

Independent Activity Schedules: Building Meaningful Play and Leisure Skills



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Learning Objectives

The participant will:

1. Define and describe the components of independent activity schedules (IAS) and explain their role in promoting engagement in play and leisure activities.
2. Identify strategies for selecting, teaching, and generalizing play and leisure skills using IAS, with an emphasis on age-appropriateness, individual preferences, and functional outcomes.
3. Demonstrate knowledge of data collection procedures used to measure progress.

Independent Activity Schedules (IAS)

- What do you think of when we mention IAS?
- Why are you attending this CEU?

Independent Activity Schedules (IAS)

- “I’ve heard of them, but can’t really visualize how to teach them.”
- “I want to recommend them to the school I work at, but don’t know where to start.”
- “I have a client who cannot stay on task for longer than 3 seconds. I’m wondering how an IAS would be appropriate for her.”
- “I want to know how to progress an IAS to make it more mature and functional for my student”

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Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis

• J Appl Behav Anal. 1993 Spring;26(1):89-97. doi: 10.1201/jaba.1993.26.89

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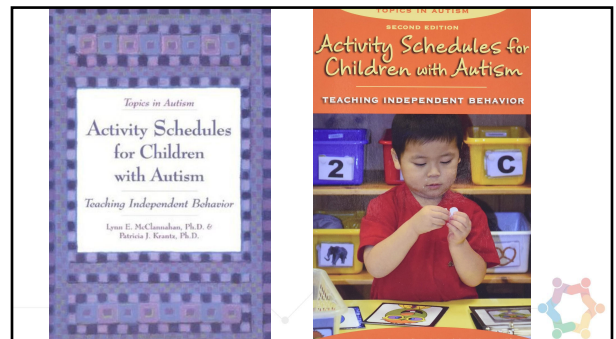
TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO USE PHOTOGRAPHIC ACTIVITY SCHEDULES: MAINTENANCE AND GENERALIZATION OF COMPLEX RESPONSE CHAINS

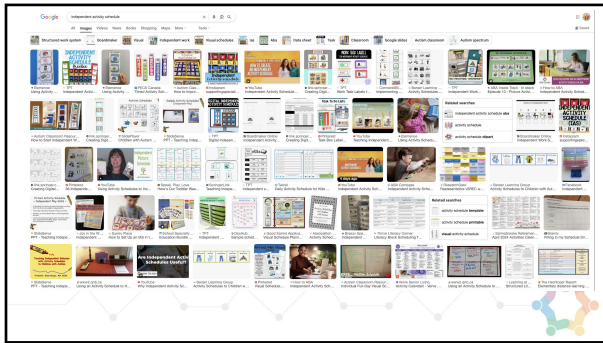
GREGORY S. MACDON, PATRICKA J. KRANTZ, AND LYNN E. MCCLENNAN

PRINCETON CHILD DEVELOPMENT INSTITUTE

We used a graduated guidance procedure to teach 4 boys with autism to follow photographic activity schedules to increase on-task and on-schedule behavior. The multiple baseline across participants design included baseline, teaching, maintenance, resequencing of photographs, and generalization to novel photographic phases. The results indicated that photographic activity schedules (albums depicting after school activities) produced sustained engagement, and skills generalized to a new sequence of photographs and to new photographs. The acquisition of schedule-following skills enabled these children with severe developmental disabilities to display lengthy response chains, independently change activities, and change activities in different group home settings in the absence of immediate supervision and prompts from others.

DESCRIPTORS: autism, prompting, stimulus control, photographic com, generalization





Independent Activity Schedules (IAS)

- Visual cues that guide individuals through a sequence of tasks or activities
 - Pictures
 - Words
 - Objects
- They can be physical (e.g., binders, Velcro boards) or digital (e.g., tablets, apps)
- Used to promote independence
- Increase play skills

(McClannahan, L. E., & Krantz, P. J., 1999)

Video



Various IAS Formats

- What kinds of activity schedules have you used or seen?

- First-then boards
- Velcro binders
- To-do lists
- Pictures, text
- Vertical, horizontal picture strips
- Calendar
- Apps



Purpose of Schedules

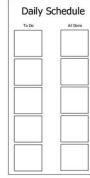
- To increase on-task behavior
- To decrease inappropriate behaviors
- To facilitate smooth transitions from one activity to the next
- To enhance acquisition of new skills
- Increase independent engagement in tasks without direct adult prompting
- Teach task initiation and completion
- Foster self-management and routine following
- Support generalization of skills across settings

Goals of IAS

• “The goal of teaching schedule use is to enable children with autism to perform tasks and activities without direct prompting and guidance by parents or teachers” (McClannahan & Krantz).

• This means:

- More structure
- More independence
- Decrease in problem behavior



Why Does IAS Work?

- IAS combines prompting strategies, task analysis, chaining, shaping, schedules of reinforcement
- Students respond to structure
- Tend to process visual information better and faster than auditory information
- May have difficulty with transitions
- Often have poor language/communication skills and exhibit their frustration through inappropriate behaviors (tantrums, crying, hitting, biting etc.)
- Often play alone or become dependent on adult prompts to interact with peers (McClannahan & Krantz, 1999)

Visual Tools in Your Life

- Calendar
- “To do” list on your desk/fridge
- Pictures in advertisements/menus to indicate that you want something
- Grocery list
- Reading a sign to tell you what line to stand in or where to exit
- Following a recipe
- Write notes to family members reminding them to do things
- Attach a note to your bathroom mirror or front door to remind you to do something
- IKEA – Assembling a piece of furniture by following step-by-step instructions



What Schedules are used for?

- Thoughts?
- Play and leisure skills
- Hygiene skills – handwashing, dressing, showering, etc.
- Life skills – morning routines, getting ready for bed, etc.
- Daily schedules – day at a glance, week at a glance
- Gym routines
- ANYTHING

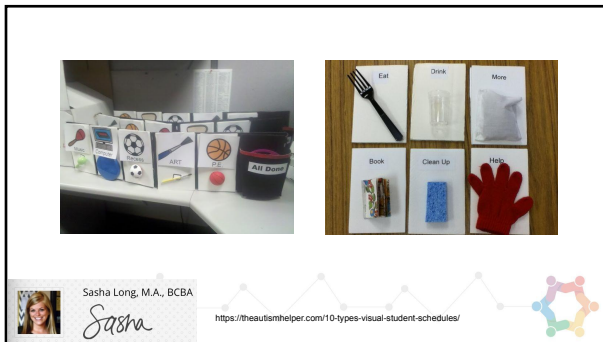
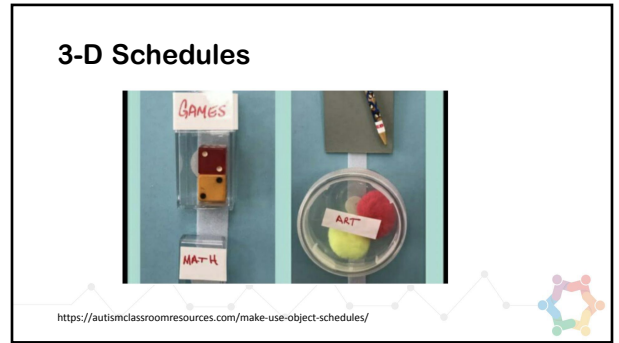
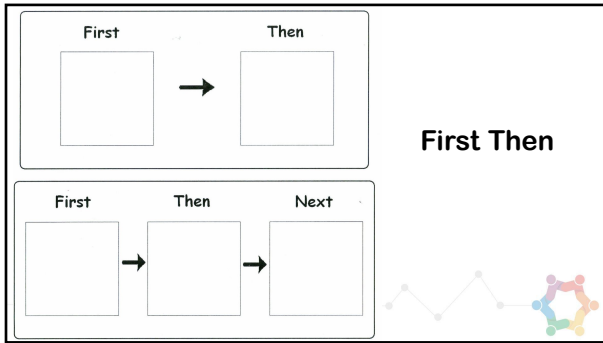
Prerequisites for Activity Schedules

- Thoughts?
- Following simple instructions
- Discrimination of pictures (picture to object correspondence)
- Ability to complete familiar tasks
- Attending to materials
- Transitioning independently from one activity to another
- Tolerance of manual guidance

(MacDuff, Krantz & McClannahan, 1993)

Getting Started

1. Assess the child's skills (e.g., matching, following directions)
2. Select appropriate format (e.g., photos, symbols, text)
3. Choose meaningful activities (e.g., puzzles, books, games)
4. Create and organize the schedule
5. Teach the schedule using prompting and fading
6. Monitor progress and adjust as needed



- ### Keys to Success
- Start small!
 - **Vary activities often**
 - Start with closed-ended activities
 - Move towards open-ended
 - Shaping!
 - 1 activity and then a reinforcer
 - 2 activities
 - 3 activities
 - Then start adding complexity – e.g., use of a timer, travelling further, choice, social interaction, etc.

What if my student isn't ready for a picture schedule?

- Activity bins!
- 1 bin
- 2 bins – 1 to-do and 1 all done

<https://handsonaswegrow.com/diy-busy-bins/>

- ### Make it Meaningful
- Move beyond shape sorters!
 - For older students, think of tasks that they can complete even if not fully independent
 - Often within meaningful routines or context students can be more successful
 - Eg: snack routines, entry routine

Progression

- What are ways that you have used activity schedules?

Apps: Choice Works

Choice Works Calendar

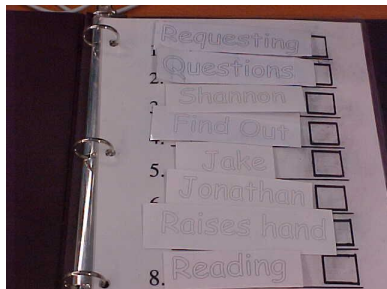
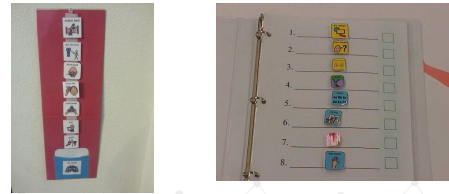


Bee Visual

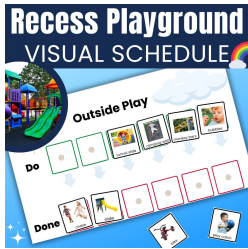


App: First Then Visual Schedule

Other Schedules



<https://www.teacherspayteachers.com/Product/FREE-Structured-Independent-Work-System-Schedules-Printables-4688197>



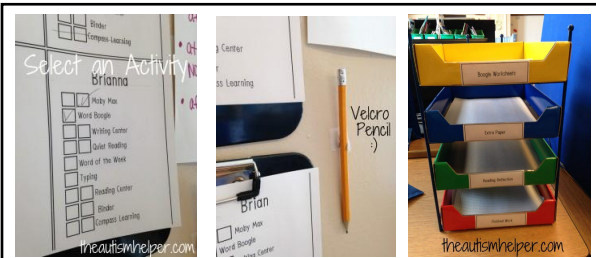
<https://www.madebyteachers.com/products/recess-playground-visual-schedule-traditional-or-flip-up-visual-schedule/>



Sasha Long, M.A., BCBA

Sasha

<https://theautismhelper.com/independent-work-system>

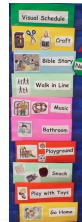


Sasha Long, M.A., BCBA

Sasha

<https://theautismhelper.com/independent-work-schedule-high-functioning-students/>

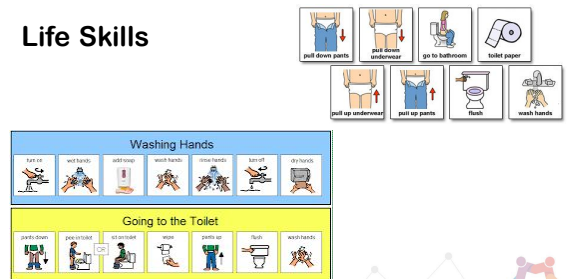
Daily Schedules

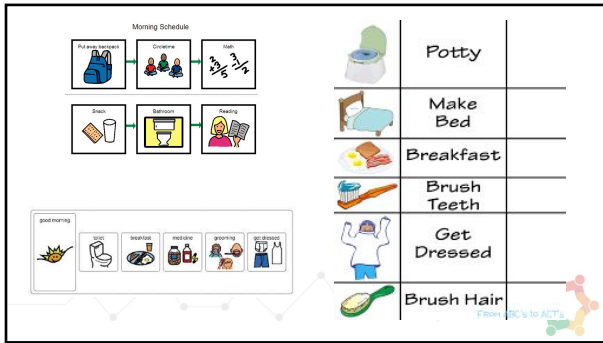


Life Skills



Life Skills





Incorporating Timers

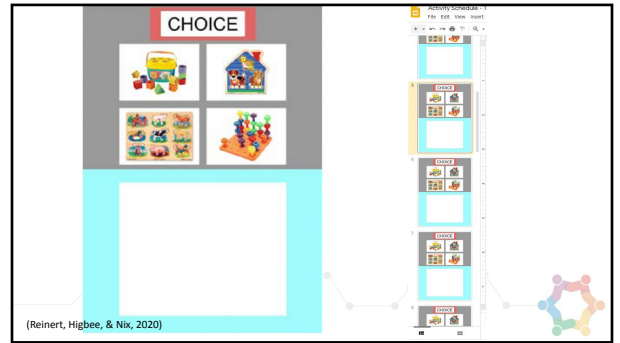
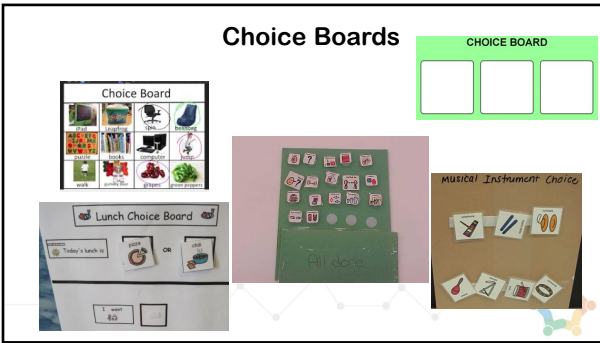
- For open-ended activities
- Help students understand how long they need to stay engaged with a task
- They can act as a signal for transitioning from one activity to another
- Teach students to set a timer and respond to a timer



Incorporating Choice

- Why is this important?
- Giving students the opportunity to make choices helps them develop a sense of control and ownership over their learning
- Choice-making can significantly boost motivation
- Having the option to make choices reduces the likelihood of resistance to the schedule

Choice Boards



(Reinert, Higbee, & Nix, 2020)

Incorporating Social

- Go say hi to...
- Go ask...
- Play this with this person...



Increasing Complexity

- Fosters skill progression
- Helps with generalization



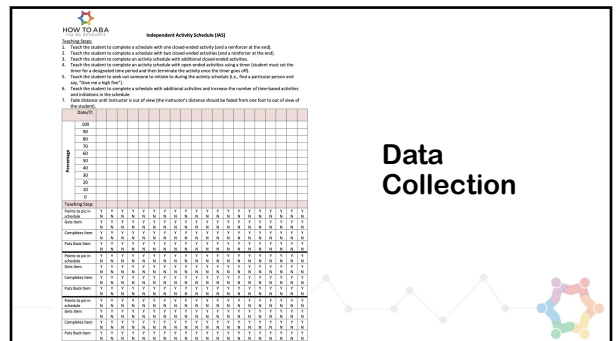
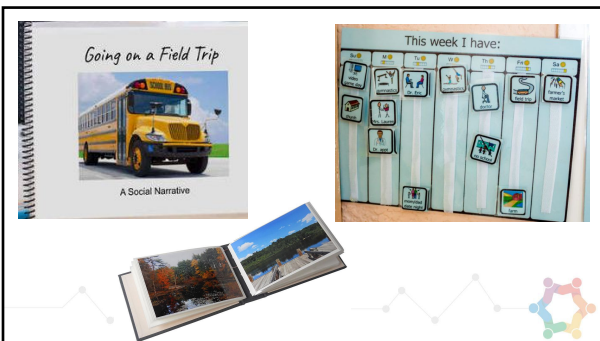
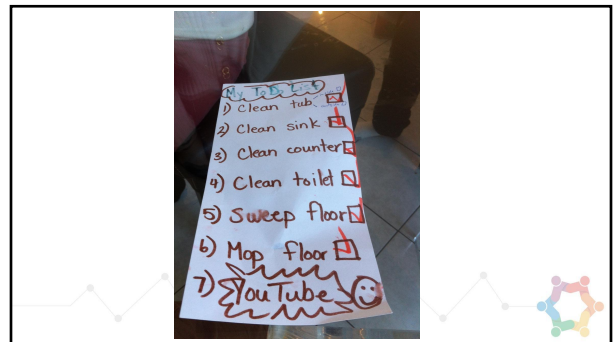
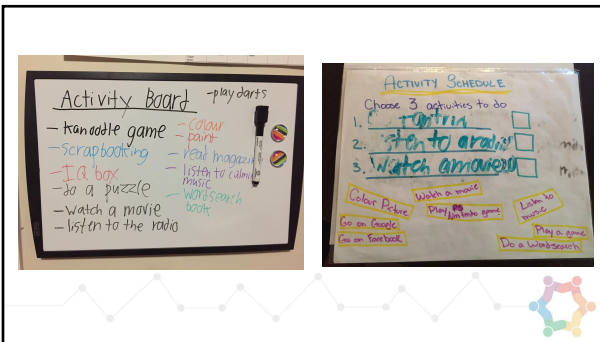
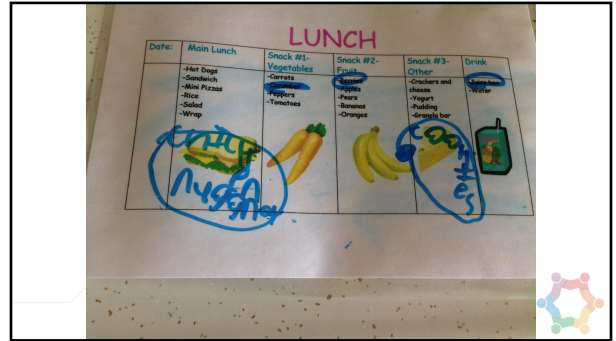
Working With Adults

Before I leave this house

1. Brush my teeth
2. Wipe my face
3. Comb my hair
4. Put on deodorant
5. Do up the zipper on my pants
6. Make sure my clothes are clean

Stove and Oven Safety


- > Take everything out of the oven before cooking
- > Always wear oven mitts when working with the oven
- > NEVER leave the kitchen when something is cooking
- > Make sure the oven is TURNED OFF when you are done
- > NEVER put paper, cookbooks or towels on the stove



Data Collection

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The Bx Resource

<https://members.howtoaba.com>

<https://members.howtoaba.com/assessments/2148519516>



Quiz Link

Questions/Comments

