



## Using Visuals

From pictures reminding children to wash their hands to day planners listing meetings for adults, people of all ages benefit from visual reminders. Often simple illustrations or words hung in critical areas can reduce the need to remind children to put away their coat, or finish their work. Below are six steps for helping kids become more organized and independent through visuals.

**1. Select a level:** Objects, photographs, colored drawings, line drawings, or words are ways to present information visually. The more concrete the visual (a photo or an object), the more likely younger and delayed children are to understand the meaning. Below are examples of visuals:

*Picture*



Take shoes off

*Story Page*



From: *Using the Bathroom*

*Drawing and Writing*



Keep Feet Still

**2. Select one image or a sequence:** Sometimes one image is all a child needs for a reminder. Other times, a sequence of visuals is helpful for remembering all of the steps in a task. A sequence of visuals also can be used as a schedule to help children transition from one activity to the next.

**Putting dishes in the dishwasher activity sequence:**



**3. Place visuals properly:** Place visuals at the child's level in the area where they will be used. If the child has a visual schedule, put it in an easy to access area. To use the visuals effectively, point out their presence (i.e. show the child the pictures of putting away the dishes). Explain the visuals are a reminder of what to do.

**4. Reinforce using the visuals:** When children remember to use the visuals, reinforce their behavior. Let the child know, "I like how you looked at your homework list and did all of your work. You can play outside." Be clear about what you liked and the consequence for completing the task.

**5. Involve the child:** Have the child write his/her homework list, select images to represent chores, or help create pictures for the visuals. If children are involved, they feel more ownership in the activities. This also helps children learn organizational strategies they can use later in life.

**6. Modify the visuals:** Examine the visuals regularly to determine if they are appropriate for the child. If a child once needed a picture but has learned to read, be sure to support reading by using a visual with only words

To receive a **free customizable children's book** on waiting, visiting our website: