

# VISUAL SCHEDULES: SPECIAL BUDDIES

by Susan Triggiano

Visual schedules are a classroom tool to give children cues about the sequence of activities during any given period of time. At church, a visual schedule can add order to a busy routine and minimize distractions during transition times because children know what to expect.

## ADJUST AS NEEDED

Creating visual schedules takes time and effort, but everyone in the room can benefit. Children may feel more calm and relaxed, and adult leaders will be more aware of the classroom routine. When flexibility is necessary, be sure to notify children of changes in advance to give them time to adapt.

## COLLECT THE MATERIALS

There are specific components that are necessary to create a visual schedule.

First, you need a specific routine, one that can be represented with pictures.

Second, the visual schedule should have a photograph or a pictorial representation of each activity along with a word or phrase that explains the activity. This may be accomplished with the cards provided in this document, black line drawings you create yourself, photographs to represent the activity, or picture cards purchased at [www.mayer-johnson.com](http://www.mayer-johnson.com) or [www.do2learn.com](http://www.do2learn.com).

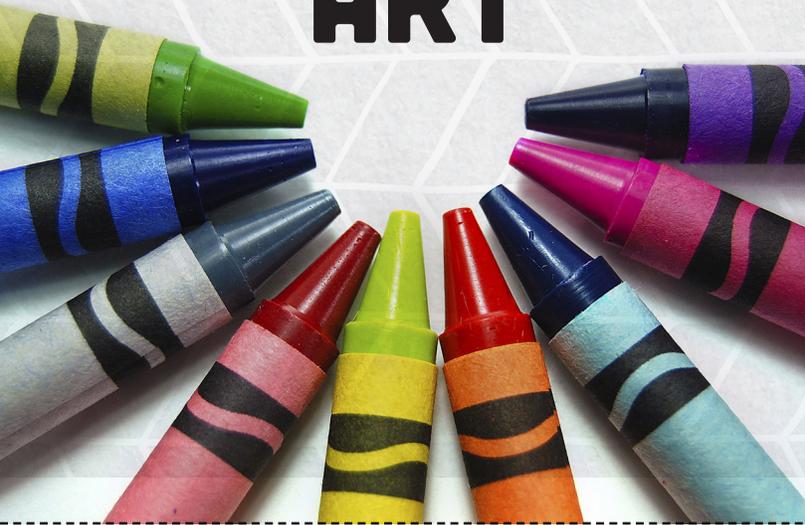
Regardless of the types of pictures you use, it is important that the text and the picture correspond as closely as possible. Remember these tips:

- If you use a digital camera to take a photograph, be sure that the activity is the main focus of the picture with very few distractions. Crop out any unnecessary visuals.
- Be sure the visual schedule is a true representation of your actual classroom activities. For example, do not represent outside time with a picture of a playground if what you do is go for a walk.

## DISPLAY THE SCHEDULE

- *Permanent schedule.* Cut apart and laminate the picture cards (pages 2-3) and visual schedule pages (pages 4-9) for durability. Place Velcro® squares on the backs of the laminated pieces. Mount the picture cards in order onto the visual schedule pages, flat ribbon, or sturdy cardboard strip. Use a decorated clothespin as a marker, sliding it down the schedule as you move from one activity to the next.
- *Hands-on schedules.* Laminate each picture individually, including its written text. Place the pictures in a card file or in plastic sleeves in a notebook. Select cards as needed for a session and display them in a smaller notebook or attached to the wall with Velcro®. Remove each card as the activity is completed.

# ART



# BLOCKS



# BOOKS



# DRAMATIC PLAY



# GAMES



# NATURE



# MUSIC



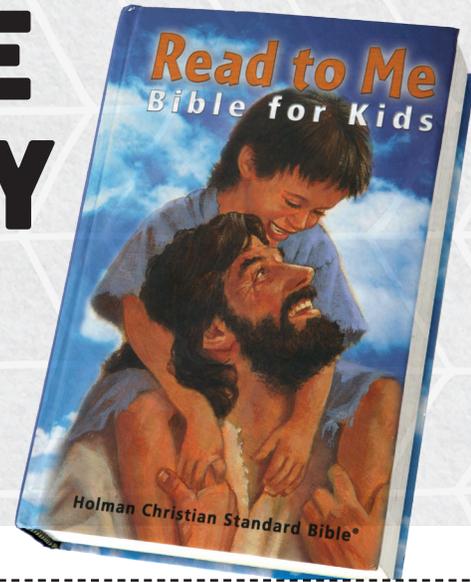
# PUZZLES



# MISSIONS



# BIBLE STORY



# CLEANUP/ TRANSITION



# SNACKS



