



Behavioural Strategies

To Help Students with Special Needs at Home during Covid 19

Here are some strategies, accompanied with tools, for parents/caregivers to help students with special needs while staying safe at home.

Give Warnings for Transitions

Transitioning from one activity or location to another can be challenging, especially if it's leaving something your child really enjoys.

Get your child's attention, give them the warning and tell them what's happening next.

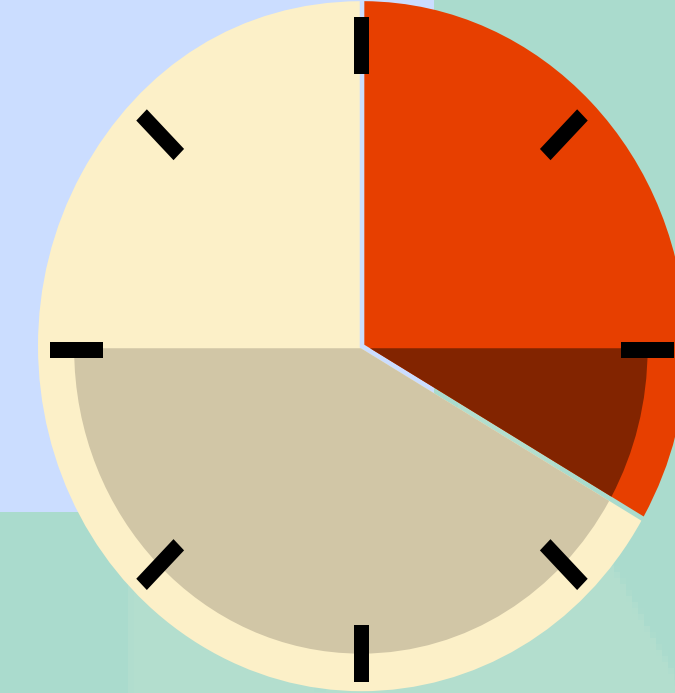
- For example: "Max, 5 more minutes outside then inside for lunch"

TRY A VISUAL TIMER

Countdown timers allow the child to see how much time is left in an activity

Download Visual Timer on Smartphones and Tablets

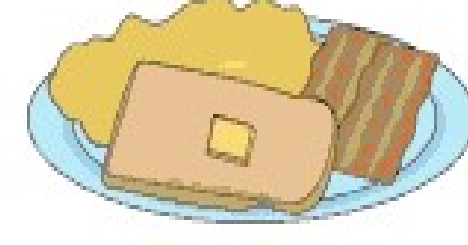
Timer Apps



Establish Routines & Use Visual Schedules

People thrive on routine and like to have some level of predictability to their day. In these times it is especially important to establish new routines that work for everyone in the house.

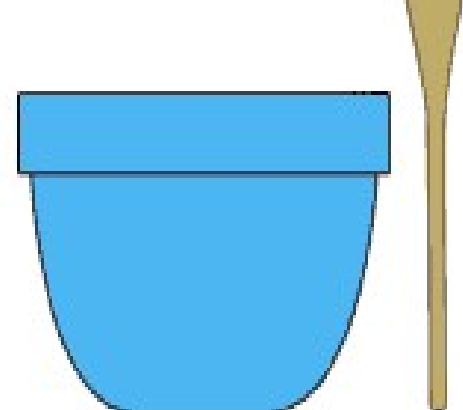
Eat Breakfast



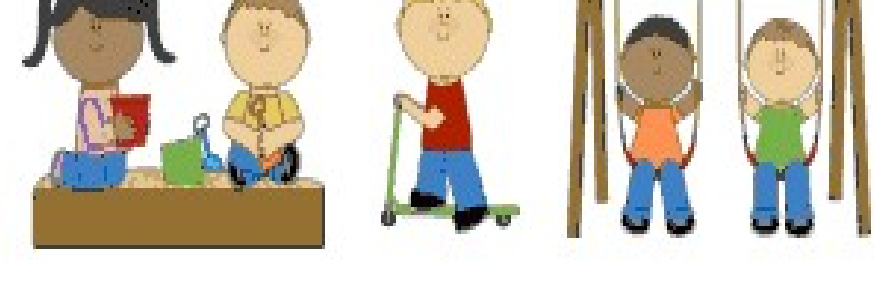
Brush Teeth



Baking



Play Outside



Play Dough



Creating regular opportunities across the day where family members have a voice about what happens and when it happens can serve as an effective anxiety reducing strategy and a communication tool. Wherever you can give your child the power to choose may help difficult tasks go smoother.

[Click Here](#)

For more Samples and Templates

Sample Schedules & Templates

- Morning Routine Schedule
- Daily Schedule Template
- Weekly Schedule Template
- Sample Daily Schedule

Reinforce Often

Remember to bring attention to and celebrate the positive behaviours that you want to see.

Examples

1. Doing something you asked them to do
2. Tolerating or completing difficult tasks (e.g. school work)
3. Transitioning from preferred activities (e.g. Turning off the TV)
4. Positive Social Skills



Break it Down

Participating in structured household chores and routines is a recommended strategy to support children and young adults coping with stress related to COVID-19. Some children/youth may need additional supports, such as a **task analysis**, to be able to participate in and/or complete these activities.

Task Analysis Tools

- Task Analysis Template
- Steps to Unload the Dishwasher
- Hand Washing Steps
- Making a Snack Steps
- Video of why clear instructions are important

Steps for creating a Task Analysis

Choose a Task

Write down the steps

Try the steps

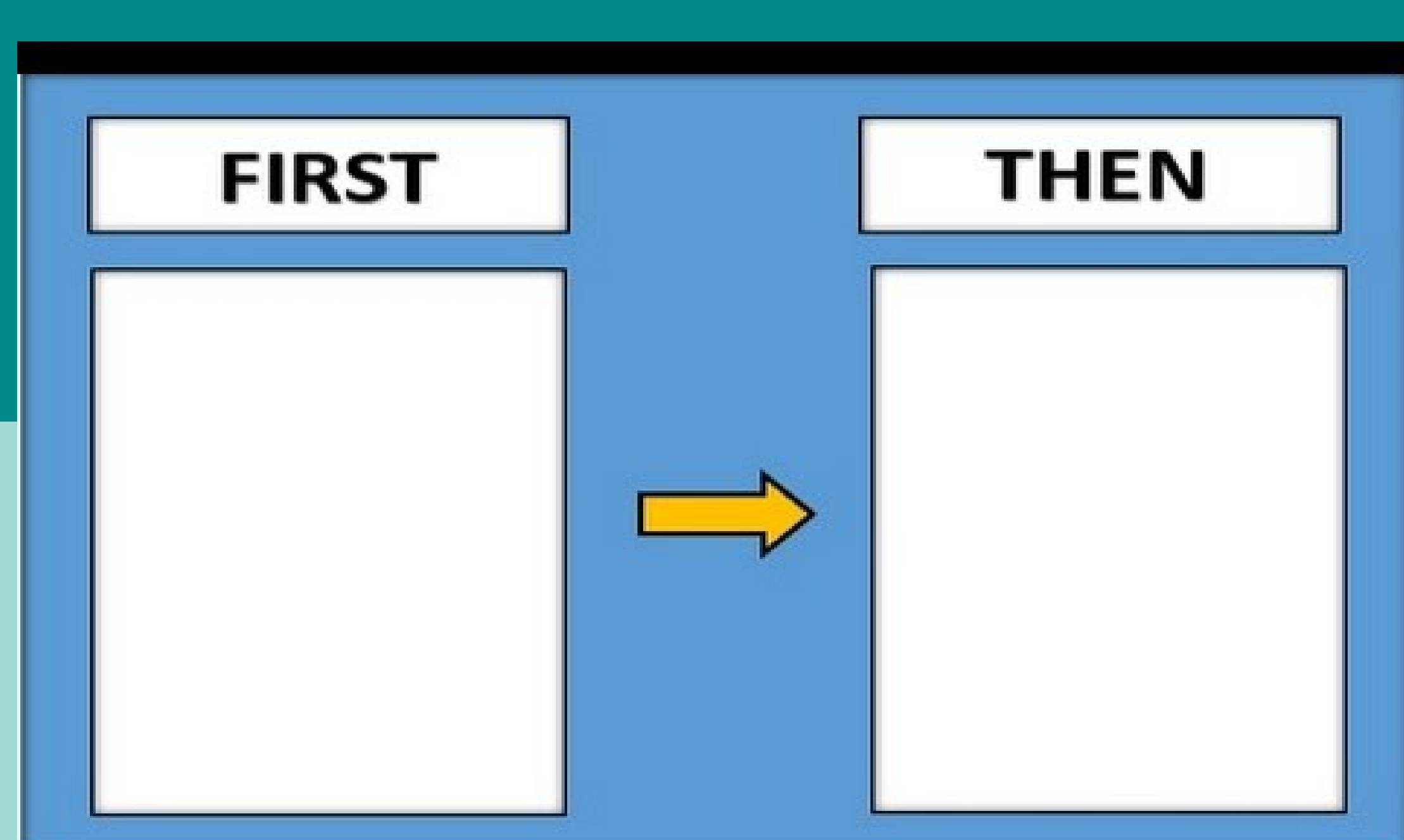
Write down final steps

Find or take pictures

Teach using the steps

Use the First/Then Rule

A helpful strategy to increase your child's motivation to complete a less preferred activity is to follow it with a preferred activity. E.g. "First brush teeth, then outside".



A **first/then board** can also be a helpful visual for children to see what they need to do before they can have what they want.



[Click Here](#)

For Samples and Templates

Learn How to Use the First/Then Rule