

# Schedules, Tools, and Activities for Transitions in the Daily Routine (STAT) Program



## Manual

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## Schedules, Tools, and Activities for Transitions in the daily routine (STAT) Program

The following symbols will be used to designate certain activities throughout the manual:



Designates where a **worksheet** should be introduced. In most cases worksheets are optional, except where stated otherwise in the manual (and indicated in bold font). Coaches may choose to fill out worksheets as they go to help organize intervention strategies.



Designates a **model, demonstration, role-play, or practice** with the teacher.



Designates a **decision point** for the coach (e.g., whether to include optional objectives).

**Note:** It is possible that some objectives may not be feasibly completed in one session, depending upon the teacher, student, and classroom. As such, each objective may be broken up into two individual sessions. For some objectives, a logical break point is suggested at the beginning of the script; for other objectives, the break point may be determined by the coach.

### Objective A: Program Introduction and Classroom Visit 1

This first objective comprises two parts: 1) provide and introduction to and rationale for the STAT program and 2) conduct a classroom observation.

#### Goal #1: Build rapport with teacher (ongoing throughout session)

Potential rapport-building strategies are listed below:

- Provide teacher an opportunity to orient you to classroom (i.e., physical space and daily routine)
- Compliment teacher on classroom environment, organization, or any other unique characteristics of the classroom
- Ask questions (e.g.):
  - o How long have you worked in this classroom?
  - o What do you like best about your classroom?
  - o What do you like best about your students?
  - o What are your students' favorite activities?
  - o How do you keep things running so smoothly during [activity]?
  - o What are some of the routines you've set up (ways that students turn in completed assignments, cues that it's time to listen or get ready for the next activity, etc.)?



#### Goal #2: Introduce program rationale

Thank you so much for having us come into your classrooms and for giving us the opportunity to work together. It is great to be here, and we hope our collaboration on this project will be beneficial for all of us. Our group intends for this to be a highly cooperative process. Clearly, you are the expert on your classroom and your students. Our team has a lot to learn from you about how your classrooms operate and what obstacles can make it difficult for things to go smoothly. More importantly, we will be really relying on you a lot to help us understand what about this intervention works and what doesn't work for you, your students, and your classroom. On our side, we have a lot of experience using these types of interventions in classroom and home-based settings. We hope that through this project, we can, as a team, figure out ways to use this program to help support your students and to make things a little easier for you on a day-to-day basis. Today's meeting is intended to give you a basic outline and rationale of why we're interested in this project and how we think it could be useful in classrooms. I'm going to be talking a bit about the background and goals of the intervention program, but definitely stop me and ask me questions if I'm not doing a good job of explaining anything.

#### Goal #3: Discuss transition-related difficulties for students with ASD and their teachers

This project was partially inspired by information collected through focus groups that were conducted with teachers in this school district and others around the country. One challenge that many teachers identified was helping students with ASD deal with transitions. As you have probably experienced, children with ASD can have a range of negative reactions to transitions, ranging from mild displeasure (such as whining or asking repetitive questions) to very challenging behavior (such as non-compliance, aggression, or self-injury). Many of the teachers we've talked with indicated that dealing with difficult transitions can cause stress and frustration. A lot of people also reported that they sometimes feel lost when it comes to figuring

out the best way to help students through their routines. Additionally, managing challenging behavior can often take up valuable time throughout the day. For example, if you are spending even ten minutes helping a child transition to and from recess, you end up losing time that could be spent structuring activities, organizing your day, and attending to other students. Another type of problem that teachers often encounter is that students with ASD may need assistance with each step of their day, rather than being able to do things on their own. This level of guidance can also take up a lot of your time as a teacher, and it also highlights the ongoing goal of helping students with ASD become more independent. What has been your experience with students who have transition-related difficulties?

Besides causing frustration for teachers, transition-related problems can negatively impact a student in many ways. For example, these issues may affect his or her ability to interact with other children or take advantage of learning opportunities, which we know are extremely important for children with ASD. More generally, transition-related problems can also cause the student undue stress and anxiety. In these ways, transition problems can often drag kids down and affect multiple areas of their lives. We know that individuals with ASD have particular difficulty with transitions and change. In fact, it likely relates to the “core” communication, social, and behavioral deficits in ASD. For example, communication difficulties may make it hard for children with ASD to understand what is expected of them as they transition, particularly when instructions are given

in a group format. Additionally, they often have problems communicating their own experiences, due to potential language difficulties as well as difficulties recognizing/identifying their own emotions. Further, children with ASD characteristically struggle with planning and organization, which can make it difficult for them to initiate the steps to transition on their own. On the social side, children with ASD may not be as naturally motivated to comply with directions for the sake of praise or “being a good student.” Finally, resistance to change is one aspect of the core behavioral difficulties that are characteristic in children with ASD.

In thinking about a student’s potential problems in these three areas, you can see how what may appear to be a simple direction can quickly cause a lot of stress for a student with ASD. Let’s use an example to see how that might play out. *[Note: Ideally, the example would be individualized from information gathered earlier in the session about the teacher’s students (if possible). However, the following example is offered as an alternative.]* Let’s imagine that Kayla is drawing with chalk outside, her favorite thing to do during recess. Her teacher calls to the whole class that it is time to come inside for the next activity. Kayla becomes very upset, throws chalk at her teacher, and refuses to leave the recess area. What factors do you think might have contributed to Kayla’s behavior? *[Solicit responses from the teacher, adding additional examples if necessary; these may include: 1) an inherent difficulty with transitions in general; 2) transitioning from a preferred activity; 3) unclear expectations about what will happen in the classroom; 4) Kayla’s difficulties communicating that she is nervous or that she wants another minute playing; 5) lack of warning prior to the transition. Worksheet #1 may be used here.]* Due to the combination of social, communication, and behavioral difficulties we discussed, what works for most children in transition situations may not necessarily work for children with ASD.





### Goal #4: Introduce transition program and assess teacher's familiarity with and implementation of these types of strategies

In response to these difficulties, we have developed a structured program to help make transitions easier for you and your students. When we talked about Kayla [or teacher's student], we identified issues that came before (e.g., lack of warning, unclear instruction), during (e.g., resistance to change), and after (e.g., moving from preferred to non-preferred activity) the transition. The nine steps that we will be learning next week are designed to provide your student support at each point of the transition. Specifically, we want to set [student] up for success by letting him/her know what's expected prior to the transition, then helping guide [student] through the transition, and then being consistent about what happens after the transition. In Kayla's' [or teacher's student's] case, what do you think the teacher could have done to help make the transition easier? *[Worksheet #1 may be used here].* *[If the teacher provides examples:]* It seems as though it was easy for you to come up with these. Are you already using these types of strategies in your classroom? *[If teacher struggles to provide examples:]* It sounds like maybe these would be new types of strategies you could try with your students. How do you think [student] might benefit from a program like this?

As I mentioned, in the coming weeks, we will be working as a team to implement a transition program in your classroom with [student]. As we go, I will rely on you a lot to let me know how you think things are going so that we can troubleshoot any potential obstacles. Teachers know better than anyone how important consistency is when delivering any instructional or behavioral intervention to students with ASD. To set your student up for success, we'll try to make sure that the essential ingredients of the functional routines program are done as consistently as possible. Over these next weeks, please let me know if you feel that is problematic or not feasible and we'll try to figure out the easiest way to keep the program successful.

### Goal #5: Gather information about the student, teacher, and classroom (this should also be an opportunity for the teacher to share her expertise with you)

**Note:** This goal is designed to be completed over the course of Objectives A and B. Information collected during these two visits should be used to inform intervention goals for each objective and also provide initial guidance regarding whether to implement any of the optional objectives (i.e., Prompting, Reinforcement). Information collected during observation can be recorded on the **Classroom Observation Form**.

To gather information on the target student:

- Observe the student during easy and difficult demands
- Observe the student during as many transitions as possible, including those that might be difficult for the student, making note of the student's behavior
- Identify individualized instructional methods or behavioral supports for student (e.g., prompting procedures, reinforcers and reinforcement schedules, modified instruction, behavior intervention plan)





Now I just want to learn a little bit more about the student who you've identified for the program. *[Worksheet #2 may be used here.]* Can you describe him/her to me? When is he/she at her best? What is most difficult for him/her? What is he/she like during transitions? Which transitions are the most difficult? Which are the easiest? How do you think he/she would respond to a transition program?

To gather information on the teacher:

- Observe teacher during instruction and transitions and make note of the teacher's strengths and areas of need regarding student-specific instructional methods and behavior management
- Ask the teacher questions (e.g.,):
  - o What is the hardest part of your day?
  - o What makes it difficult?
  - o What is the hardest part of working with [student]?
  - o What do you think gets in the way of your feeling successful with [student]?
  - o Are there any strategies you use that you don't feel completely comfortable with?
  - o Are there supports that you think might be helpful to you in the classroom?

To gather information on the classroom:

- Obtain information on the classroom environment and structure, with a particular focus on use of strategies to facilitate transitions (e.g., use of visual schedules, prompting strategies, reinforcement strategies, instructional methods)
- Observe teacher during several activities and with several students
- Make note of the teacher's use of a variety of strategies with the class in general (e.g., prompting, reinforcement, visual schedules, instructional strategies, antecedent management, implementation of behavior intervention plans)
- Perform a basic safety check. Observe the classroom environment and determine whether there are any safety risks to students (e.g., exposed wires, opportunities for elopement, allergens)



### Goal #6: Prepare for next session

I'm really looking forward to working with and learning from you during the next couple of months. *[Give teacher time at the end of session to ask remaining questions.]*

Think about the transition-related challenges we discussed. See if you can identify some transitions that are difficult for [student] and that you would like to work on in the upcoming weeks. *[Hand out **Parent Handouts (Outline and Objective A)**. Worksheet #3 may be used here.]*

## Objective B: Steps to Support Transitions

**Note:** For Objective B, the coach may make a decision regarding a logical break point. Additionally, if the coach has not yet completed the classroom observation (i.e., Goal #5 from Objective A), he/she may do so during this objective.

### Goal #1: Session preparation

Last time we discussed the rationale for and basic purpose of a transition program. Since that meeting, have you noticed anything new about your student's behavior during transitions or thought about their behavior in a different way? Did you identify problematic transitions that you'd like to be the focus of the program? Today our meeting is going to be more practical than theoretical. I hope that talking about the specific steps of the transition program helps provide a more real picture of how the program would play out in your classroom. Remember that the purpose of the nine steps I am about to describe is to prepare your student and guide him or her through a transition. This process will be helpful even for easy transitions because it promotes consistency (so that the student will know what to expect during difficult transitions), provides additional learning opportunities, and gives the student opportunities to be successful.



### Goal #2: Introduce Step #1 – Provide a warning

#### 1. Provide a warning for the transition:

The first step is to provide [student] a warning that a transition is about to happen. Warnings can help make transitions easier in several ways. Firstly, they signal that the current activity is about to end and gives students a chance to finish what they are doing. This can be especially helpful for students who are involved with a toy or activity that they really like. Secondly, warnings are the first step in helping the student understand what is expected of him. For example, by saying "In five minutes we're going to clean up the toys," you can help reduce a child's anxiety about what he should be doing next and when he will have to do it. Thirdly, warnings give students a chance to get used to the idea that they will be moving on to something else, which is particularly important for students who may be resistant to change. What kinds of warnings do you currently use in your classroom?

Warnings can be given at any time, depending upon the needs of the student. For example, students who generally do well with transitions may only need one warning (e.g., "We're going to clean up in one minute"). Students who have more transition-related difficulties may benefit from more gradual warnings (e.g., at 5 minutes, 3 minutes, and 1 minute). How many warnings do you think [student] needs for transitions?

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Resistance to change	Gives time to adjust
Planning/organization problems	Gives the student a chance to finish what she/he is doing
Anxiety	Provides clear expectation of what comes next



**Goal #3:**  
**Introduce Step #2 – Signal to gain student attention**



**2. Signal to gain student attention:**

The second step is to gain the student’s attention. As you have likely experienced, students with ASD oftentimes have difficulties attending to instructions, particularly when they are presented within a large group format, such as a classroom. In many cases, an individual with ASD may not be deliberately ignoring your directions. Students may be focused on other activities to the extent that they have “tuned out” general noise in their environment. We also know that social sounds, such as a person’s voice, are not as naturally reinforcing to individuals with ASD, as compared to typically-developing children. For all of these reasons, you may have experienced difficulties getting [student] to follow instructions in the classroom. Has that ever been a problem for [student]?

As you might expect, having a student’s full attention increases the likelihood that they will comply with an instruction. As such, you will want to use a clear, consistent signal to get [student’s] attention prior to the transition. This signal could be as simple as calling his/her name, clapping your hands, or saying “eyes up.” Take a minute to brainstorm some ideas for signals that you could use in your classroom.

What the signal sounds like is not as important as making sure that it is a good match for your student. For example, if a child is easily overwhelmed by language demands, asking him to “Please look at me so we can get started” will probably not be very effective. The signal should be individualized to [student] and his/her needs. You may need to try out a few different signals to figure out what is most effective. What signals do you think would be appropriate for [student]? *[Part 1 of Worksheet #1 may be used here.]*

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Intense or special interests	Refocuses the student on the teacher
Social motivation	Student attention increases the chance of following directions
Receptive language	Ensure that signal matches the student’s abilities
Receptive language	Students often benefit from multi-modal instruction (visual and verbal)

**Goal #4:**  
**Introduce Step #3 – Clearly communicate transition-related instruction**

**3. Clearly communicate instruction (what):**



The third step involves providing clear instruction. It is important to state the instruction using clear, simple language to increase the chance that the student will follow your directions. [Provide examples such as “Get ready for lunch,” versus “Put your book away and line up to wash your hands;” “Clean your desk,” versus “Put your pencils and papers in your bag. Some of these are outlined on Worksheet #2, which may be used here.] For some students, it is also helpful to let them know what the next activity will be (e.g., “It’s time to get ready for lunch. Put away your books and get your lunch bag”). Preparing students for what is next can often help reduce anxiety about what to expect. However, this may not make sense for some students, particularly if you can anticipate that they will have trouble with an upcoming activity. For example, asking a student who hates math to clean up and get ready for addition worksheets may create an even more difficult transition. As such, it’s very important to individualize the instructions to every student. Do you think that announcing the next activity would make sense for [student]?

Related to the theme of individualizing the instruction, another important thing to consider is matching the language complexity to your student’s abilities. For example, if he/she is working on one-step instructions in other situations, it is best to stick to one-step instructions during transitions. If you are working on increasing independence with a student, you may not even want to give a verbal instruction. For those students, it might make more sense to gesture to the student’s activity schedule or to the materials required to complete the transition. Again, these may be things that you are already doing with your students without really thinking about them. The purpose of talking about them in detail today is to help us

all be more aware of the types of instructions we use with the children we work with. Can you come up with some examples of clear instructions you use or would like to use with [student] that are specific to transitions? *[Part 2 of Worksheet #1 may be used here.]*

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Receptive language	Use of simple language/ multi-modal instruction
Planning/organization	Lets the student know exactly what is expected of him/her

## Goal #5: Introduce Step #4 – Communicate behavioral expectation

### 4. Communicate expected behaviors (how):

In addition to letting students know what they should be doing during transitions, we want them to understand how they should be following those directions. For example, Connor is reading a book quietly at his desk when his teacher tells him to stand up and put his book away. Connor says, "I don't want to!" but he stands up and throws his book loudly into his desk. Would you call that a successful transition? Even though Connor technically followed his teacher's instructions, his behavior was not appropriate for the classroom. Because we already know that transition time may be more anxiety-provoking for many students, it is especially important to communicate our expectations for behavior. What type of instructions might you give Connor the next time you want him to clean up his book? *[Provide additional examples of behavioral expectations (e.g., "Line up quietly," "No talking," "You may whisper," "Keep your hands at your sides.")]*

Does [student] have any behavioral difficulties during transitions? Let's brainstorm some instructions that may help address those issues. *[Part 3 of Worksheet #1 may be used here.]*

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Repetitive/stereotyped behavior	Gives an appropriate alternative
Difficulties with social cues	Makes it clear what behaviors are appropriate for a given situation

## Goal #6: Introduce Step #5 – Specify a time expectation



### 5. Specify at time expectation for the transition:

Related to the idea of how we want students to complete transitions, it is important for transitions to be completed in a timely manner. As discussed earlier, it is easy for students to get into the habit of taking a long time to transition, especially when they require a lot of prompting and redirection along the way. We also talked about how children with ASD frequently struggle with planning and time management. As such, the fifth step involves clearly letting the student know how much time they have to prepare for their next activity. This does not have to happen separately from the individual direction. Rather, you can combine the time expectation with your instructions. For example, you might say, "You have two minutes to line up for lunch," or "You have 30 seconds to put away your math book and take out your science book." Later on, we will talk about specific transition routines and how quickly you'd expect [student] to complete them. However, in general, what time frames are you usually working with when it comes to transitions in your classroom? Does [student] ever have difficulty transitioning quickly?

As you've likely experienced, many students with ASD are visual learners, so we usually like to combine the verbal instruction with some kind of visual cue of how much time they have. Timers work very well in these situations because they can be carried around by or placed on the desk of an individual student or they can be placed for the whole class to see. If you are working with students who cannot tell digital time, you might consider an analogue timer, in which the time remaining is shaded in a color and it slowly disappears as time runs out. Alternatively, you could provide your own visual countdown by giving the student gradual verbal warnings (e.g., "3 minutes left," "2 minutes left") while showing them how much time is left on your fingers. Depending on your student's needs, you might choose to

use a verbal cue, visual cue, or a combination. What do you think might work best for [student]? *[Part 4 of Worksheet #1 may be used here.]* Whichever cue you decide to use, the important thing is to provide gradual warnings throughout the transition period (as opposed to just at the beginning). Then we can fade that out over time.

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Problems with organization and task initiation	Visually reminds them to manage their time
Rigidity	Capitalizes on preference for sameness

**Goal #7:  
Introduce Step #6 – Watch student for follow-through**

**6. Watch student for follow-through on expected behaviors:**

After telling a student what to do, it is important to watch them do what you told them to do. This may sound like common sense but it is an easy one to let slip, especially when you are trying to keep track of multiple students in the classroom. However, it is a critical step because you'll need to know whether [student] should be praised for doing things correctly, whether he/she requires redirection, or whether he/she needs assistance/prompting. (We'll talk more about those later.) I wouldn't expect any teacher to be able to watch one student like a hawk when she/he has other student to attend to – all we're asking is for you to keep an eye on [student] as he/she completes his/her transition steps and be ready to jump in if needed. In thinking about how transitions look for [student] and your classroom in general, how easy do you think it would be to implement this step? Is there anything you think might get in the way?

*[Note: You may need to spend some time troubleshooting with the teacher here if she/he thinks it will be difficult to attend to the student's behavior during transitions. Environmental adaptations (e.g., moving the student closer to the teacher's area, turning the student's desk so he/she is facing the teacher) can be helpful in making it easier for a teacher to keep track of a particular student.]*

Being close to [student] and watching his/her behavior will help guide you to the next steps, which could involve either reinforcement (for following directions) or additional support (for noncompliance, challenging behavior, or new skills).

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Receptive language	Breaks instruction down into smaller components
Receptive language	Provides multi-modal teaching
Anxiety	Helps student learn the "right" way
Repetitive/stereotyped behavior	Provides appropriate alternative

**Goal #8:  
Introduce Step #7 – If necessary, provide additional support (redirection and/or prompt)**

**7. Provide student with additional support (e.g., redirection, prompt):**

Of course, there may be times when [student] does not follow instructions on the first try or when he/she engages in challenging behavior. In these cases, the next step is to redirect him/her by giving the same direction you originally gave. Although it can be a frustration situation for many teachers, it is important to stay calm and focused on what you need the student to do. By becoming upset, teachers may unintentionally make a student more anxious or angry or they may get into an unnecessary power struggle with the student. However, it is difficult to argue with a teacher who is calmly repeating instructions. How does [student] usually react when you give him/her instructions? Does he/she ever struggle with following directions? How do you typically respond in those situations? *[If the teacher describes that he/she typically responds to noncompliance in a different way (e.g., arguing, time out), provide additional guidance and rationale for remaining calm and representing demands. Encourage the teacher to attempt using redirection to see how the student will respond.]*

During this stage, you will likely also have to incorporate your prompting procedures, depending on how independent [student] is with each step of the transition. As you would do when prompting other skills, prompting for transitions should also follow a prompt hierarchy and use accompanying reinforcement. As you know [student] best, can you describe when you think he/she will need prompting during transitions and how you might help guide him/her through those moments?

*[Note: If the student has a behavior intervention plan (BIP), talk with the teacher about how to incorporate the BIP for any instances of challenging behavior during transitions (e.g., following the plan and then redirecting to the original transition-related instruction when the BIP steps are complete).]*

ASD-Related Difficulty	How this step can help
Social motivation	Supplements praise with external rewards
Communication	Highlights what is right, rather than just what not to do
Rigidity	Motivates students to shift attention

**Goal #9:  
Introduce Step #8 – Reinforce success**

**8. Reinforce success:**

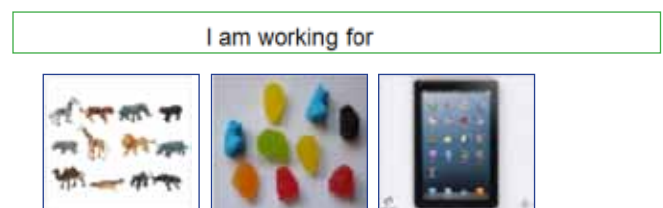
If your student follows directions right away, you can skip the previous step and go straight to reinforcement. The nice thing about this step is that it can be tailored to [student]. For some students, positive praise is enough to reinforce behavior during transitions. If you go this route, make sure that the praise is highly descriptive (e.g., "[Student], thank you for pushing in your chair," "I like how you put your books away with a quiet voice"). Other kids may require other types of reinforcement, such as food or toys, or they may be on a token system. Alternatively, you may use a group contingency for the whole classroom (e.g., putting marbles in a jar for good behavior and giving the entire

class a reward at the end of the day, stoplight system). Any of these strategies can be used with transitions; however, it is usually considered best to always use social praise when teaching a new skill, even if it is combined with another strategy. In particular, we recommend using behavior-specific praise. This both helps the student understand exactly why he is being reinforced and also provides an additional reminder of the appropriate behavior. For example, if you asked your student to put his book away, behavior specific praise might include saying "Great job putting your book in your backpack!"

How do you usually reinforce [student] in your classroom? *[Probe for various types of reinforcement (e.g., social, tangible, token systems, group contingencies).]* What reinforcement strategies do you find most effective for [student]?

*[This section applies to students who are working on increasing independence during transitions.]* One other aspect of reinforcement involves thinking about the quality of the behavior completed by the student and how that corresponds to the quality or quantity of reinforcement. As you start to teach new skills to your student, I imagine that you provide a lot of reinforcement, even when they require prompting. However, what happens to reinforcement over time and as your student begins to learn? *[Encourage the teacher to talk about fading reinforcement or introduce the topic if necessary.]* A similar concept can be used during transitions. Where initially you may be providing frequent reinforcement or high-quality reinforcement for every step of the way, over time we'd expect you to be able to fade out that reinforcement. You can also save high quantity or quality reinforcement when [student] independently completed transitions, as compared to when he/she has to rely on you for prompting. Let's brainstorm some praise statements or other reinforcers you think would be good to use with [student] during transitions.

*[Part 5 of Worksheet #1 may be used here.]*



## Objective C: Practicing STAT Program Steps

**Note:** For Objective C, the coach may make a decision regarding a logical break point.

The purpose of this session is to model provide examples of each step of the transition program. Goals should include: 1) working with the teacher to identify a variety of examples, 2) engaging in role-plays, and 3) demonstrating the steps with classroom students during various transitions.

### Goal #1: Session preparation

Did you notice anything about your use of the transition steps we discussed last time? *[Review steps with the teacher, praising him/her for steps that he/she is already doing. Provide the teacher opportunities to ask questions or discuss any challenges faced since the last session.]*

### Goal #2: Introduce structure and rationale for modeling and practice

Last time mainly covered a description of the transition program steps and some examples. Today, the goals are much more hands on, to give you a sense of how these steps will actually play out in the classroom and with [student]. We're going to review the steps one at a time, and for each one, I'll show you what it will look like in action. Then you'll have an opportunity to practice the steps with me in a role-play. Finally, I'll demonstrate each step with your student and then you'll have a chance to practice them during classroom activities. The goal is for this practice is to make it easier to remember all the steps and to make it more comfortable to use them with your students.


*[For each step of the program, follow the basic outline listed below. You may need to make adaptations based upon the current classroom environment (e.g., student availability, classroom schedule). For example, you may need to combine several steps when providing demonstrations and practice with the students if there is limited transition time during your meeting. Provide praise, support, and constructive*


### Goal #10: Introduce Step #9 – Signal end of transition

#### 9. Signal end of transition by beginning next activity.

The final step is a signal to end the transition by starting the next activity. Although the main purpose of this step is to provide the student a signal to complete his/her transition, it also gives a natural consequence for uncompleted transitions. For example, if a student has not completed all his/her transition steps, he/she will miss out on part of the next activity. Each transition is different, and so it is up to you as [student's] teacher to decide how much time is reasonable for a transition to be completed, based on what steps are required. Can we talk for a minute about some of the typical transitions in [student's] day? How long would you expect each of these to take? Remember that over time, as [student] becomes more successful with transitioning, he/she may complete some of these transitions more quickly. *[Have teacher complete part 6 of Worksheet #1.]*

### Goal #11: Prepare for next session

 Read over this transition steps cheat sheet *[hand out Worksheet #3]*. Take note of which steps you routinely do and which might be challenging to use and we can talk about it at the beginning of our next meeting. *[Hand out Parent Handout (Objective B) Worksheet #4 may be used here.]*

 **Note:** Ideally, at the end of this session, the coach will decide whether to implement any of the optional objectives (i.e., Prompting, Reinforcement). Although the best time to introduce these objectives are between Objectives D and E, they can be incorporated at any point throughout the program.

feedback as necessary. Check in frequently with the teacher to assess his/her level of comfort with the steps and to see whether the teacher has any questions. Although examples for each step should be identified collaboratively, a few samples are provided here. Additionally, keep in mind that the steps are not necessarily linear and may be combined.]



1. Review the step description and definition (using **Worksheet #1**)
2. Encourage the teacher to think of several examples and provide your own, as needed
3. Model the step with the teacher
4. [**Optional:** Have the teacher role-play implementing the step with you as the student]
5. Demonstrate the step with a student (or class as a whole, if not feasible to practice with individual student)
6. Ask the teacher to practice the step with a student (or class as a whole, if not feasible to practice with individual student)



### Goal #3: Practice step #1

#### Step 1: Provide a warning

"In five minutes we're going to put our books away."  
"Toys away in two minutes. Toys away in one minute. Toys away in 10 seconds."

### Goal #4: Practice step #2

#### Step 2: Signal to get student attention

Teacher claps hands  
"Eyes up"  
"Listening ears"

### Goal #5: Practice step #3

#### Step 3: Communicate the transition-related instruction

"Put your toy on the shelf."  
"Put your books in your backpack and sit in your chair."  
Teacher gestures to student's activity schedule

### Goal #6: Practice step #4

#### Step 4: Communicate behavioral expectation

"Use a whisper voice."  
Teacher puts finger to lips  
"Keep hands in pockets."  
"Line up with hands at your side." (Combined with Step 3)

### Goal #7: Practice step #5

#### Step 5: Specify a time expectation

"Lunch begins in three minutes."  
"You have two minutes to line up with hands at your side."  
(Combined with Steps 3 & 4)  
Teacher sets and draws the student's attention to a timer

### Goal #8: Practice step #6

#### Step 6: Watch the student's behavior

Assess whether the student is following directions.

**Goal #9:  
Practice step #7**

**Step 7: Respond to the student's behavior**

**7a. Reinforce success**

[If teacher completed the optional Reinforcement Module, use examples of reinforcers identified during that session.]

Behavior specific praise: "Nice putting your book away quietly."

Giving a toy, book, or other tangible reinforcer

Social praise (e.g., high five)

**7b. Redirect and/or provide a prompt**

Teacher repeats original instruction

Teacher repeats original instruction and provides a gestural prompt to the schedule

**Goal #10:  
Practice step #8**

**Step 10: Signal the end of transition**

Begin the next activity

**Goal #11:  
Prepare for next session**

Continue to practice carrying out the steps with [student] and other students in your classroom. Like you did last time, take note of the steps that are easy and difficult to do.

[Hand out **Parent Handout (Objective C)**. *Worksheet #2* may be used here.]



**Objective D:  
Activity Schedules**



Although activity schedules are included as a core objective, the coach may choose to opt out of completing this session if a) visual schedules (classroom-based or individual) are available; b) the schedules are reviewed regularly with the student; and c) the schedules are appropriate to the student.

**Note:** For Activity Schedules, a logical break point is suggested between Goals #5 and 6.

ASD-Related Difficulty	How schedules can help
Task initiation/Rigidity/Planning	Occur at pre-determined times
Rigidity/Anxiety	Occur in a predictable sequence
Receptive language/Anxiety	Clear, visual guidelines of what is expected
Prompt-dependence	Conducive for prompt-fading to increase independence
Problems shifting between activities	Intersperses preferred and non-preferred activities

**Goal #1:  
Session preparation**

[Review use of steps from previous session with teacher, providing feedback, answering questions, and troubleshooting when necessary.]

**Goal #2:  
Introduce activity schedules and assess teacher's familiarity with and implementation of these types of strategies**

Because transitions are so problematic, there has been a lot of research looking at the use of activity schedules for children with ASD. Activity schedules are basically visual representations of a series of activities that are predictable in three ways: 1) they occur at pre-determined times; 2) they occur in a predictable sequence; and 3) they include clear guidelines for what the student is expected to do. These characteristics make them a good fit for students with ASD for several reasons. In thinking about your own students, do you have any ideas why this might be? [Provide the teacher time to answer, validating their examples and adding

additional rationale if needed. Examples may include: 1) they are well-suited for individuals who enjoy predictability and sameness; 2) their structured nature is conducive for prompting and prompt-fading to increase independence; 3) they can be easily implemented across settings to promote generalizability; 4) they can be easily incorporated with visual supports; etc.] A student may have an individual activity schedule for his own routine and some teachers use classroom-wide activity schedules with all their students.

Let's take an example. Mara takes the bus to school every day and reads her favorite book during the 30-minute ride. On Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays, her classroom teacher gets her off the bus and tells Mara to "get ready for the day." The teacher then gives Mara ten minutes of free-play in the classroom. On Tuesdays and Thursdays, her aide gets her off the bus. She helps Mara take off her jacket, put away her lunch, and then starts her day with a ten minute direct instruction session. Mara has a long history of throwing tantrums during the morning routine. What do you think may be contributing to Mara's tantrums? [Allow teacher to answer and provide additional examples if necessary (e.g., varying expectations by staff member, inconsistent schedule, transition from preferred to non-preferred activity, lack of warnings). **Worksheet #1** may be used here] How would activity schedules benefit Mara in this situation? Here's a handout of what we just talked about – the ways that transitions are hard for students and how activity schedules might help.

[Hand out **Worksheet #2.**]

I realize that this type of program may sound familiar to you and that you may already be using these types of strategies in your classroom. Do you currently use activity schedules or something similar in your classroom? [If yes, assess the teacher's experience with the intervention. How has that worked for you and your students? What do you like and dislike about this approach? Is there anything that you feel gets in the way of your students being successful with their routines?]

In what ways do you think activity schedules [or, if they are

currently using some form of schedules, "some changes to your activity schedules"] could be beneficial to you and your colleagues? [If needed, provide the following examples:] Many teachers have found that when their students transition more easily, they save time that can be used for instruction and other classroom activities. Also, in the same way that it is easier for students to follow predictable routines, their consistency also makes less work for teachers. Finally, because routines support structure throughout the day, they can be beneficial for the entire class, not just an individual student.

### Goal #3: Identify routine(s) for which activity schedule(s) will be used and outline schedule steps


Activity schedules are very flexible and can be used for a variety of activities throughout the day. On a large scale, they can be used to outline a student's classroom activities, with varying level of detail. [Hand out **Worksheet #3 (3 pages).**] You can see how these activity schedules range in number of activities and in scope. For example, this schedule (#1) includes a very basic outline of the all the student's activities for the day (e.g., morning group, math, lunch, reading). This schedule (#2) breaks down the day into smaller steps, with this section focusing on the morning arrival routine (e.g., Get off the bus, walk to cubby, take off jacket, hang up jacket, put lunch in cubby, hang up backpack, walk in classroom, sit at desk). At a very detailed level, this activity schedule (#3) breaks up an individual activity into all its steps (e.g., washing hands – turn on water, get hands wet, push soap pump, rub hands together, rinse hands, turn off water, dry hands).

Let's talk about what routines would make the most sense for [student] to complete with an activity schedule. [Help the teacher choose one or two appropriate routines. The type of schedule chosen should depend upon the student's transition-specific issues. For example, students who have difficulty with changing activities, who struggle with transitions to non-preferred activities, or who are anxious about what comes next, may benefit from schedules that focus on more global daily routines (as demonstrated in schedule #1). Students who have difficulty understanding verbal instructions or who have





moderate planning difficulties may benefit from more detailed schedules (as demonstrated in schedule #2). Finally, students who are learning a new transition sequence or who have significant planning difficulties may benefit from a highly detailed schedule (as demonstrated in schedule #3). Use your knowledge about the student and the classroom structure to help the teacher identify appropriate routines. The coach should complete **Worksheet #4** as they discuss each section with the teacher.]

 What steps do you think we should include in this schedule? [Help the teacher choose steps to be included in each identified routine and record them on **Worksheet #4**.]



**Goal #5:**  
Identify how to implement the schedule, including three elements: cue, prompts, and reinforcement

We've made a lot of progress toward a schedule for [student], and now the last step is to figure out the best way to present it to him/her. Basically, we need to figure out how to guide [student] through the schedule in a way that works for [student] and for you. To do this, we're going to talk about three main elements of carrying out a schedule: the cue, prompting, and reinforcement.

The first step in carrying out the schedule is to use a cue that signals to [student] that it is time to follow his schedule. You already identified possible cues for [student's] transitions in our second meeting, including [list the teacher-identified signals]. Which one would you like to use? [Record teacher's response on **Worksheet #4**.] Keep in mind that it may take some repetition for [student] to learn this new signal, so try not to get discouraged if he/she doesn't pick it up right away. Another thing I want to mention is that it is best to save direct requests, like "Look at your schedule" only for a last resort. Because the goal is to get [student] as independent as possible with his schedule, we'd like him to use it without needing to be told.

After providing the cue, you will likely need to **prompt** [student] to use the schedule, at least at first. Let's think for a minute about how exactly you want him/her to use the schedule. [Complete a task analysis with the teacher for schedule use (e.g., pick up the schedule, touch the appropriate icon, pick up the icon, complete necessary transition steps, return to schedule, place icon in the pouch). Record steps on **Worksheet #4**.] What does prompting for [student] usually look like? [While validating the teacher's current prompting strategies, say] When using activity schedules, we generally find it is best to use the most hands-off approach possible because this encourages students to do things on their own. Good prompting procedures for activity schedules include

**Goal #4:**  
Identify how to present the schedule

Now let's think about what the schedule will look like and what will be easiest for [student] to understand. Because the overall goal is for [student] to be more independent, we'll want to choose a format that he/she will be able to ultimately use him/herself. There are several formats for activity schedules, including pictures, words, an organizer, or a combination of these. As you can imagine, picture schedules work best for children who struggle with reading. Most commonly, they involve using picture icons to represent each activity, which are then attached with Velcro to a laminated paper, book, or clipboard. For children who are beginning readers, the schedule can include a one- or two-word description of each activity (pictured in schedule #1). Finally, students who can read at a third-grade level may prefer using a calendar or organizer. Any of these methods can be combined. For example, you'll see that schedule #2 uses picture icons that also include words. Which format do you think will work best with [student]? [Record teacher's response on **Worksheet #4**. Discuss any additional features of the schedule (e.g., whether they will use a one-page sheet or a book). If the teacher intends to use Velcro icons, talk about where to include a pouch for completed activities.]

a few characteristics: 1) Prompting is done from behind the student. This will help [student] see from his/her perspective, what the sequence of activities should look like and also makes it easier for you to step back when he/she is successful; 2) Prompting involves as little physical guidance as possible to help [student] complete his transition. Again, the focus is on making sure [student] doesn't become too dependent upon prompts; 3) Prompting is only done when necessary. This sounds like common sense, but when you're in the middle of prompting a response it can sometimes be hard to notice when a student is being successful on his own. In general, we try to give student an opportunity to do things independently before jumping in and then also try to fade out as quickly as possible, even in the middle of a response.

Finally, [student] should get some kind of **reinforcement** for successfully completing each step in his schedule. This could range anywhere from praise to a favorite toy or activity. In figuring out what kind of reinforcer is most appropriate, it's important to think about several aspects of the transition and the student's ability. First, how difficult is this transition for the student? You may want to reserve the best reinforcers for the hardest transitions. Second, is the student in the process of learning the schedule or transition steps? Students who are currently learning skills may need more reinforcement initially, which can then be faded over time. Third, do you plan to reinforce every step of the activity schedule or just once at the end? You can also mix your reinforcers (e.g., using praise or tokens after each step and then giving a bigger reinforce at the end). What reinforcers can you imagine using for [student's] schedules? *[Help the teacher identify appropriate reinforcers based on the child and transition characteristics. Record the teacher's choices on **Worksheet #4.**]*

### Goal #6: Model and role-play using an activity schedule



Now that we've talked about the details of using an activity schedule, let's do some practice, so you will already feel somewhat familiar with the steps when you start them with [student]. *Activity schedule may be modeled and/or role-played if necessary. If modeling or role-play is not necessary, ask the teacher to run through the schedule at least two times, for both a successful transition and one that requires prompting or redirection. Provide the teacher an opportunity to ask questions.]*

### Goal #7: Session preparation



For next time, begin to use the activity schedules we outlined today with [student]. Try to take a moment to review the nine STAT program steps before starting a schedule. Take note of what steps [student] does well and where he/she needs more help. *[Hand out **Parent Handout (Objective D)**. Worksheet #5 may also be provided.]*  
**Program Note:** For Objectives E, F, and G, the coach should attempt to schedule sessions with the teacher **both when the target student is available and when the target transition is likely to occur.**



## Objective E: Implementing the STAT Program, Part I

Note: For Objective E, a logical break point is suggested between Goals #3 and 4. Additionally, the coach is encouraged to make multiple copies of the **Data Collection Form** prior to session.

### Goal #1: Session preparation

*[Review teacher's use of strategies since the previous session, offering praise for completed steps. Review any steps that the teacher indicated were difficult to complete and assess for barriers to those steps. Keep those barriers in mind throughout Objective E and troubleshoot with teacher to address them.]*

### Goal #2: Identify a difficult transition and conduct a task analysis

Today we are going to work on actually applying everything we have talked about during one of [student's] transitions. Eventually, the goal is to use the STAT program on any transitions that are difficult for [student], but we'll start with one today, to get used to it. At this time, what would you say is the most difficult transition for [student]? I'd like to learn more about that routine. At what time of day does it happen? How many times does it happen each day? Is it always the same person who initiates the transition? Can you walk me through all the steps of what happens in the classroom? *[Encourage teacher to identify the individual steps of the transition and fill out **Worksheet #1**. Prioritize observing the transition if it is scheduled to occur during the session.]* As we review the transition steps *[indicated on **Worksheet #2**]*, let me know what the challenges there could be during each of them. *[Encourage teacher to identify whether there are any barriers to each step. These may be added to Worksheet #2 if desired.]* As we practice the steps today, we'll troubleshoot and see if there is anything we

can do to get around these challenges. *[While reviewing the steps with the teacher, confirm the topography of each step (e.g., What is the signal? What is the transition-related instruction?). As you review the steps, the coach should complete **Parent Handout (Objective E)** with the individualized steps for the student.]*

### Task analysis for getting a drink of juice


1. Take out cup
2. Take out juice bottle
3. Take the cap off the bottle
4. Pour juice into cup
5. Put the cap on the bottle
6. Put juice bottle in fridge
7. Close fridge


### Goal #3: Introduce data collection





We often hear teachers say that it's difficult to remember all the steps and to carry them out in a busy classroom, especially when they first start using them. We also know that many people can learn the steps more quickly when they keep track of which steps they do and don't do during each transition throughout the day. *[Introduce **Data Collection Form**]*. This is form that we use in the study to track whether we've done a good job in teaching and explaining the steps of the STAT program. After we finish our sessions together, we will come in and watch how you complete the steps during [student's] transitions. It can also be a helpful tool for you to track your own use of the steps in the time before our next meeting. As we go through and practice using the STAT program, we'll also start filling out this feedback sheet.

#### Goal #4: Role play/practice STAT program steps during teacher-identified transition

 [At this point, the coach should assess the extent to which the student is available for demonstration and practice of the STAT program steps.]

 **[If it is not possible to practice during actual transition, provide a model and role-plays.]** Even though we can't practice directly today, it might be helpful to walk through the STAT program steps again, this time thinking about what will happen during [teacher-identified transition]. First, let's review the nine steps. [Review **Worksheet #2** with teacher. If necessary, work with the teacher to identify any transition-specific cues that have not already been discussed. For example, if the teacher does not have a signal identified for this transition, help her to create one.] Do you have any questions about how any of the steps would be done during this transition? I'll walk through the process first and have you act as your student. This will be really helpful for me because you know best how [student] will react during each of the steps. [If necessary, conduct a demonstration of the nine steps, with the coach acting as the teacher and the teacher acting as the student. Encourage the teacher to role-play any of the obstacles she/he anticipates (e.g., challenging behavior, non-responding). Allow the teacher to ask questions.]

 [If necessary to provide additional practice:] Thank you for showing me what this transition usually looks like in the classroom. This time, you run through the steps and I'll act as [student]. Feel free to ask me questions as you go, and I might also make some comments. [Encourage the teacher to practice the nine steps, with the coach role-playing the student. Illustrate use of the **Data Collection Form**. Provide praise for steps attempted or completed successfully, in addition to constructive feedback for steps missed or not done well. Ideally, this should be a collaborate process. For example, ask questions such as: "Did you notice which steps you did?" "Do you think you missed any?" "What was hard about those steps?" Reassure the teacher about the challenges associated with starting any new program (e.g., numerous steps to remember, doing things in a new way, trying to focus on the program while managing the rest of the classroom). Troubleshoot ways to address these challenges and conduct additional demonstrations/role-plays as needed.]

 **[If the transition occurs during the session, provide a demonstration and have the teacher practice with the**

**student.]** Before we practice with [student], it might be helpful to walk through the STAT program steps again, this time thinking about what will happen during [teacher-identified transition]. First, let's review the nine steps. [Review **Worksheet #2** with teacher. If necessary, work with the teacher to identify any transition-specific cues that have not already been discussed. For example, if the teacher does not have a signal identified for this transition, help her to create one.] Do you have any questions about how any of the steps would be done during this transition? I'll walk through the process first and have you act as your student. This will be really helpful for me because you know best how [student] will react during each of the steps. [If necessary, conduct a demonstration of the nine steps, with the coach acting as the teacher and the teacher acting as the student. Encourage teacher to ask questions.]

How would you feel about trying out the steps with [student] now? Do you have any questions before you start? Feel free to ask me questions as you go, and I might also make some comments. [Encourage the teacher to practice the nine steps with the student. Illustrate use of the **Data Collection Form**. Provide praise for steps attempted or completed successfully, in addition to constructive feedback for steps missed or not done well. Ideally, this should be a collaborate process. For example, after the transition is complete, ask questions such as: "Did you notice which steps you did?" "Do you think you missed any?" "What was hard about those steps?" Reassure the teacher about the challenges associated with starting any new program (e.g., numerous steps to remember, doing things in a new way, trying to focus on the program while managing the rest of the classroom). Troubleshoot ways to address these challenges and conduct additional demonstrations/role-plays/practice as needed. If the teacher struggles during the transition, offer to jump in to model/assist with any of the steps.]

## Objectives F & G: Implementing the STAT Program, Part II

Although they follow the same structure, these are intended to be separate objectives, to provide multiple opportunities for practice.

**Note:** For Objectives F & G, the coach may make a decision regarding a logical break point.

### Goal #5: Prepare for next session

Continue practicing the STAT program with [student] during [teacher-identified transition]. Do you think you would also have time to complete the **Data Collection Form**? [Identify potential barriers to completing the form and troubleshoot alternative strategies. For example, if the teacher is concerned about the time to complete the form for each transition, agree upon a limited number of transitions to track. Hand out **Parent Handout (Objective E).**]

### Goal #1: Session preparation

*[Review teacher's data collection forms. Provide praise for completing the forms and for steps administered. Ask the teacher to identify barriers to completing the forms or for any missed steps. Provide preliminary troubleshooting, as well as ongoing brainstorming throughout the session for how to overcome these obstacles. Solicit feedback regarding potential changes in the student's behavior during transitions.]*

### Goal #2: Identify session goals



Last time we started practicing the STAT program during [student's transition]. At this point, let's see whether it makes sense to continue working on that transition or whether you want to focus on a different routine for [student]. Do you still feel like [student's transition] is a problem? Did you notice any other transitions where [student] had difficulty and you thought the STAT program might be helpful? [Help teacher make a decision regarding whether to continue working on the previously identified transition from Objective E, or whether to focus on a



new transition. If the teacher decides to work on a new transition, conduct a new task analysis and have the teacher complete Worksheet #1.

The remaining steps are identical to those completed in Objective E.



### Goal #3: Role play/practice STAT program steps during teacher-identified



*[Provide practice (with demonstrations and role-plays if necessary) of the nine steps. Encourage teacher to complete **Data Collection Form** and simultaneously complete your own data collection form. Provide ongoing praise and constructive feedback. After each transition, compare data collection forms to ascertain how closely the teacher is monitoring his/her own performance.]*



### Goal #4: Troubleshoot obstacles/challenges

*[It will be important to address any obstacles to program implementation or data collection as they arise. Although we cannot anticipate every potential barrier, some commonly-reported problems are listed below with suggestions regarding how to address them.]*

#### **Problem: Student engages in challenging behavior**

Students can engage in challenging behavior that may or may not relate to the intervention procedures. It can be helpful to normalize this for teachers. For established challenging behavior, encourage the teacher to follow the student's behavior intervention plan, if one exists. If the student does not have a behavior intervention plan, work with the teacher to identify ways to redirect the student to the presented task. If the student presents with a new challenging behavior that appears to occur in the context of the intervention, attempt to identify whether any changes to the program might alleviate the problem. For example, the student may be reacting to the signal or a new prompting procedure. If possible, try an alternative strategy that still fulfills the intervention goals (e.g., identify a new signal; use a less intrusive prompt). Finally, if the behavior is not destructive or dangerous to the student or others, the teacher may wish to ignore the behavior.

#### **Problem: Student does not follow directions**

Again, this may be a common occurrence (especially when the intervention is new), and it may be helpful to normalize this for teachers. Encourage the teacher to use consistent redirection to task, as well as appropriate prompting procedures and reinforcement to guide the student through the transition. If the teacher is struggling with identifying or using these procedures, the coach may decide to add in the optional prompting and reinforcement sessions.



#### **Problem: Teacher has limited time to implement intervention because of other classroom demands**

Provide validation for the teacher's statement, assuring her/him that you understand how many simultaneous responsibilities she/he is coordinating. Gather information regarding what the teacher perceives as the conflicting obligations and highlight any conflicts that you have noticed. As a multi-step intervention, the STAT program can certainly feel cumbersome and time-consuming, especially in the beginning. Reassure the teacher that as she/he becomes more familiar with the steps, it will likely become much easier to implement the program, and transitions will go more quickly and smoothly. Work with the teacher to identify any potential steps that can be simplified, at least in the short run (e.g., shorter directions, more direct prompting strategies, accessible reinforcers). Additionally, the teacher may consider using some of the steps (e.g., warning, signal, group instruction) as a classroom-wide strategy to manage the transition for multiple students at once.

### Goal #5: Assign homework

Continue practicing the STAT program with [student] during [teacher-identified transition]. *[Hand out **Parent Handout (Objectives F & G).**]*

## Optional Objective: Reinforcement

**Note:** This session is designed to be completed within one session. Although this session is intended to help teachers provide reinforcement during the STAT program, it can also be tailored to address reinforcement for the student's activity schedule, depending upon whether that module has been completed.

### Goal #1: Session preparation

*[Review content from previous session with teacher, providing feedback, answering questions, and troubleshooting when necessary. Refer to Lesson Plans (Objectives A-G) for content-specific scripts.]*

### Goal #2: Describe and provide rationale for reinforcement

Today we're going to talk about something that is probably very familiar to you – reinforcement. It's always interesting to see the different kinds of reinforcers that are used with students. For example, I've seen you use *[describe specific examples of the teacher using reinforcers or reinforcement systems with his/her students. Praise the teacher for any examples of good reinforcement practices (e.g., contingency, immediacy, consistency, behavior-specific praise, use of token system)]*. As you probably remember from when you were first learning about children with ASD, reinforcers are anything given after a child's behavior that helps to increase that behavior in the future.

The reason we're talking about reinforcement today is because reinforcement strategies can sometimes look a little different during transitions than it does during the rest of a student's day. I'd like to work together to see if we can figure out the best reinforcement system for [student] during his/her difficult transitions. Why do you think reinforcement will be so important in these situations? *[Encourage teacher*

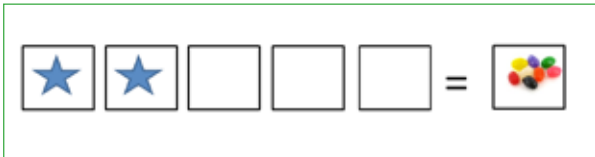
*to respond and praise relevant responses. (Example include: 1) We already know that transitions are really hard for [student], so he/she may need more encouragement to get through them than he/she may during other activities; 2) Because transitions often involve many steps, the behaviors we're trying to teach [student] can be more complex than what he/she is used to; 3) We want to be consistent with the reinforcement system [student] is already using during other parts of the day.)]*

### Goal #3: Describe different types and schedules of reinforcement

Because the number of steps and types of activities included in a transition can be so different, it's important to think about both what type of reinforcer is best and when it should be given. Can you give me examples of the types of reinforcers that you use in your classroom? *[Provide additional examples if necessary (e.g., tangibles, preferred activities, praise, social reinforcers, token systems).]* Which of these works best for [student]? Generally, we try to use strong reinforcers at first when teaching a student to cope with transitions. This can then be faded out over time and as he/she becomes more successful. However, there are some other things to consider when choosing a reinforcer for transitions. You probably want to choose reinforcers that can be given and used quickly. For example, letting a student work for a 5-minute video clip at each step will not create a more effective transition. The type of reinforcer should also relate to when it is given. You could choose to reinforce [student] for each individual transition step. This approach can be helpful for students who are really struggling or who are in the process of learning the steps. In this case, you would probably want to use smaller reinforcers along the way. Alternatively, you could wait to reinforce [student] until he/she has completed the entire transition. In this case, you could use a bigger reinforcer because [student] had to complete more steps for it.

Knowing what you know about [student], when do you think he/she will need reinforcement? *[Help the teacher choose an appropriate reinforcement schedule, taking*

into consideration the student's prerequisite skills, ability to complete multi-step directions, typical reinforcement schedule, and level of difficulty with transitions.]



Now that you've decided when you want to give reinforcement, what reinforcers do you think will work best? It may be helpful to think of several reinforcers, to give [student] some choice. [Help the teacher choose appropriate reinforcers, taking into consideration the availability of reinforcers, the student's typical reinforcers, the student's level of difficulty with transitions, etc.

**Worksheet #1** may be used here.]



#### Goal #4: Practice providing reinforcement in the context of transition-related activities

[If necessary to model/role-play] Let's do some practice with [student's] new reinforcement system. First, I'll show you how I'd go through the steps, with you acting as [student]. Feel free to stop me at any point with questions.

[Model basic transition steps with reinforcement and have the teacher role-play the student. Provide the teacher an opportunity to ask questions at the completion of the model.]

Now let's switch roles so that you can practice giving me reinforcement. As you're going through the steps, I may ask you questions or offer suggestions on what to do next. At the end, I'll give you some overall feedback and also see if you have any questions. [Have the teacher practice providing reinforcement and provide feedback as needed. Praise the teacher for elements completed well.]



[Provide practice with the target student, first demonstrating the reinforcement system with the student (if necessary) and then having the teacher reinforce her student. Provide praise and constructive feedback as necessary.]

#### Goal #5: Prepare for next session

Before our next meeting, try to start using the reinforcement system with [student]. Make note of any questions, challenges, or changes in [student's] behavior. [Hand out **Parent Handout (Reinforcement)**.]





## Optional Objective: Prompting

**Note:** For Prompting, a logical break point is suggested between Goals #4 and 5.

### Goal #1: Session preparation

*[Review content from previous session with teacher, providing feedback, answering questions, and troubleshooting when necessary. Refer to Objectives A-G for content-specific scripts.]*

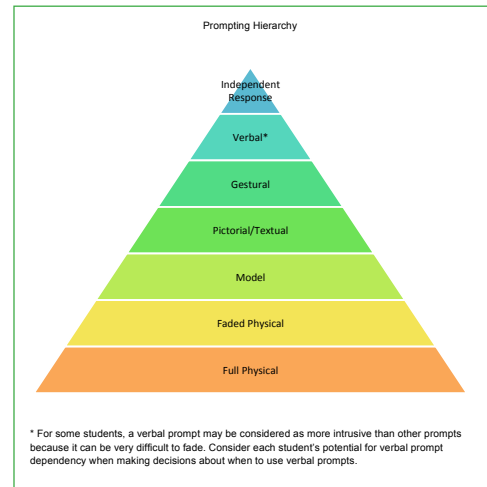
### Goal #2: Provide definition of and rationale for prompting

Introducing a new transition routine or activity schedule can be challenging because it's something new and also because students may or may not have the skills they need to follow the new program. Just like there are many steps you have to think about in the STAT program, your student also has to do several things in a short period of time. Even if you might expect [student] to be able to do all the steps in the routine, you may be asking him/her to do them in a new way or in a new order. Is there anything about the STAT program that you think will be different for [student]?

Because of the changes transition routines often create, we generally don't expect students to be able to do them perfectly right from the start. However, you also know from your teaching experience that it's important to provide initial support to help students learn new skills, rather than letting them get frustrated or practice those skills in the wrong way. That's why we are going to talk about prompting today. Prompting is probably a very familiar term to you, but we often find different people think about prompting in different ways. When we talk about "prompting," what we basically mean is helping to guide a student through the behaviors we want him or her to do. Prompts happen after the initial instruction and before the student begins to respond.

### Goal #3: Define different types of prompting procedures

What kinds of prompts do you currently use in your classroom? What kinds of prompts do you currently use with [student]? Those are great examples of different kinds of prompts. There are a variety of different prompts you can use with your students. We'll go over several of these and then talk more about which ones are the best fit for the STAT program and for [student]. *[Hand out **Worksheets #1 and #2.**]*



A **gestural** prompt involves using a physical gesture, such as pointing, to show the correct response. For example, if you told [student] to put his books away and pointed to his backpack, the point would be the prompt. It is intended to show him where he should put his books when he hears your instruction.

A **verbal** prompt can be given in two ways. It can involve providing part or all of a response audibly. For example, if you tell [student] to say "I'm sorry" to his friend, you might give him the verbal prompt, "I'm..." and wait for him to say "sorry." In other cases, a verbal prompt can be a spoken reminder or hint of what the child is supposed to do. Let's say you tell [student] to put away his books and he just sits at his desk. You might use the verbal prompt "Pick up your math book...put it in your backpack" to remind him of what he needs to do next. Verbal prompts are very easy

to give, and they often feel natural. We give each other verbal reminders all day. However, verbal prompts can be extremely difficult to fade, and students with ASD often become dependent upon them. As such, it's generally best to try other prompting procedures first, even though it can be tempting to use a verbal prompt. Do you use any verbal prompts in your classroom?

**Modeling** a response involves acting out what you want the student to do. In our previous example, if you tell [student] to put his books away, you could model the response by putting the first book away yourself. Because the hope is that the student will then copy your behavior, modeling works best with students who have good imitation skills. Do you use modeling with any of your students?

A **physical** prompt involves physically guiding the student through the behavior by placing your hand on his/her hand, wrist, elbow, or some other part of the body. If you wanted to give a physical prompt for [student] to put his books away, you might put your hand on his hand and help him pick up the books and put them in his backpack. Over time, you may be able to guide him/her by putting your hand on his elbow, instead of his hand. Do you ever use physical prompts?



**Pictorial** prompts are pictures used to represent objects, actions, and tasks. Activity schedules that you use in the classroom may use pictorial prompts [give examples if teacher uses picture-based activity schedules]. In our example of asking a student to put his books away, pictorial prompts could include pictures of the student picking up his books, putting them in his backpack, and then sitting at the table with his hands folded. Do you use any pictorial prompts?



**Textual** prompts are very similar to pictorial prompts except that they use written words instead of pictures. In this case, the textual prompts would say, "Pick up books, put in backpack, sit at desk with hands down." Do any of your students use textual prompts?

**Keep feet on the floor**

**Goal #4:**  
**Identify appropriate prompting strategies for the target student**

You said that you already use [give examples] prompting with [student]. Do you think these will also be useful for guiding [student] through transitions? Why or why not? Are there other prompting strategies that you would like to try for the STAT program? *[Work with the teacher to identify relevant prompting strategies that are appropriate for the target student, with respect to prerequisite skills, level of difficulty during transitions, and familiarity with prompting procedures.]*



**Worksheet #3** may be completed here.]

## Goal #5: Discuss elements of effective prompting

Everyone uses prompts in a slightly different way, which is great – you have to customize what you’re doing to meet the needs of your students. However, there are some “key elements” of prompting as well. These are things we consider to be necessary to help prompting be as effective as possible. *[Give teacher **Worksheet #4.**]*

- 1. Prompts should be given at the same time or immediately after the direction.** If you tell [student] to pick up his pencil, you want to guide him to pick up his pencil before he reaches for his book. This way, the student is encouraged to follow the direction right away (instead of waiting for your help) and he/she does not have the chance to do things incorrectly.
- 2. Prompting should happen behind the child as much as possible.** This helps encourage students to do things on their own, rather than waiting for help. It also provides students a clear point-of-view on how the steps should be completed. Do you think there will be any challenges to being able to prompt in this way?
- 3. Prompting should be combined with reinforcement.** Even though it may feel strange to reinforce a student for something you’re helping so much with, it’s important to give reinforcement for prompted behaviors. By providing reinforcement, you’re helping the student understand what is expected of him and also increasing his motivation to do it himself next time.
- 4. Generally, prompting should start at the highest level** and with the most assistance, especially when learning new skills. Because the transition steps are new for [student], we recommend starting with the maximum prompt necessary to help him/her get through the transition. For example, if you are choosing between a physical prompt and a pictorial prompt, we would suggest starting with the physical until [student] is more successful at getting through the steps.

- 5. Prompts should be faded over time.** Of course you probably don’t want to be using a very high-level prompt over long periods of time, and as your student becomes more successful with the transition, it may not be necessary. You may do some trial and error as you continue to figure out how much prompting [student] needs. When you notice him/her become more successful and independent with the steps, try using a lower-level prompt and seeing if [student] is still successful. Eventually, the goal is to fade out prompts over time to help students become as independent as possible. How might [give examples of prompts chosen by teacher] be faded over time? *[Help teacher identify a plan for prompt fading. If desired, teacher responses can be recorded on **Worksheet #2.**]*

## Goal #6: Model and rehearse prompting procedures with teacher

[If teacher requires modeling and/or role-plays:] Now that we’ve figured out what prompting will look like, let’s practice going through the steps together. I’ll demonstrate first, with you acting as [student]. *[Model prompting strategy for teacher. Allow teacher to ask questions or provide feedback.]* Now, let’s change roles and you practice prompting with me acting as [student]. As you’re going through the steps, I may ask you questions or offer suggestions on what to do next. At the end, I’ll give you some overall feedback and also see if you have any questions. *[Encourage teacher to practice prompting procedures, providing praise and feedback when necessary.]*

*[Ask teacher to practice on student during a transition. If a transition does not occur within the session, practice the same prompting procedure (e.g., physical, gestural, model) on the student during a different activity. Provide encouragement, praise, and feedback as necessary.]*

**Goal #7:**  
**Prepare for next session**



Before our next meeting, try to start using prompts with [student]. Make note of any questions, challenges, or changes in [student's] behavior. *[Hand out **Parent Handout (Prompting)**. Worksheet #5 may also be used here.]*











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