

Choice Boards

What are choice boards?

A choice board is a visual support that includes objects, photos, pictures, line drawings or text which can be used by your child to communicate what activity, item or task they would like. A minimum of 2 choices would be presented to your child at one time for them to make a choice.

Why might you use choice boards?

Some children with an Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) may not be motivated by the same items/activities that are commonly provided in the home, community or classroom environment. Because of this, parents may find it extremely difficult to motivate their children with ASD to participate. The use of choice boards may increase your child's motivation by providing them with a choice over which activity comes next or what they would like to work for. Providing this choice may give your child a sense of control over their lives and environment and therefore increase their level of participation. Even though you are the one offering choice, you are also the one controlling the options. In order for a choice board to be an effective strategy, your child must be able to make a choice between a preferred and non-preferred item/activity and the choice made by your child must be provided.

When could you use a choice board?

A choice board is a strategy that is used to offer your child a choice before an activity/task begins in order to increase participation and decrease the possibility of your child engaging in challenging behaviours.

How could you use choice boards?

- To structure free time (e.g., after school, weekends, outdoor play etc.)
- To offer a choice in the order of tasks to be completed
- To offer a choice to pick what to work on/for
- To offer a choice in the materials being used for an activity
- In conjunction with a "First-Then" board (to pick the reinforcer) or a schedule

Questions to consider when implementing a choice board

- What is your child's visual recognition level (e.g., objects, photos, pictures, line drawings or text)?
What is the goal of the choice board?
- Can your child choose between a preferred and non-preferred item/activity?
How many choices should be displayed?
- How will your child indicate their choice? Verbally and/or non-verbally (reaching, pointing)?
- How will the choices be displayed?
- Is the strategy at your child's developmental level?
- How are you going to teach the choice board?

Choice Boards

Before implementing any strategy, remember to:

1. Assess – What is your child currently able to do?
 2. Goal – What is a specific goal for your child to work towards?
 3. Strategies – How will you teach to reach the goal?
 4. Monitor – How will you know if the teaching strategies are working?
- (Hodgdon, 1995)

How to Teach:

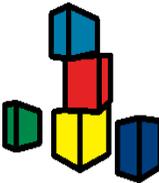
1. Parent completes empty squares by writing or placing pictures of the choices being offered relevant to the task (e.g., book, game, blocks, DVD). It is important to make sure that each of the chosen activities are available and to always honour the choice your child makes.
2. Review the choices with your child.
3. Allow your child to select from the available choices.
4. Once your child selects their choice, the parent immediately provides the choice, and rewards/reinforces the child using verbal praise, smiling, high five, etc.

Samples:

Blank Board

My Choices 	

Filled Board

My Choices 	
read a book 	play a game 
build blocks 	colour a picture 

Template:

My Choices 

References:

Hodgdon, L. (1995). *Visual strategies for improving communication practical supports for school and home*, Troy: QuirkRoberts Publishing.

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DynaVox Mayer-Johnson

2100 Wharton Street

Suite 400

Pittsburgh, PA 15203

Phone: 1 (800) 588-4548

Fax: 1 (866) 585-6260

Email: mayer-johnson.usa@dynavoxtech.com

Website: www.mayer-johnson.com