Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

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ESC Region 13

Components of Structured Teaching

- Physical Structure
- Visual Clarity
- Schedules
- Routines
- Work systems
- 1:1 / Direct teaching
- Communication systems
- Reinforcement

Principles of Structured Teaching
Structure = Organization

- To effectively teach individuals with autism spectrum disorders, a teacher must provide structure.
- That is, set up the classroom so that students understand where to be, what to do, and how to do it, all as independently as possible.

Lee Marcus, TEACCH Staff
Chapel Hill TEACCH Center
Structure looks different for different students and in different classrooms.

Visual supports to make daily activities predictable and understandable
Using visual supports to make individual tasks understandable
Physical and visual supports in various environments
Expressive and receptive communication supports

Structure
In the Classroom

Routines and schedules
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

**Routine vs Schedule**

**Routine:**
- The way you go about doing something
- Like a habit

**Examples:**
- How you put on your shoes
- How you enter the classroom

**Schedule:**
- Sequence of events
- Chunks of the day
- Events of the day
- Where you go during the day
- Order of how events will occur

**Implement Routines in the Classroom**
- Routines are calming to students.
- Routines are predictable.
- Routines are a classroom management strategy.

**Individual Student Schedules in the Classroom**
- Schedules represent the events of the day.
- Schedules tell you where to go in the room, in the school or when to leave the school.
- Schedules provide predictability.
- Schedules increase independence.
- Schedules provide external structure throughout the day.
Designing Individual Visual Schedules
Directional Design

Top to bottom

Left to right

Designing Individual Visual Student Schedules
Location

on a wall
in a folder
in a binder
on a clip board
on a technical device
on a desk or next to a desk
next to other schedules or away from other schedules

Designing Individual Visual Student Schedules
Number of activity representations

1 representation
2 representations  First - Then
Morning activities / Afternoon activities
Entire day
Designing Individual Visual Student Schedules

Form of activity representations

- Actual object
- Photograph
- Icon / Line drawing
- Word with a icon
- Written word

Object Match Schedule:
Student transitions using an actual object representing the next event
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

Top to bottom
First – Then
Object Schedule

Visual cues to increase independence

Top to bottom
First – Then
Object Schedule

Visual cues to increase independence

Photo – a photograph representing the event

Photo without a word    Photo with a word

Lunch

Students use a photograph to represent the next activity
Dinosaur transition marker
1 photo at a time

Students use a photograph to represent the next activity
Peg in peg board transition marker
1 photo at a time
Highlighted visual cue to focus on the activity representation
Top to Bottom Photo Schedule –
First – Then
Students use a photograph to represent the next activity.

Left to Right Photo Schedule –
name card is the transition marker: Students use a photograph to represent the next activity.

Icon or Line Drawing:
Student transitions using an icon or line drawing type of representation of the next event

Left to Right Icon Schedule
First – Then
When the transition marker envelope was at the bottom of the schedule, the student did not see the pictures as a sequence of activities. The student was not scanning from the top to find the next picture, therefore needing to be prompted to find the correct one. To increase sequence understanding and independence, the transition marker was moved to the top of the schedule.
Top to bottom line drawing and written word schedule –

Map piece transition marker
Arrow added to increase independence

Word with a small icon:
Student transitions using a word with a small icon

Top to bottom word with a small line drawing –
Pop cycle stick transition marker
Top to bottom word with a small line drawing on a clip board
check off marker is the transition marker

Written Word:
Student transitions by reading what the next activity is

- breakfast
- work
- recess

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<th>3</th>
<th>4</th>
<th>5</th>
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<td>Math</td>
<td>Lunch</td>
<td>Science</td>
<td>Art</td>
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<table>
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<th>Saturday</th>
<th>Sunday</th>
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Written Schedule
with an embedded work system
Mark off when finished

7:45 Math
Warm up
Teacher lecture
P. 50 Problems 1-10
Problems 11-20
Read book
8:45 Science
Teacher lecture
Work with small group
Read pages 34-40
Read book
Designing Individual Visual Student Schedules
How to manipulate the schedule

Take object, photo, icon or word to the next activity and match it to a like representation

Designing Individual Visual Schedules
How to manipulate the schedule

Put the schedule item in a finished pocket

Designing Individual Visual Student Schedules
How to manipulate the schedule

Check it off or flip it over
As the activity is over, the representation is either removed…

or checked off…

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Status</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Get up</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Get dressed</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eat breakfast</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush teeth</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Go to school</td>
<td>✔️</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Now I know when that will happen! Oh, that is what I am supposed to do.
Using visual supports to make individual tasks understandable

- Organization of materials
- Clarify expectations using visual cues
Using Visual Structure to Increase Independence

- Organization of materials
- Defines how to do the task
- Clarifies beginning and end
- Materials can be organized by using:
  - Containers
  - Bins
  - Trays
  - Folders
  - Binders
  - Graphic organizers

When using Visual Structure to Increase Independence remember to...

_________ for

Each Student

Visual Structure becomes the…

_________ !!!
Factors to Consider when Determining Tasks for a Student

- Level of independence
- Instructional level and emerging skills
- Strengths and weaknesses
- High interest to the Student
- Work habits (organization, distractibility, attention span, motivation)

Criteria to Consider When Selecting Appropriate Tasks and Objectives

- Developmentally appropriate
- Functional
- Increase independence
- Parental issues
- Based on need / IEP / TEKs
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

[Image of three trays with numbers and objects]

[Image of a cluttered desk with materials and a sign that says "Done"]

[Image of a stack of cards and a chart with words]
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

Using visual supports to make individual tasks understandable

Visual supports to make daily activities predictable and understandable

Physical and visual supports in various environments

Expressive and receptive communication supports

Structure
In the Classroom
Physical and Visual Supports in Various Environments

• Clarify expectations using visual cues
• Provide clear boundaries
• Provide labels of what activity will take place in specific areas of the room
• Limit distractions

Areas to think about:
- Play / leisure
- 1 to 1 direct teach
- Independent work
- Group activities
- Eating
- Transitions
- Centers / how many can be at a center

Label areas
Physical Structure

Clarify where I should be
Allow for the needed structure to attend

Structuring for Independent Work
Routines, schedules, physical structure, visual information, independence in action
Visual supports to make daily activities predictable and understandable

Using visual supports to make individual tasks understandable

Structure
In the Classroom

Physical and visual supports in various environments

Expressive and receptive communication supports

Production – Expressive

- gestures
- voice output
- written
- pictures or line drawing
- vocal
- sign language

Production – Expressive

Behavior
Remember!

Behavior is...

Communication takes two.... Communication is an exchange of messages or information which requires a listener.....

Supporting Communication

Form – how will they communicate

Function – the why or purpose to communicate
Form – how we communicate

Objects
Photos
Icons/ line drawings
Vocal words
Written
Voice output
Sign Language

Function – the why or purpose to communicate

request
get information
I want...
Where?
Who?
How?
reject
comment
No thank you.
I saw ...

Conversation Skills

greet – initiate a conversation
end a conversation
Hello...
See you later...
Conversation Skills
respond / listen / respond / listen
conversational exchanges

“How are you?”

“Fine, and you?”

“I have been sick.”

“Did you go to the movie?”

“Yes, it was really funny!”

This is a way to support a student’s Expressive language

Form: real object
Function: request food

Form: object that replicates the toy
Function: request toy
Form: photo
Function: **call teacher by name**

Form: environmental print/line drawing icon
Function: **request food**

Form: written word and line drawing
Function: **ask for help**
Form: written word with a small icon or photo
Function: create a sentence/script to request food / scan the room to see what listener is available

Form: icon / line drawing
Function: receptively understand turn taking / express to the social partner "your turn" or "my turn" by touching or holding up the icon

A communication support to help Chad express he needs help
Form: written word
Function: ask for help
Form: written word
Function: request food

Form: written word
Function: greet / end conversation / social commenting

Form: written word
Function: request food -- reject / say no -- give information -- request to leave the area
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

[Images of classroom setups with visual supports]

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[Images of classroom setups with visual supports]

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[Images of classroom setups with visual supports]

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[Images of classroom setups with visual supports]
Structure and Visual Supports in the Classroom

1. Tell Mary that the snack will be ready at 1:30.
2. Tell Susan Huey that we found the popcorn.
Visual reminders: Clarify expectations

Teach wait

Use as a visual reminder to clarify expectations
Visual supports to make daily activities predictable and understandable

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Structure in the Classroom