

How-To Templates

Activity Schedules

Individuals with an autism spectrum disorder (ASD) sometimes have difficulties with sequential processing (i.e., learning the order of events). These difficulties with sequential processing may result in individuals becoming anxious or overwhelmed in certain situations, which in turn may lead to problem behaviors to communicate that anxiety. In contrast, individuals with ASDs often have strengths in visual processing. As a result of this strength, the use of visual schedules can help the individual better understand expectations, thus reducing the likelihood of negative behaviors.

An activity schedule is a visual representation or sequence of pictures or words that represent each step during an activity. Much like a visual schedule represents the activities an individual will complete during the course of an entire day, an activity schedule represents the steps to completing one activity within the day. For example, an activity schedule might list the specific steps involved in brushing teeth, getting dressed, or playing with play dough.

Daily schedules and activity schedules (mini schedules) are often used in connection with one another. For example, a daily schedule for home might show an individual that in the morning s/he must get dressed, eat breakfast, and then brush teeth. After s/he checks the schedule and sees it is time to get dressed, s/he may go to his/her closet where s/he finds an activity schedule that outlines each step of getting dressed (take off pajama shirt, take off pajama pants, put on clean shirt, put on clean underwear, put on clean pants, put on 2 socks, etc). The individual then returns to his/her daily schedule and sees it is time to eat. S/he eats independently and then checks his schedule again. S/he now sees it is time to brush his/her teeth and goes to the bathroom. In the bathroom s/he may find an activity schedule that outlines each step of brushing teeth. By combining both types of schedules, the individual can successfully manage the larger daily transitions as well as understand how to complete the more complex tasks in his day.

How Do I Make an Activity Schedule?

1. Begin by determining which activities during the day are difficult for the individual to complete successfully (i.e., independently and without behavior).
2. Break complex tasks into several steps represented by pictures or words.
3. Be conscious of details (include even minor steps or details).
4. Consider making the final step on the activity schedule a picture or word that refers the individual back to their overall daily schedule (if s/he has one).

Which Type of Activities Can Have an Activity Schedule

1. Activity Schedules are appropriate for a large range of activities or routines, including functional activities, work activities, and art activities.
2. Refer to the pictures provided for examples of a few situations in which Activity Schedules might prove helpful.



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For referrals, call 317-274-8162
For research, call 317-274-8162
Other resources: call 317-278-7839
www.iupui.edu/~psycdept/autism/

rileyhospital.org

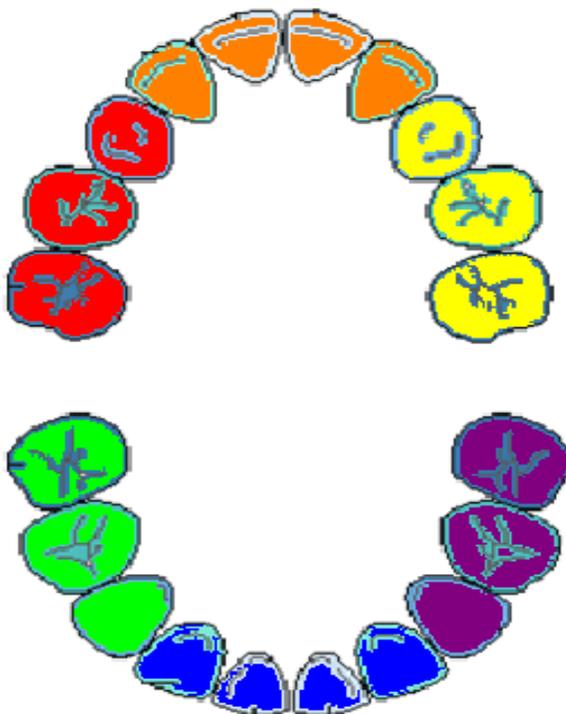
Materials provided are samples only!
They may need to be individualized to meet the particular needs of a person with an ASD!

To Make: Pull-Off Schedule

1. Begin by selecting an activity for which such a schedule is appropriate.
2. Write down every step of the activity .
3. Check your written list by having someone else follow the directions exactly as written, add in any steps that you missed.
4. Create picture or word cards to show each step (or use the templates shown here, if appropriate).
5. Laminate the schedule cards if possible.
6. Cut a rectangular piece of poster board so it is large enough for all the activities to be listed .
7. Place Velcro on the poster board in a straight line.
8. Use Velcro to place pictures or words on poster board.
9. Label a box or envelope with a “finished” picture (use the one provided here or create your own). This will be used to hold schedule cards after the pictured activity is completed.

To Make: Check-Off Schedule

1. Begin by selecting an activity for which such a schedule is appropriate.
2. Write down every step of the activity.
3. Check your written list by having someone else follow the directions exactly as written, add in any steps that you missed.
4. Create picture or word cards to show each step (or use the templates shown here, if appropriate).
5. Laminate if possible.
6. Place the schedule on a hard surface and ensure a pen is always nearby. It can help to use a clipboard to keep everything in one place.

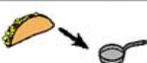
*Templates***Toothbrushing****Toothbrushing**

- Red
- Orange
- Yellow
- Green
- Blue
- Purple

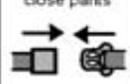
Showering

- Turn water on
- Get in shower
- Put soap on washcloth
- Wash face and ears
- Wash neck
- Wash arms and hands
- Wash front
- Wash back
- Wash private area and bottom
- Wash legs and feet
- Rinse body
- Put shampoo in hair
- Wash hair
- Rinse hair
- Turn water off
- Get out of shower

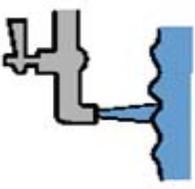
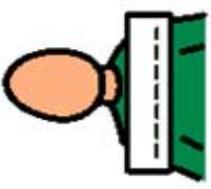
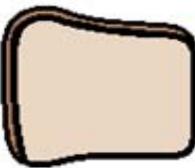
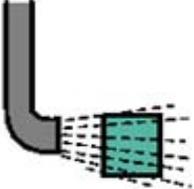
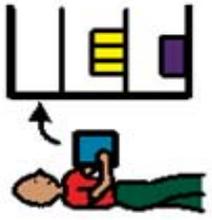
Cooking

- wash hands 
- sit in chair 
- wait for directions 
- spread butter on tortilla 
- turn tortilla over and sprinkle cheese on 
- fold over quesadilla 
- wait turn 
- listen to the teachers 
- put quesadilla in skillet 
- wait while it cooks 
- Use a spatula to turn the quesadilla over 
- Put on plate 
- choose a topping 
- eat quesadilla 
- throw away plate, napkin and silverware 

Dressing

- get underwear 
- put tag in back 
- pull on underwear 
- get pants 
- pull on pants 
- close pants 
- get shirt 
- put tag in back 
- put on shirt 
- get socks 
- put on socks 
- get shoes 
- put on shoes 
- ask for help tying shoes 

Picture Template

<p>get toothpaste</p> 	<p>turn on water</p> 	<p>write name</p> 	<p>get bread</p> 
<p>get toothbrush</p> 	<p>get soap</p> 	<p>color with blue</p> 	<p>take one piece</p> 
<p>put toothpaste on toothbrush</p> 	<p>scrub hands</p> 	<p>color with green</p> 	<p>get peanut butter</p> 
<p>brush teeth</p> 	<p>turn off water</p> 	<p>color with yellow</p> 	<p>spread peanut butter on bread</p> 
<p>rinse toothbrush</p> 	<p>dry hands</p> 	<p>color with red</p> 	<p>eat</p> 
<p>put away toothbrush</p> 	<p>finished</p> 	<p>color with purple</p> 	<p>clean up</p> 