Getting The Most From Your Visual Schedule

kit — Kids Included Together
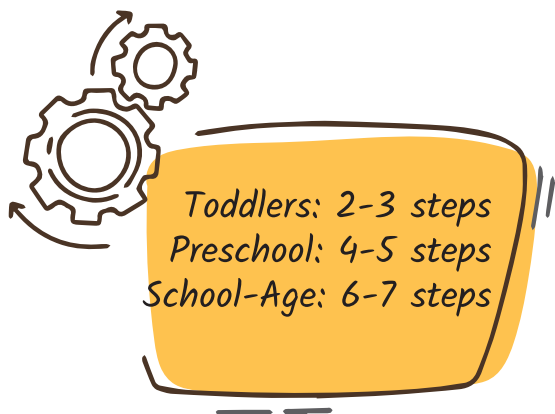
Use this Tip Sheet to help build a visual schedule for an individual child or youth who needs support following routines.

Accessibility

For a visual schedule to be effective, it needs to be easily accessible to both children and staff. This means using a schedule that can **travel with the child** throughout the day. Having **multiple copies** to give to the child & staff and to keep in central rooms also helps everyone follow along!

Age Appropriateness

Toddlers: 2-3 steps
Preschool: 4-5 steps
School-Age: 6-7 steps

Adjust the number of steps included on a visual schedule depending on the age of the child that will use it. For younger kids, try **breaking up the day into sections** and creating a visual schedule for each one. For example, you can use one schedule for morning activities, another for lunch and clean-up, and another for nap and snack time. Switch the schedules as you move through the day. Remember to use language on the schedule that the child will understand or use pictures instead of words.

Personalization

Challenge yourself to **use actual photos of your site** instead of clip art images to represent places or activities. You can also use a small photo of the child as an icon to move their picture on the schedule as they move from one activity to another during the day.

Simplicity

Having a consistent schedule is more important than having a pretty one. If you don't have access to a printer or laminator, just **draw out a general flow** of the day's activities on a piece of paper. To make it easier for kids to follow along, **use numbers to order activities** rather than specific times.
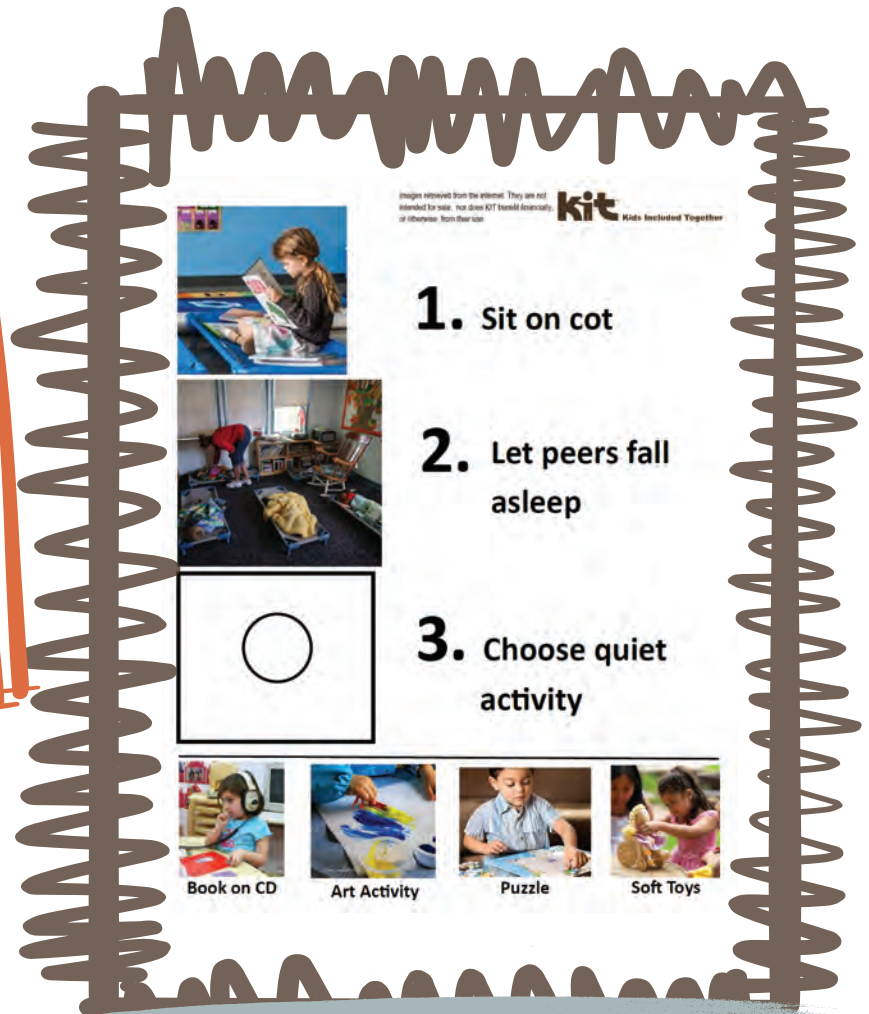
They can be simple drawings!

1. storytime
2. puzzles
3. art
4. wash hands

TIP!
Your visual schedule should read like a book - left to right and top to bottom

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1. Sit on cot

2. Let peers fall asleep

3. Choose quiet activity

Book on CD   Art Activity   Puzzle   Soft Toys

Photos offer a real-life perspective!
In the example above, the child can select one of the four activities available to complete their visual schedule.

Other Resources

- KIT's Creating and Using Visual Schedules
- Visual Supports Tip Sheet