

'First and Then' Strips

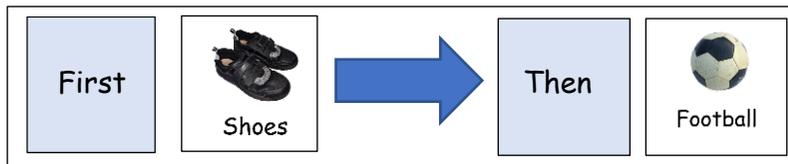
'**First and Then**' strips are a visual aid used with the spoken word. They can support a child with SEND to understand the sequence of two events and to motivate them to do a task that they don't enjoy by showing them clearly that something desirable will happen straight after.

Supporting the child's understanding of what is happening and what is expected of them can prevent their anxiety and frustration rising and prevent an escalation in undesirable behaviour

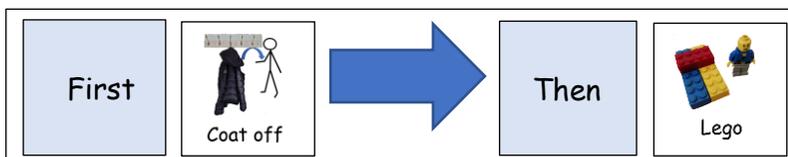
With acknowledgement of original concept: *Premack, D. (1959). Toward empirical behavior laws: I. Positive reinforcement.*

How do I use 'First and Then' Boards?

1. Decide which task you need the child to complete. Stick this picture on the '**First**' box.
2. Decide on the activity that the child likes for the '**Then**' box which the child gains immediately after the '**First**' task is done. This preferred item or activity should be motivating enough to increase the likelihood that the child will complete the first task. Stick this picture on the '**Then**' box
3. Gain the child's attention and then present the board to them with a brief clear verbal instruction e.g. **First** put on your shoes, **then** football.



Or another example: **First** take off your coat, **then** Lego



4. If required, whilst the first task is being completed, refer back to the board to continue to motivate e.g. ***“one more shoe then football”***
5. When the first task has been completed, immediately refer the child back to the board and say, ***“Shoes are on, now football!”*** or ***“Coat is off, now Lego!”*** then provide the preferred activity, praise and celebrate their achievement!
6. In order to teach the child, it is important to give the preferred activity straight away, or they may not trust you next time.

What to do if the child is resistant to completing the first task

1. Continue to physically prompt the child to complete the first task. Keep your focus firmly on the task, not the behaviour. Once completed still give the child the preferred activity as it is important to reward the success of the first task so that they learn that this is what they need to do to get what they want.
2. If you predict that the child may find this visual support challenging or they continue to resist the first task, asking them to complete just part of the ***‘First’*** task, or change to something which they usually complete willingly and successfully. This will support them to understand and follow the concept before then increasing your level of expectation

‘First and Then’ template for you to print, laminate and use

