SUPPORTING EARLY LEARNERS WITH VISUAL SUPPORTS

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ESD 105

Our toddlers/preschoolers arrive to a school environment brand new to the world of school based learning.

◦ Often without experience in what it looks like and feels like to be part of a group

◦ Often without experience participating in a structured learning environment

◦ Often without experience sitting, attending, or imitating the skills modeled to them by an adult

◦ Perhaps with developmental differences

◦ Perhaps with difficult patterns of behavior

To support early learning/beginning level learners, we have to make sure each student can understand what they are being asked to do.

Giving our students extra clues and cues:

◦ Visual Tools Offer
  ◦ Extra support to lower language learners (Receptive Language Delays-Understanding of Langauge)
  ◦ Extra support to students with developmental delay
  ◦ Extra support and motivation to students with behavioral differences

Using visuals with students increases their opportunity to experience success while learning how to learn.

Today's Presentation:

◦ Today we are going to focus on visual tools that support:

1. Learning how to learn
2. Learning beginning sequencing skills
3. Learning how to make choices
4. Increasing success of our students with behavioral differences

# Learning How to Learn:

Initial Step Of Supporting Learning:

A First/Then Board is a great visual tool to increase a child's understanding of what they are to be doing now, and what will be coming next.
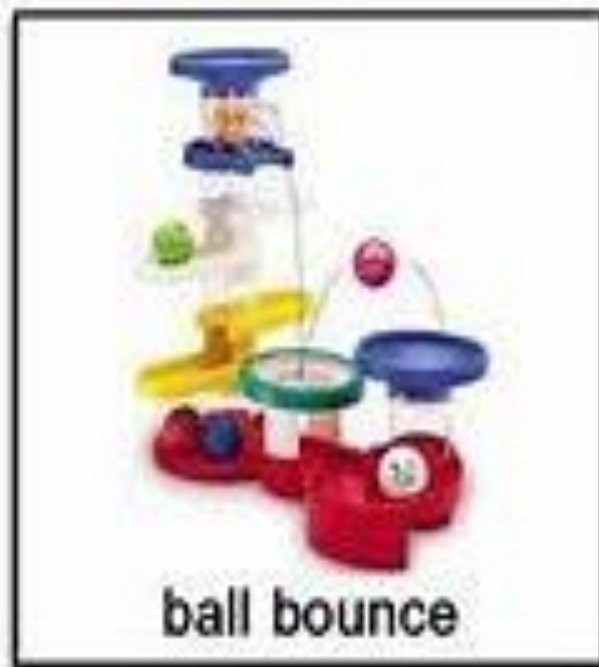
First/Then Board Continued:

- ◦ First/Then boards also support with motivation. For early learners that are intrinsically interested in coming to the table for learning, a First/Then board supports a child in learning what will come next after they complete the short task that is given.

First	Then
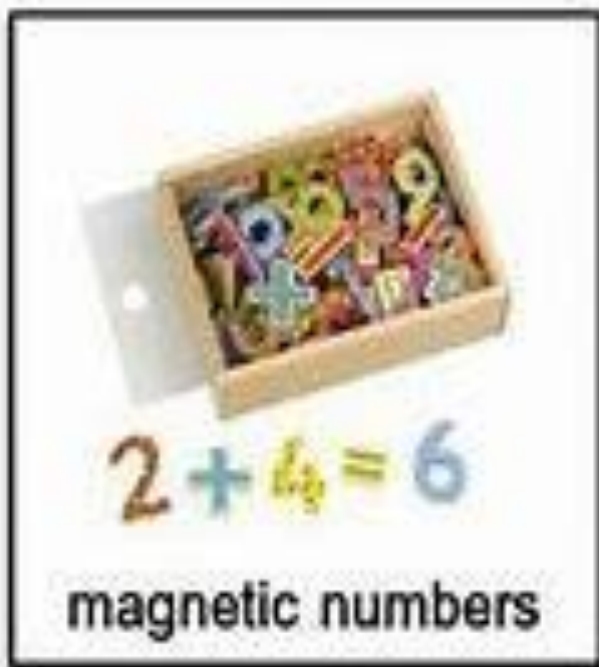
First Then Board:

◦ Load the First/Then board with pictures that are **<u>meaningful</u>** to your student.

◦ Chose an activity that is more preferred/motivating to the child you are working with to place in the "Then" box.

◦ Get down at a child's level to assure that the child has the best opportunity to attend to the visual supports.

◦ Always utilize language with the visual cue. ("First we work on magnet letters and then it's time for ball maze")

◦ Provide support in having the child touch each picture as it's being presented

◦ Move to complete the first activity with the child.

◦ Present the more motivating activity following the work activity being completed.

Hierarchy of understanding visual tools: This is so incredibly important!!

◦ Objects (diaper, toothbrush, crayon, small toy, bubble wand)

◦ Pictures of real objects

◦ Symbols

◦ Drawings

◦ Words

   *Without creating meaning for the child we are working with, we are simply creating more work for ourselves.

Real life objects as a visual tool:

Example of using objects as a visual tool:

Pictures of pictures of real life objects as a visual tool:

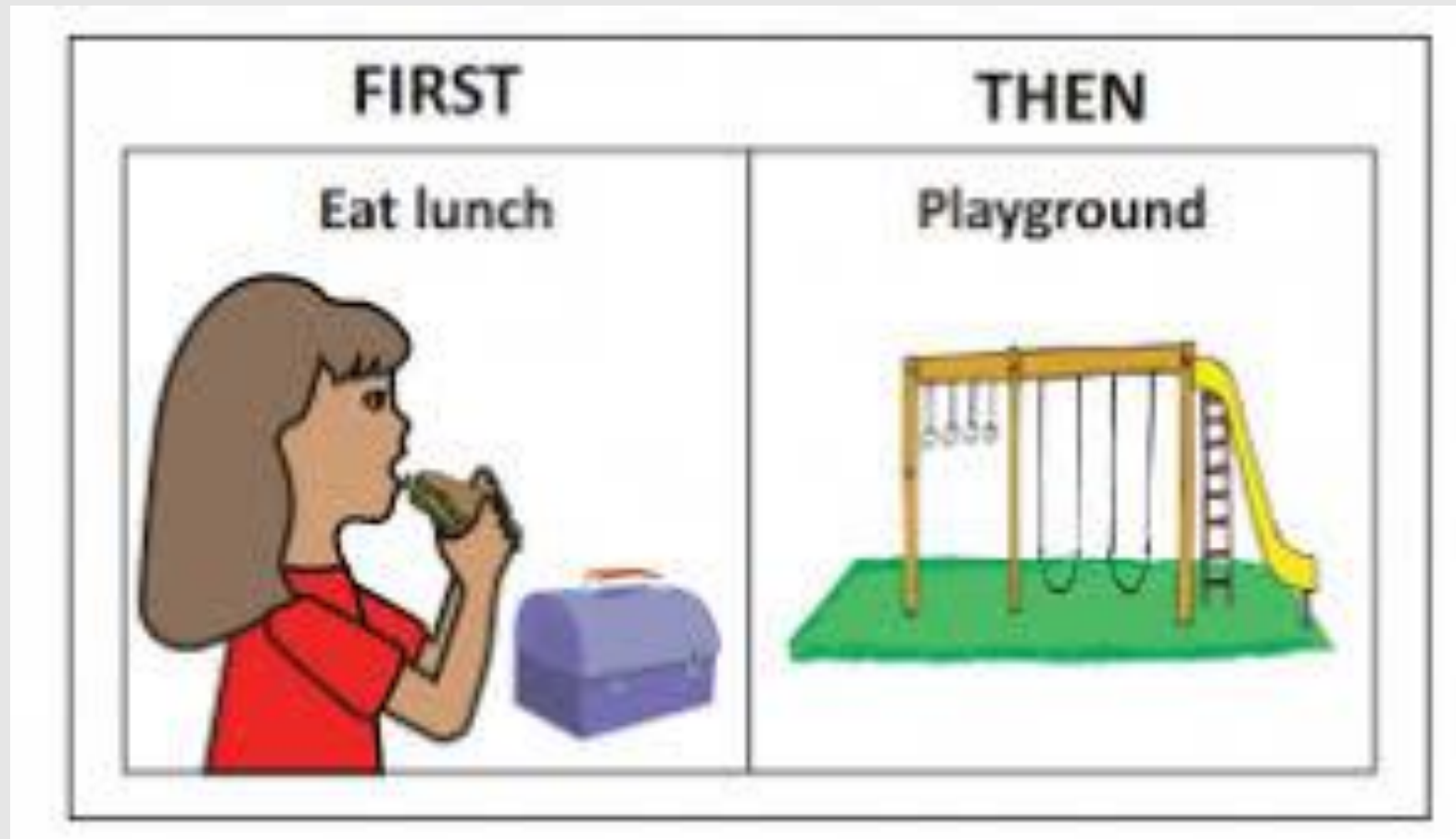# Pictures of real life objects as a visual continued:
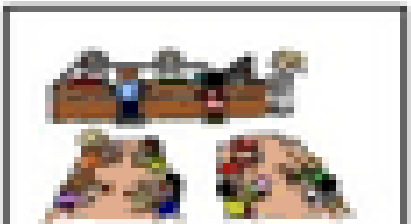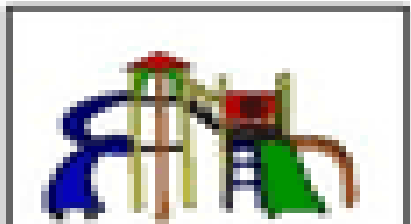

OBJECTS

First bathroom, then legos

Use of picture symbols as a visual tool:

Use of pictures symbols continued:

Use of drawings as a visual tool:

Use of a First/Then with words as a visual tool:
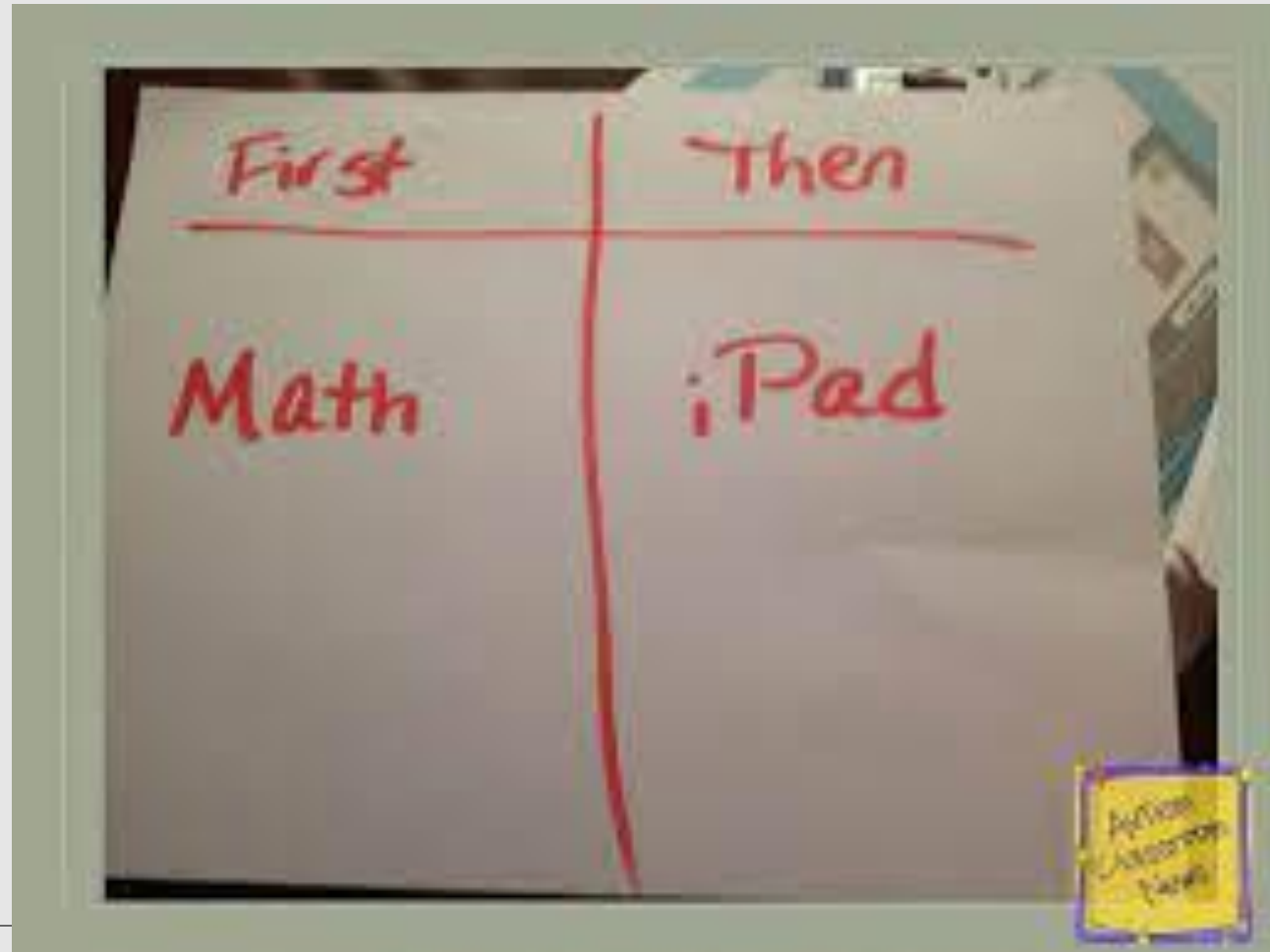
Presentation of First/Then board:

◦ As you are getting started using a first/then board with a child, **make the "first" activity (adult directed) activity quick and easy**. Completing a simple puzzle, moving quickly through a board book, putting blocks back into the block container, etc.

◦ Use lots of positive feedback as the child moves through the activity. ("Look at you go," "Great job," "I love what you're doing!"

◦ When the "First" task is completed, you say, "You're all finished with magnets, now it's time for ball maze!"

◦ Set a timer to let the child know that there will be an end to the more motivating activity. (3 to 5 mintues)

◦ Load the "First/Then" board again.

Using the First/Then board for clean-up:

◦ It's free play and the music just started to indicate it's "clean up time".

◦ Load your "First/Then" board with a clean up photo and then a more motivating activity.

◦ Get down at the child's level and support the child in touching the pictures as you talk about the "First/Then" process.

◦ Move with the child as you support the child in cleaning up.

◦ Reward the task by allowing the child time with the more motivating activity that's listed in the "Then" category.

Moving beyond the First/Then Board:

◦ The First/Then board is to support gaining a child's attention, working on following through with a task, and receiving a more motivating activity when the "first" task is completed. **This is beginning sequencing.**

◦ Once a child has mastered the "First/Then" board, you can move onto increasing the number of tasks that are presented.

◦ Your new tool will be called a visual schedule.

◦ **Start Small!**

Visual Schedule:

Visual Schedule:

Visual schedule with an all done envelope:

Whole class visual schedule:

Utilizing visual tools to support making a choice:

Why is choice making important?

○ Learning to make a choice between two preferred activities/toys teaches a child to:

  ○ Making a choice

  ○ Look at attend to both objects

  ○ Communicate a responds by reaching for, pointing to, or using words.

  ○ The concept supports young children in play. I can look at the toy shelf, chose 1 toy, sit down, and play. This can replace a child's desire to engage in the run/dump play routine.

Begin teaching choice making by showing a child two objects or two pictures of objects.
It's best to start with 1 preferred item, and one less preferred item so that we are supporting them in the decision making process.

After a child has mastered choosing between two objects, you can begin to broaden the field of choices offered to them.

Choice board for snack time:

Three item choice board for play:

Picture Exchange vs Choice Board Without Velcro:

◦ For a child to move from a choice board where they are required to remove the picture and hand it to their communication partner they must present with a dedicated point.
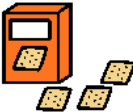
Six item choice board:

Choice Board for Circle Time

Choice Board for Snack

A child's ability to be part of choosing parts of their day <u>increases a child's interest in participating</u>.

Using visuals to increase motivation to complete a task that is less preferred.

We do not all come into the world intrinsically ready to learn. Sometimes learning tasks feel difficult, less interesting, or out of our league.

Think about when the alarm rang this morning. What motivational techniques did you use to get yourself up and

Extrinsic Motivation

Behavior is driven by external rewards such as money, fame, grades, and praise

Utilizing extrinsic motivation to support student success:

Changing Behaviors through increasing motivation and Pairing Reinforcement Strategies:

◦ Types of Reinforcement Systems:
  ◦ One to One Reinforcement
  ◦ Token Boards
  ◦ Ticket Systems
  ◦ Point Scales
  ◦ Visual Schedules with Self Monitoring Systems of Reinforcement

One to One Reinforcement: First I follow an adult directed activity, then I get something I want.

◦ **<u>Token Economy</u>**

Token Economies require delayed gratification. We do not come into the world with an understanding of delaying gratification, so often it's a skill we teach. Students are given "tokens" to represent success in meeting their expected behaviors.

I am earning:

Slinkey

Reinforcement Systems Continued:

○ **<u>Ticket Systems</u>**

Students are given tickets for demonstrating expected behavior that they may turn in for desired toys, activities or food items.
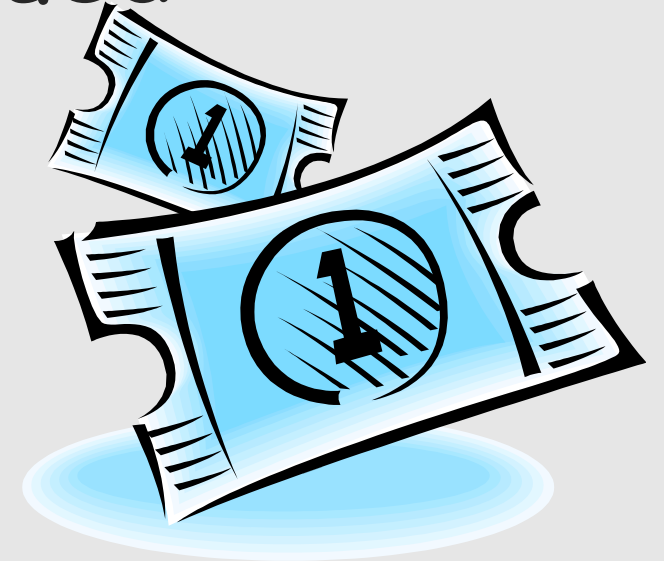
◦ **Point Scales**

Students receive points for demonstrating their expected behavior that they can redeem for tangibles/activities.

PE Hands to Self	+2	+0
Hallway Hands to Self	+2	+0
Lunch Line Hands to Self	+2	+0
Restroom Hands to Self	+2	+0
Complete Science Work	+2	+0
Complete Math Work	+2	+0

How to increase SUCCESS:

Reward frequently

◦ When teaching me "how to learn"
◦ When teaching something new
◦ When teaching something difficult
◦ When you feel like you're losing me!!!

◦ How to effectively teach and utilize a reinforcement system?? IMPORTANT!!!

  ◦ Make sure you have a reward (something that the student is earning) that is **HIGHLY** desirable and **ONLY** available to the student after completing the desired behavior!

  ◦ As you get going, **reinforce frequently** and ongoingly (More is always better than less!)

  ◦ Remember to pair verbal praise with any system of reinforcement

  ◦ Be willing and ready to tweak your system!

  ◦ Train teachers/providers across school

  ◦ **Give…don't take away!**

Questions?

Thanks for participating in today's training! You are doing the most important work! Please reach out if you have any concerns.

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