

UNIVERSITY OF
LOUISVILLE®

KENTUCKY AUTISM
TRAINING CENTER 

Visual Supports

Laura Ferguson, M.Ed., BCBA

What are Visual Supports??



Things that we see that enhance the communication process.

Types of Visual Supports

- 1) Body Movement:** body language, natural gestures, and sign
- 2) Environmental Cues:** such as objects and signs
- 3) Traditional tools for organization:** calendars, shopping lists, recipes, and instruction manuals
- 4) Specialized communication aids:** picture stories, behavior scripts, and activity schedules.

Why are visual supports important?

- Give the student/child time to focus
- Time to work out meaning
- Child can refer back to visual
- Enable communication to be more specific
- Encourage consistency in procedures, expectations, and routines across all people involved with the child

Why are visual supports important?

- Make life predictable
- Gives a framework for talking about change








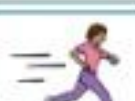


The Importance of Visual Supports Part 1


Visual Schedules


- Easy way to provide students with consistent cues about their daily lives
- Help child anticipate what will happen next


Whole Day Schedule

Today's Schedule

 art	 science	1	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
 music group	 lunch		2	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 break	 English		3	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 geography	 gym		4	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
 swimming	 multimedia class		5	<input type="text"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>


Start over


Clear checks


Review

Routine/Activity Schedule

MY MORNING SCHEDULE

Today is **Thursday** 

I am **staying home** 

wake up 	breakfast 	medicine 	rest in bed 	

Copyright © 2006 by Adapted-4-Autism
The Picture Communication Symbols© 1981-2007 Mayer-Johnson, Inc.
Used with permission.

Activity Schedule

 **Jake's Morning Schedule**

1	 wake up	 get out of bed	 put on robe	 put on slippers
2	 use bathroom	 go to toilet	 wash hands	 dry hands
3	 brush teeth	 put on pants	 put on shirt	 put on shoes
4	 fold laundry	 put in drawer	 make bed	 sing for breakfast

Within Activity Schedule



Brushing Teeth

1

wet toothbrush



2

toothpaste on brush



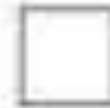
3

brush teeth



4

spit in sink



5

rinse toothbrush



Within Activity Schedule



First/Then

Visual form that provides high motivation for the student to work through one activity to get to a preferred activity.

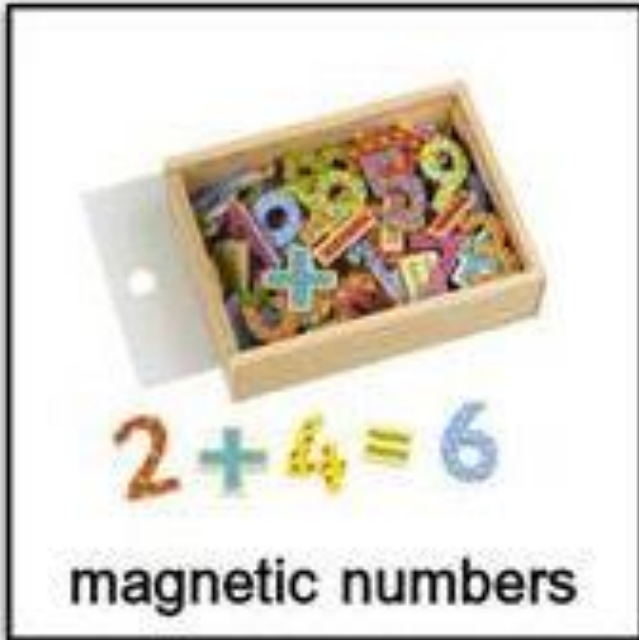
This can be a powerful strategy in maintaining appropriate behavior throughout transitions.

First/Then

STEPS for TEACHING:

- 1) Identify preferred items through preference assessment
- 2) 1st Preferred-Then Preferred several opportunities over several days
- 3) Gradually introduce non-preferred tasks as the “First” expectation
- 4) Make sure that “Then” is still a highly preferred item

First



Then



First

Tidy up



Then

Outside



Social Narratives

- * Social narratives are interventions that describe social situations in some detail by highlighting relevant cues and offering examples of appropriate responding.**
- *They are aimed at helping learners adjust to changes in routine and adapt their behaviors based on the social and physical cues of a situation, or to teach specific social skills or behaviors.**

Social Narratives

Social narratives are individualized according to learner needs and typically are quite short, perhaps including pictures or other visual aides.

Sentence types that are often used when constructing social narratives include descriptive, directive, perspective, affirmative, control, and cooperative.

Being the line leader

In school most kids walk in line between classes.



The line leader keeps the line moving.



Different children in my class can be the line leader.



If the teacher asks someone in my class to be the line leader, I will try not to get frustrated.



I can say o.k. may be next time.



(This might make my classmates think that I am good at taking turns)

Video Modeling

A form of observational learning in which desired behaviors are learned by watching a video demonstration and then imitating the behavior of the model.

Video self-modeling

Individuals observe themselves performing a behavior successfully on video, then imitate the targeted behavior.



Other-as-model Video Modeling

Individuals observe someone else, preferably same gender and age as themselves, performing a behavior successfully on video, then imitate the targeted behavior.



Video Prompting

Individuals observe someone else, preferably same gender and age as themselves, performing each step of a behavior successfully on video and uses the video clip as a prompt, if needed, to complete the step.



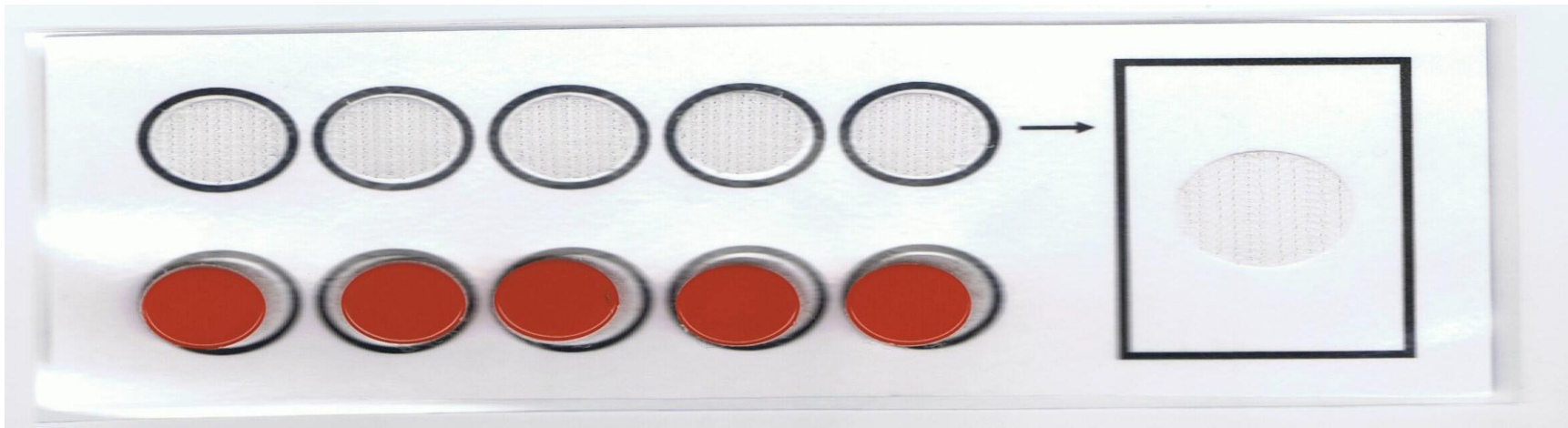
Token Systems

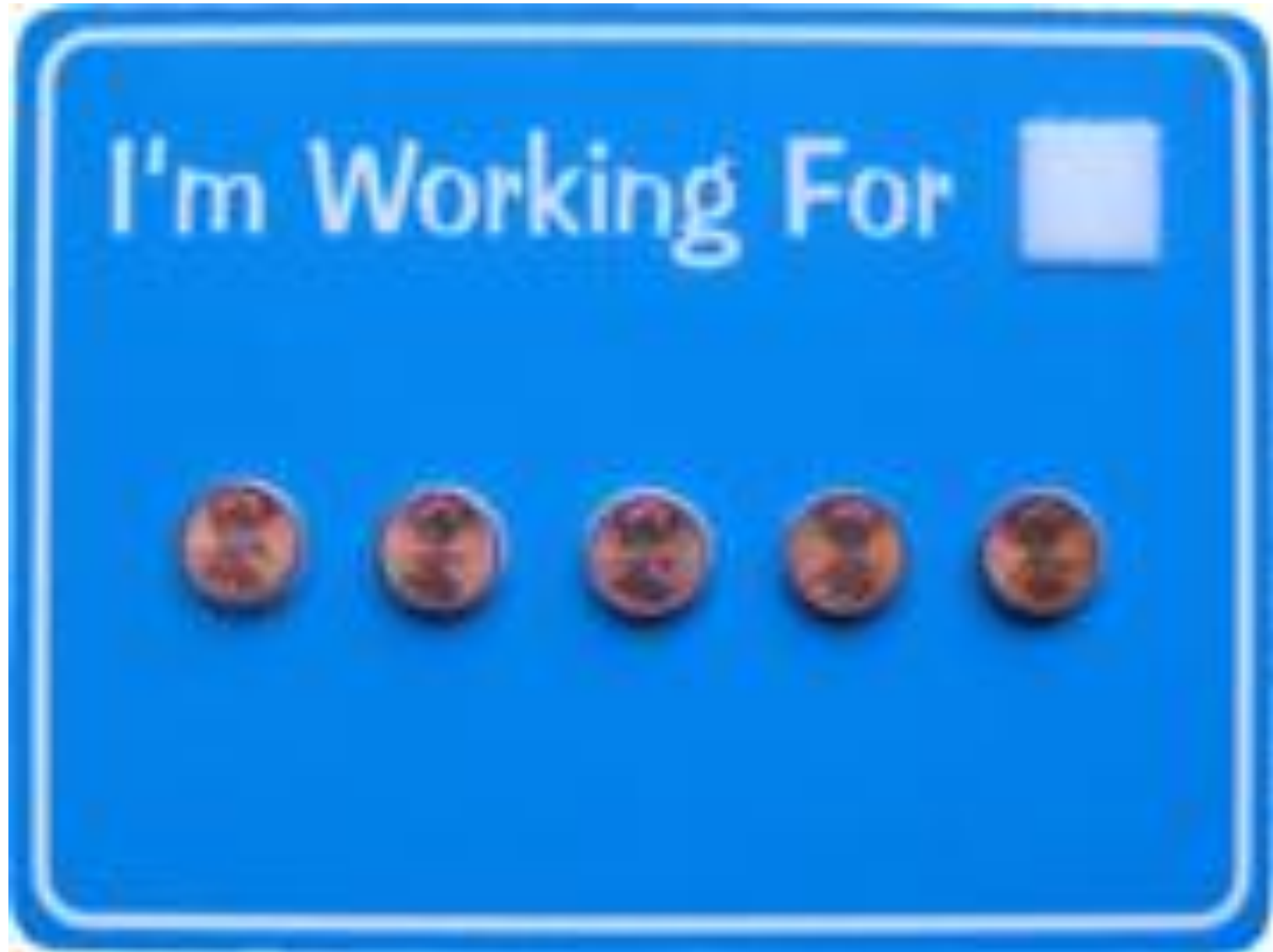
Behavior change system that is composed of three major components:

1. A specified list of target behaviors
2. Tokens or points that participants receive for emitting the targeted behaviors
3. Menu of backup reinforcers; preferred items, activities, or privileges the child can obtain when tokens are earned.

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Token Systems





Implementing a Token System

Depending on the skill level of the learner, the steps in implementing a token system may vary.

General steps include:

1. Describing how the system works
2. Model the procedure for token delivery
3. Model the delivery for token exchange

(Cooper and Heron, 2007)

Token Systems

First tokens should be given on a thin schedule of reinforcement.

Example:

Starting with one token required to contact reinforcement. Then gradually fading in the amount of tokens, before reinforcement is contacted.

They receive reinforcement more quickly

In Summary

Remember:

Visual Strategies help individuals with autism navigate the unknown and predict what may come next.

Thank you so much for coming!!

Questions??

Questions?

Contact info:

Laura Ferguson

Laura.ferguson@louisville.edu

Center contact info:

Telephone: (502) 852-4631

Fax: (502) 852-7148 E-mail: [katc @ louisville.edu](mailto:katc@louisville.edu)

<https://louisville.edu/education/kyautismtraining>

