

Summer Activity Ideas

Sports and Games



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Sports activities and games can be incredibly challenging for individuals with an ASD. Many obstacles may arise from the fast pace of the activities, the change in tempo and in types of activities, sensory overload, physical challenges from the equipment used, and group involvement (e.g., playing in large groups or small, keeping up with rules, gross and fine motor requirements, and required socialization). However, structuring activities and using visual supports may help the individual participate in the activities successfully and eventually independently.

The considerations below need to be individualized based on the needs for a particular student.



Physical Structure

Individuals with an ASD are visual thinkers and thrive in well-structured settings. Therefore, clearly marking areas (e.g., activity areas and waiting areas) using cones, sticky tape, or even partitions (if available) can help

an individual orient independently after an initial training. Remove unnecessary furniture or equipment that might be distracting from the task activity with the exception of "waiting" chairs (if needed) and a sensory box with some motivating items to help with the waiting period. If removing furniture is not possible, clearly mark it as non-accessible (e.g., Stop! sign).

Visual Supports

- *Visual Schedules*

A visual schedule is a linear progression of

Download visual support templates at
www.HANDSinAutism.iupui.edu/tools.html

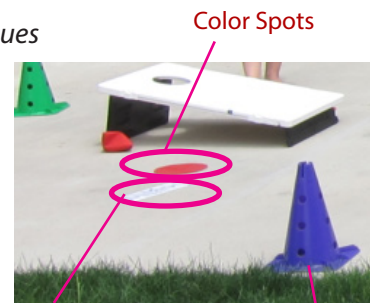
pictures, objects, or words that represent a sequence of steps or activities. Implementing a visual schedule allows individuals to be more independent and to reduce the prompting needed from caregivers. Schedules help define what is going to happen and in what order. Moreover, it assists the individual's adaptability and flexibility. If an individual struggles with a particular component of a schedule, First-Then boards can be used to work through a non-preferred task, which is then followed by a highly preferred task (e.g., "First running [least preferred], then bowling [most preferred activity]).

- *Mini schedule or activity schedule*

Much like a visual schedule, a mini schedule or an activity schedule is a visual representation or sequence of pictures, objects or words that represent each step during an activity. The mini schedule represents the activities an individual will complete during a period of time while an activity schedule represents the steps to complete within one activity (see examples on p. 2-3). Again, similar to visual schedules, the use of activity schedules encourages completion, independence and flexibility.

- *Visual cues*

Often, individuals with an ASD might not be able to attend to or comprehend information presented auditorily-- especially in stressful situations. Therefore, using visual communication devices is recommended



Color Spots
Game Rules Physical Structure

Materials provided are **samples only!**

They may need to be individualized to meet the particular needs of a person with ASD!

to assist with processing time and the need for visual reminders. These can be:

- small cards with icons for sitting down, being quiet, break (also known as pulley cards),
- visuals to illustrate time (count-down board, stop light, or time-timer),
- voice chart for self-regulation
- your turn - my turn cards,
- color spots made of paper or vinyl to indicate where an individual should sit or stand,
- choice board to assist with motivation and choice

▪ **Social Narratives**

Social narratives or scripts can be used in a variety of situations, including preparing individuals for new experiences, explaining complex social situations, or coaching individuals through difficult skills. Other situations in which social narratives could be used are waiting in line, turn-taking, if an individual has some fears about equipment, playing nicely with friends, etc.

▪ **Peer Modeling, Video Modeling or Video Self-Modeling**

Using modeling can help an individual gain important skills by observing and imitating appropriate behaviors performed by him/herself or others.

Some general points to remember:

- When using live peers, it is important to find peers who are preferred, exhibit positive behaviors and who are willing to assist the individual during activities.
- Have everything set up before an individual with an ASD arrives to assist with the individual staying on task;
- Provide very precise instructions, e.g., jump 10 times with both feet vs. jump several times.
- If a brand new skill is being taught, teach it in small steps that an individual can successfully complete.
- Give time to process; individuals with an ASD some-times require longer processing times.
- Use only the level of prompting needed to accomplish the skill.
- Do not forget to provide specific praise to the individual.

Sample Social Narrative about Winning & Losing

It's OK if Others Win

Sometimes, when I play games, I win.
Sometimes, I do not win.



I can say, "This makes me mad!" or "I am upset!"



This is OK. No one wins all the time!



It is OK to use words about how I feel.



If I see that someone else has won,
I will try to stay calm.



It is OK to be sad that I did not win.
Winning is not the most important thing.



I will try to take a deep breath. This
will help me stay calm.



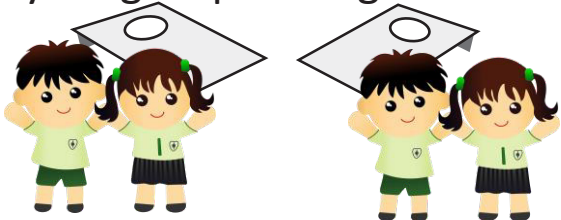
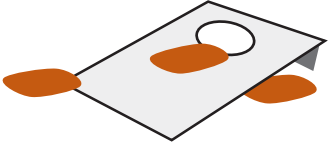


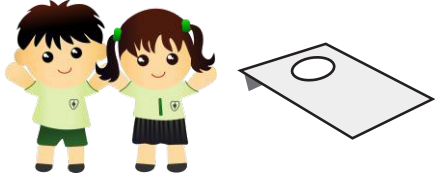

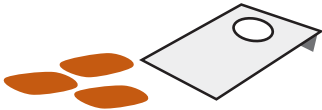
What is important is being nice and
having fun! My parents and teachers
will be very happy to see me being
nice when others win!



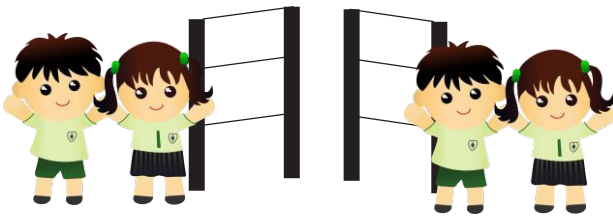


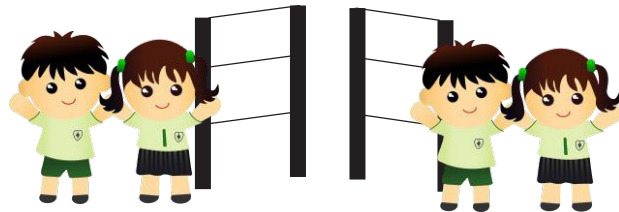


I can also use words to tell my
parents or teachers that I am upset.




Sample Bean Bag Toss Visual Supports

<p>Two people on the team, youngest person goes first</p> 	<p>1 point if bean lands on board. 3 points if bean goes in hole</p> 
<p>Wait your turn</p> 	<p>Team member <i>on other side</i> takes turn</p> 
<p>Stand next to your board</p> 	<p>When a team gets 10 points, game is over</p> <p>10 </p>
<p>Toss 3 beans onto other board</p> 	




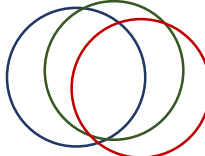
Sample Ladder Toss Visual Supports

<p>Two people on the team, youngest person goes first</p> 	<p>1 point for every ball hanging on the ladder</p> <p>1</p> 
<p>Wait your turn</p> 	<p>Every team takes turn</p> 
<p>One team throws 3 balls onto the ladder</p> 	<p>When a team gets 10 points, game is over</p> <p>10</p> 






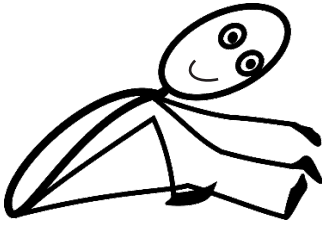

Sample Swimming Visual Schedule

<p>Play with noodle</p> 	<p>Play on steps</p> 	<p>Swim with life jacket</p> 	<p>Free swim</p> 
<p>Bob in water</p> 	<p>Float on back</p> 	<p>Doggy paddle</p> 	<p>Swim with tube</p> 

Sample Frisbee Golf Visual Supports

<p>1 Choose 1 Frisbee</p>	
<p>2 Who is the oldest person? They will go first. The next oldest will go second. The youngest will go last.</p>	
<p>3 Throw your Frisbee until it gets into the hoop</p>	
<p>4 Count how many times it takes you to throw the Frisbee into the hoop</p>	<p>1 2 3</p> 
<p>5 Repeat steps 3 and 4 for the rest of the hoops</p>	

Sample Exercise Visual Schedule

<p>Jump 15 times</p> 	<p>10 sit-ups</p> 	<p>10 push-up</p> 	<p>Count to 10 and job in place</p> 
<p>Touch your toes and count to 10</p> 	<p>Stretch your back</p> 	<p>Stretch your legs</p> 	<p>Jump rope</p> 