Visual Supports

- The following pack contains visual supports which were devised by the Speech and Language Therapy Department in St. Michael's House.
- You can print off relevant sections that you can use with your child at home.

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Speech and Language Therapy Department

St Michael's House

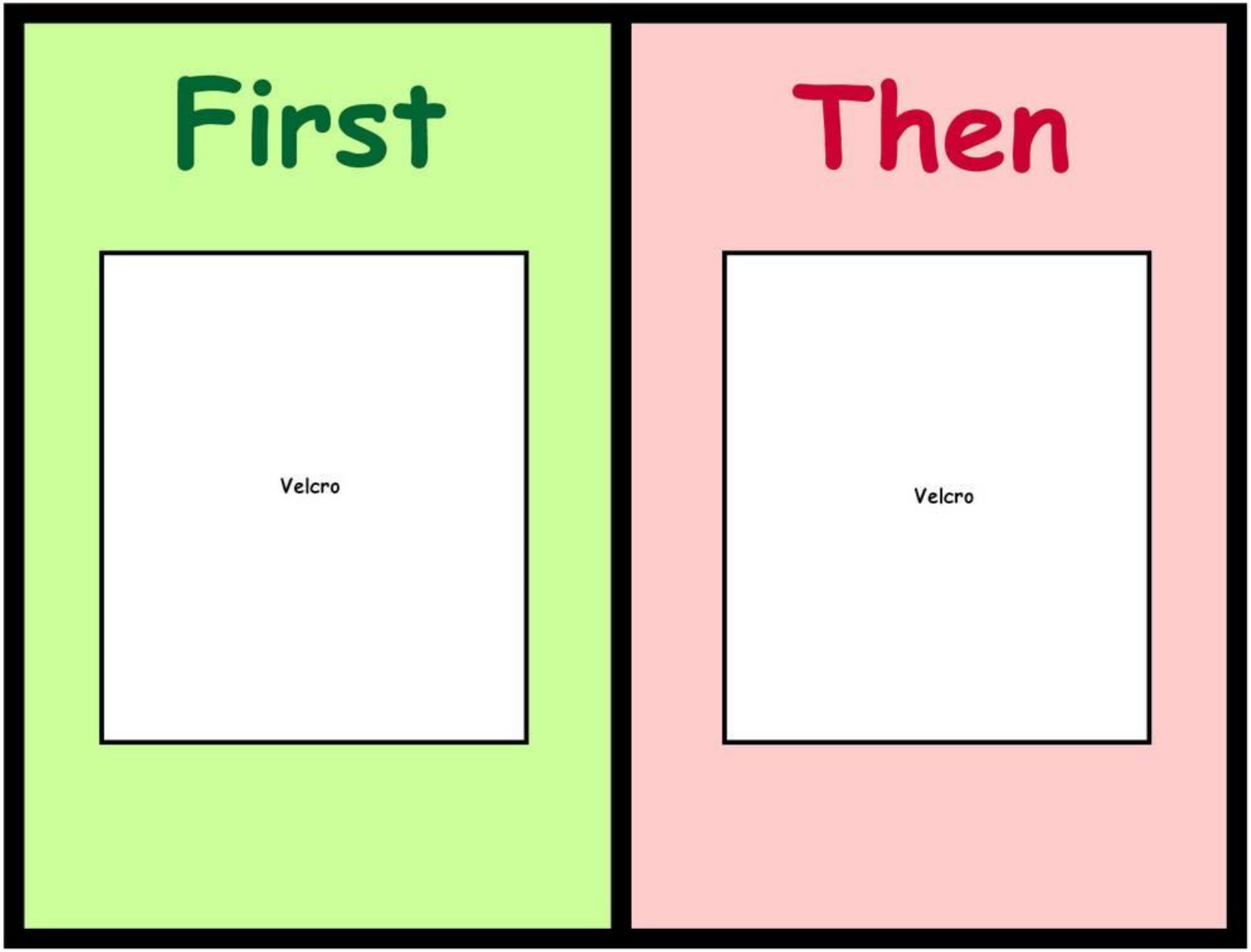
First/then schedule

Why use a first then schedule?

- A 'first-then' schedule is a visual support—you can use objects, photos, pictures, line drawings or text and is used to provide information to your child around an expectation. The 'first' section involves a task that your child is expected to complete, and the 'then' section should be a preferred item/activity (reinforcer) for successful completion of the first task. For example, 'first' John needs to sit at table and 'then' he can play with play-doh.
- A 'first-then' board can be used to motivate a child to do activities they do not like by showing them they will be given a motivating activity after they complete the first task.
- A 'first-then' board can be used to support a transition from one activity to the next.
- A first-then board can also help a child learn to sequence a few activities before they are able to follow a longer schedule.

How to use a first then schedule?

- Put the pictures on the schedule in order of when they will happen e.g. first school work, then iPad. You can show your child the real items for the activities too, if you can do so easily.
- Show the child the board and use simple language when explaining what is going to happen.
- When the activity is finished, tell your child "X is finished" and point to the picture. Take the picture of the board. Then put the next picture in the "first" slot.


First
Velcro
Then
Velcro

Visual schedule

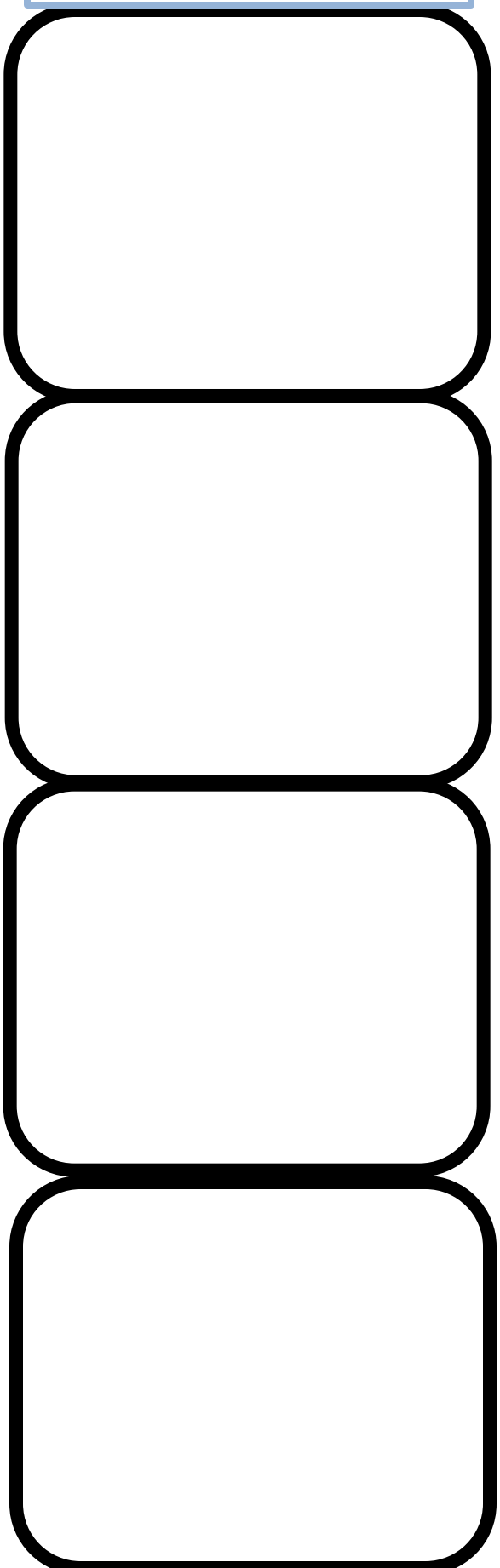
Why use a visual schedule?

- Visual schedules help children to organise their day and understand the general sequence of events. If a child has difficulty remembering what is going to happen, he or she can refer to the schedule to be reminded.

How to use a visual schedule?

1. Use schedule template and visuals provided. Ensure you have pictures of the main activities the child carries out each day. If the visuals you need are not in the examples provided, you could search Google images and find appropriate images there.
2. Make the schedule base and place this somewhere accessible for the child, e.g. on a clear wall or on the fridge. Include a 'finished' envelope which can be taped to the bottom of the schedule.
3. Put the activities of the day in order on the schedule. Place the first activity to be completed at the top of the page. Place the next picture below it etc. Starting with about 4 pictures is usually good as then there is flexibility in what is happening later and the information isn't too visually overwhelming.
4. You may also want to have less or more pictures on the schedule at a time, depending on the child.
5. When the activity is finished, tell the child it is finished and remind him/her to "check your schedule". He/she can put that picture in a "finished" envelope at the end of the schedule. Continue with this throughout the day.
6. You can keep the extra pictures nearby in a zip-lock bag or envelope.

Visual Schedule



Choice Board

Please refer to handout on 'Making Choices' for details on how to use choice boards

Choice Board

Choice Board

Visuals

These pictures can be cut out and used to insert into the choice board, first/then schedule or visual schedule.

Jigsaw	Games	Walk
Garden	TV	Drive
Books/School work	Therapy Ball	Baking

Visuals

These pictures can be cut out and used to insert into the choice board, first/then schedule or visual schedule.

Arts and Crafts	Mealtime	Bubbles
Music	Call a friend	iPad
Colouring	Playdoh	Yoga

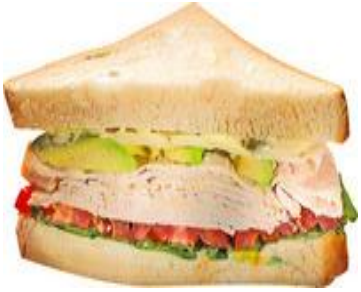
Visuals

These pictures can be cut out and used to insert into the choice board, first/then schedule or visual schedule.

Get Dressed	Cooking	Bed
Bath	Brush Teeth	Pyjamas
Toilet	Shower	Exercise

Visuals

These pictures can be cut out and used to insert into the choice board, first/then schedule or visual schedule.

Trampoline	Messy Play	Sand Play
Water Play	Swing	Scooter
Breakfast	Lunch 	Treats

I'm working for chart

***Why* use an "I'm working for" chart?**

- An "I'm working for" chart can be used to motivate your child to complete un-preferred tasks throughout the day or to behave the way that you want.
- The child collects stickers or tokens for the chart each time he/she behaves the way you want. The stickers and the reward reinforce positive behaviour.

***How* to use an "I'm working for" chart?**

- Set up the schedule by cutting out the board and the tokens (stars) provided. Encourage the child to choose a reward. Ensure it is something the child is very motivated by e.g. treat, favourite game, time on the iPad etc. Place a visual that represents the reward in on the "I'm working for" board.
- Be really clear and specific about which behaviour you are rewarding. For example, "sitting at the table for your breakfast" is a specific behaviour that you can observe.
- Give the child a sticker immediately after they have done what it is you want them to do. E.g positive behaviour, completed specific tasks etc. Pair the token with verbal praise, naming the behaviour e.g. "That was really good tidying. Here's a token".
- Once the child has received the sticker, encourage he/she to put the sticker on the "I'm working for" board and offer lots of praise.
- Try to stay positive. If your child doesn't earn a star, it is best to move on and focus on encouraging the child to try again. Stars should not be removed from the board.

I'm working for chart

Insert photo here

I am working for:

star	star	star

star	star	star	star	star

Not Available Symbol

***Why* use a "not available" symbol?**

- When your child requests something, it is important to acknowledge them and let them know that you have heard them. However, at times there may be things that your child keeps asking for that they cannot have. The "not available" symbol can be used to let your child know if something is finished, not available or if they have had too much etc.

***How* to use a "not available" symbol?**

- If your child is asking for something that they cannot have e.g. if they have had too many chocolate buttons. You can teach the concept of "not available" by putting the not available symbol on the packet and shake it to indicate that the bag is empty. Explain that "X is not available".
- It is important to be consistent with this approach to increase your child's understanding of it; this means being sure to stick with the "not available" message once you have used the symbol.

Not Available

Useful Apps

If you do not have a printer at home, here are some useful apps that you can use instead;

- Sounding Board
- ChoiceWorks
- First Then Visual Schedule
- ChooseIt! Maker 3