

USING VISUALS

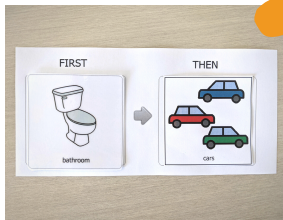
INFORMATION AND INSPIRATION

We as adults all rely on visual helpers every day. We use calendars, day timers, street signs, grocery lists, maps, and so on. Using visual cues in our environment allows us to plan, organize, and most of all be independent. Visuals are equally important to children because they are just beginning to learn how things work in the world - [Connectability](#).

WHAT ARE VISUALS USED FOR?



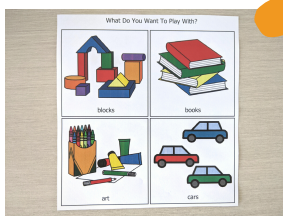
Visual schedules provide children with information about what their day will look like. They provide a sense of predictability in children's days and they can anticipate what will or will not occur thus decreasing anxiety and challenging behaviour.



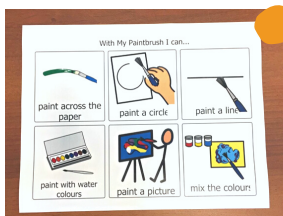
First...Then boards break down the visual schedule into smaller and more manageable chunks. They also can support transitions to remind children of what is coming next. First...Then is most effective when the "then" is highly motivating. i.e., "First bathroom, then you can play with cars", or "First clean up, then bubbles".



Visual Tags support children's understanding of directions. These visuals are easily accessible (as educators normally wear them on their person) and provide children with a visual understanding of what the educators is asking. i.e., Sit down, line up, bathroom time, etc. Any direction that educators give children can be made into a visual, and these can be personalized and arranged in any order based on needs of classroom.



Choice Boards provide children with support to make decisions throughout the day. They could be used to choose play activities (i.e., blocks or play dough), food choices (i.e., milk or water), or could be used during group time to choose books to read or songs to sing.



Visuals to support play can be used in any area of a learning environment; they provide children with ideas on how they may use materials appropriately which, as a result, supports engagement in experiences.

TIPS FOR USING VISUALS



Use visuals with **ALL** children. All children benefit from using visuals, just like all adults do. Using visuals class-wide also normalizes using supportive strategies and builds a sense inclusion and belonging.



No matter what visual support you are using, always pair a **verbal prompt** with it. It is important that children hear the language and see the visual at the same time so they form associations and build language skills.

Similar to any other communication, getting down to a **child's eye level** to use a visual will be most effective.

Remember that children communicate and understand at different levels. Some children might benefit from using real objects (i.e., a diaper to indicate bathroom time) or a real object's photo instead of an icon or image; **personalize** accordingly!

Use written text along with visuals to promote **literacy** and to ensure that everyone uses the same language. Being consistent is important, so if the visual says “group time”, all educators should use the term group time instead of “circle” or “gathering time”.

Be patient. Implementing any new strategy takes time to become effective. Once you start using a visual, use it consistently throughout the day and with all children. Remember, visuals support all children and contribute remarkably to their success without us even realizing it.

CONNECT WITH
YOUR
RESOURCE
CONSULTANT
TO SUPPORT
YOU IN
IMPLEMENTING
VISUALS IN
YOUR
CLASSROOM
AND WITH
INDIVIDUAL
CHILDREN!



9 REASONS TO USE VISUALS

www.northstarpaths.com

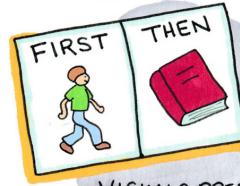
@kwiens62



- VISUALS ARE PERMANENT (SPOKEN WORDS DISAPPEAR)



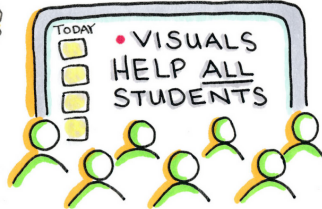
- VISUALS ALLOW TIME FOR LANGUAGE PROCESSING



- VISUALS PREPARE STUDENTS FOR TRANSITIONS



- VISUALS HELP KIDS SEE WHAT YOU MEAN



• VISUALS HELP ALL STUDENTS



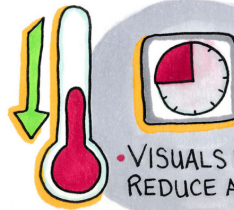
- VISUALS HELP BUILD INDEPENDENCE



- VISUALS ARE TRANSFERABLE BETWEEN ENVIRONMENTS AND PEOPLE



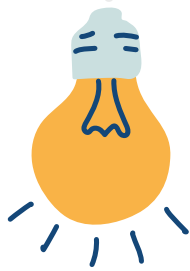
- VISUALS HAVE NO ATTITUDE
 - NO TONE
 - NO FRUSTRATION
 - NO DISAPPROVAL



- VISUALS HELP REDUCE ANXIETY

Kristen Wiens - North Star Paths

THRC RESOURCE LIBRARY OFFERS PRE-MADE VISUAL SUPPORTS FOR THE HALTON COMMUNITY. FIND THEM [HERE!](#)



Book an Appointment with the RL Staff to create personalized visual supports that fit your needs!

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Long Story Shortz - Visuals](#)

[5 MM Special Edition: Visuals](#)

[Podcast: Using Visual Supports in Early Childhood Programs](#)

[Create your own Visuals: Connectivity Visuals Engine](#)



info@thrc.ca



905-875-4600 ext. 101