



LOOK Strategies for Families: Using Cues and Visuals

WHAT IS IT AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Cues and **visuals** are quick reminders. They show your child what you want them to do in the moment. Children often need our support to keep track of what they *should* be doing and *when* to do it. And rules change! For example, it's okay to run outside but not inside. Sometimes it's helpful to explain or give directions. But, often a visual or cue can get your point across.

A **visual** is a picture that shows your child what to do.

- ◆ Examples of **visuals** include: using pictures or labels to show where toys or other things go, a chart or checklist with pictures for each step of a routine or chore.

A **cue** is a signal your child has learned that tells them what to do.

- ◆ Examples of **cues** include: pointing to your ear (listen), putting your finger to your lips (quiet), gently patting your arm (gentle hands), playing a song or turning the lights on and off to show that it's time to clean up or move to another activity.



HOW TO AND TIPS:

Plan when to use visuals or cues to support your child. This might be:

- Times it seems like your child isn't sure of what to do or needs more reminders.
- When rules change.

For example, rules often change when coming inside after playing outdoors or when you are leaving home to go to a new place. Rules might also change when ending play time and starting to get ready for bed.

- To show your child where things go.

For example, visuals can show your child where blocks and other toys go at clean up time.

Before you use visuals or cues with your child:

- Explain the cue or visual ("When I turn down the lights, that means it is time to clean up.").
- Practice using the visual or cue.

Using visuals or cues:

- Your child may need extra support as they learn a new cue or visual ("I'm using the looking eyes, listening ears signal – time to look and listen," "Look at the pictures to see where your toys go," "One of our rules is to use gentle hands – see the picture?").



WHAT DOES IT LOOK LIKE?

Using Cues and Visuals at Home

- ◆ Introduce a clean-up song to your child, say, "Do you hear our new clean up song? When we hear this song, it means it's time to clean up. Let's practice!"
- ◆ Makes a chart for your child's morning routine with pictures of each step. Point to the chart to remind them that they need to brush their teeth after breakfast.
- ◆ Put labels and pictures of where toys go on the toy shelf to make clean-up easier.



LOOK at you: You are the expert on your child. We'd love to hear from you! Do you use cues or visuals at home? Tell us about them! Let us know what works well for your family!