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**C**REATING AND IMPLEMENTING VISUAL systems in the home can be a daunting task, especially with tightrope-like schedules and busy family lives. In the *Choiceworks Visual Support System*, parents have a new ally in their quest to make the world more comprehensible for their children with ASD. This wonderful resource was designed by parents who know both the rewards and challenges of implementing visual systems in the home. *Choiceworks* is an intuitive, durable, and compact set of three boards, designed to ease the child's most difficult moments. The system can travel easily from home to Grandma's and Grandpa's house. Or, they can have their own system in the ready when their grandchildren come to visit. This wonderfully portable system can be taken to the grocery store; ballet classes; the doctor's office; or just about anywhere your hectic schedule takes you.



The main board is a 5-step schedule system, complete with magnetic icons to identify it as a "morning," "daytime," or "nighttime" schedule. At the bottom of the board are icons for preferred activities that the child may choose when his or her schedule has been completed. Icons are stored

on the inside of the easel. When a board is snapped on to it, the icons are safe from little hands and gusts of wind. The "Waiting" and "When I am Upset" boards (my personal favorites), capture solutions for two of the most universally difficult challenges any parent can face. Both of these boards are solution-oriented—showing the child what he or she can do to cope with these difficult circumstances. There is even a timer included with the "Waiting" board to add to its utility. And with the blank schedule squares and dry erase marker, parents can customize all of the boards to meet their children's individual needs.

The *Choiceworks Visual Support System* extends well beyond the person with ASD and his/her family. I know from personal

experience that the "waiting" board is an absolute godsend to *any* parent of a young child who decides to suddenly become loud at the *exact* moment that Mom or Dad (or Grandma or Grandpa) pick up the telephone! In addition to the general "waiting" icon, this board also "anticipates" three types of "waiting" scenarios—*taking turns*; *having quite time*; and *interrupting*. At the bottom of the board, the child is told what he or she can do while waiting. This section, in particular, can also serve to give parents and grandparents ideas regarding what they can do to help their children to be more patient.

One of the things I really love about the *Choiceworks Visual Support System* is that it addresses the child's instructional needs by including companion booklets that parents may use to teach their child the underlying concepts associated with the icons. The general instruction book is simple and easy to follow, and even includes additional supports that can both help parents to identify how their child is feeling, as well as help the child to communicate the reason why he or she is upset.

The *Choiceworks Visual Support System* is well worth its small price tag, given its widespread application, durability, portability, and attention to detail. The company plans to offer additional icon sets that can be used with its system, further enhancing the usefulness of this ingenious and versatile resource.

While designed with families in mind, the *Choiceworks Visual Support System* would also be a wonderful addition to a child's school program, since it serves to remind parents and educators alike that we shouldn't just react to difficult situations—we should respect, teach, and support the child through them. The *Choiceworks Visual Support System* provides an ideal way to do just that! 🐝

Please send an email or call with your questions.

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