-step activities. For example, "FIRST clean up, THEN go outside."
 - First/Then boards can be broken down into a sequence of steps followed by a reinforcer or the next transition. For example, "FIRST color-cut-glue, THEN computer."

Making the First/Then Board

1. **Gather the materials:** Scissors, glue stick, poster board or file folder, clear contact paper, Velcro, pictures (photographs, pictures from magazines, computer programs, cereal boxes, household supplies, restaurant menus or placemats, wrappers, etc.). TIP: Every picture should have a label so your child can associate the written text with the picture.
2. **Collect pictures** to represent activities (refer to section on Picture Tips, to determine your child's visual stage).
3. **Cut the pictures** out and paste on poster board for durability or print on cardstock.
4. **Laminate or cover** in contact paper.
5. **Use a file folder or cut the poster board** large enough to hold several of the pictures. Divide the sections by making a vertical line to separate the first/then sides. Laminate or cover in contact paper.
6. **Velcro** small pieces of Velcro on the back of the pictures. TIP: Make sure you use the same side of Velcro on all pictures. Next, place a strip of opposite Velcro on both sides of the First/Then board.
7. **As you use the "First/Then" board** with the child, try to place a reinforcing 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 samples.) As each activity is completed, turn the picture over to indicate that the activity is "finished."



Microsoft Clipart© pictures on a simple 2 step transition "First/Then" board.



Activities pictured on the left side represent 2 activities within circle time, then the bold line represents the transition to the next place.



Activities pictured on the left side represent a mini schedule of activities prior to the transition to the activity pictured on the right.



Schedule pictured on the left side represent activities within circle time, then the bold line represents the transition to the next place.

8. Once your child successfully follows the First/Then board activities, *change the pictures* according to the activity. When using a First/Then schedule, remember to model the behavior. It shouldn't take long before your child understands the First/Then concept! If your child is not following the First/Then board, consider the visual stage you have selected by referring to the "Picture Tips" section. It is also possible that the activity on the "then" side is not reinforcing for your child.
9. *Celebrate* your success!



Helpful Tips:

Using Your Visual Schedule

- Review activities with children
- Inform children of schedule changes by re-arranging visuals, or use a stop sign to cover an activity that will not occur that day
- Turn visuals over to indicate activities completed and activities remaining
- Create mini-schedules to guide the class through circle time or other activities, turn over activity when completed
- Use choice visuals within an activity (e.g., song, story, finger play, puppets) to let children choose activity or activity sequence

Files for making visuals are located on your CD. These include: daily visual schedule, potty visuals, wash hands visual, mini-schedules, and outside activity cards.