

# VISUAL SUPPORTS - WHAT ARE THEY AND HOW DO THEY WORK?

**What are visual supports?** "A visual support refers to using a picture or other visual item to communicate with a child who has difficulty understanding or using language. Visual supports can be photographs, drawings, objects, written words, or lists. Research has shown that visual supports work well as a way to communicate." - Taken from "Autismspeaks.org"

While the majority of research on the use of visuals focuses on children who may be diagnosed with an Autism spectrum disorder, as the above quote states, visual supports help children "who [have] difficulty understanding or using language". Children who have significant articulation delays, physical delays, or developmental language delays can benefit from the use of visuals.

The link below is titled "Visual Supports and Autism Spectrum Disorders". I selected this link because it explains in very understandable terms the importance of visuals and communication as well as the use of the "First, Then" board and Visual Schedules. Both of these tools are used throughout our preschool classrooms at Stepanski to help children complete tasks that may be less desirable or preferred and to help children organize their day so they know what to expect when coming to school.

[https://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/sciencedocs/atn/visual\\_supports.pdf](https://www.autismspeaks.org/docs/sciencedocs/atn/visual_supports.pdf)

<http://adayinourshoes.com/free-printable-visual-schedules-for-home-and-daily-routines/>

<https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/tyc/oct2019/teaching-children-autism>