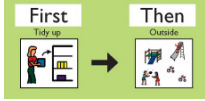# Using Visual Tools

ElmTree Clinic
NURTURING YOUNG MINDS

Visual tools can be very useful to support daily routines and transitions for all young children. Even when young children understand simple language for instructions they may have difficulty remembering or putting activities in order. This is because the part of their brain that helps them organize and make sense of the world is just developing. It takes time to learn routines.

Four useful tools are:

1) First – (Next)Then (https://connectability.ca)

This strategy helps children order a few activities. For example, first we wash hand, then we eat.

2) Visual Schedules (http://www.livingwellwithautism.com)
   This strategy helps organize a sequence of activities for part of a day, or within activities (tasks within a task).

The website http://www.do2learn.com/picturecards/printcards/ has many free picture cards, examples and videos of how to use these tools. Also check out:
http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/modules/module3b/handout2.pdf

More information can be found at Autism Speaks. This website has Toolkits in the Parent Resources section that have been created by experts and the suggestions can be useful for all children. http://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/sciencedocs/atn/visual_supports.pdf

There are also apps available for your phone or tablet. Here are some examples:

https://autiplan.com (free)

http://www.beevisual.com - Choiceworks app

3) Baby signs can also help add a visual signal to your spoken words or phrases:

https://pathways.org/watch/parents-guide-baby-sign-language/

4) Visual Timer: A visual timer can help children understand time and help them wait by checking the pie as it gets smaller. There are lots of phone apps for visual timers too!