

## Choice Assessment

A choice assessment is a quick and easy way to determine what items or options an individual will choose to engage. This helps an individual understand the available options and provides them with a degree of investment in the outcome. It also provides a measure of relative preference (e.g. "I don't like any vegetables but I really hate broccoli. So I'll choose peas.").

### Steps:

1. Select the available options or items ahead of time. Examples would be: "Do you want to read with me or play by yourself?" "Do you want to pick up your toys or do these worksheets?" "Now that we are done with music do you want to write or do math before we take a break?"
2. Try to set it up the same way every time. "Juan, come here I have a choice for you. Do you want to do ... or ...?" or "Let's go check the choice board."
3. Be ready to address emergent situations. Child wants to add an alternative to your choices. You can (a) indicate that their alternative is not a choice now but may be at a later time, or (b) incorporate their option (e.g. "Sure we can read but you will also need to do some writing or math first."
4. Mention before, during, and after the choice activity what is going to occur once the activities are completed (i.e. dinner, play break, bed, etc).

### Some suggestions:

- a) A person's preferences change over time. On occasion offer more varied options to see something you did not expect emerges as a preferred item or activity.
- b) You can bias a person's choice by adding something extra to one choice (e.g. "Do you want to draw by yourself or count the toys with me).
- c) You can use choice in structured schedule building. "Ok we have these four work tasks and these fives short play breaks, what would you like to do first? What do you want to do next?"
- d) For escape motivated individuals you can structure the choices so they get out of more than they have to do. "Pick two of these 5 tasks and if you do well on them we won't do the others today."
- e) You can build up to less preferred choice making after you have established a desire to do the choice making process using more preferred choice items and activities. However, it is a good idea to expose an individual to some of the undesirable alternatives on occasion so they understand those items may be involved in future choices.
- f) This handout is designed to provide suggestions and recommendations to help individualize a choice assessment to your needs and to make it possible to extend the applications of the choice assessment to other situations that may benefit from a choice component.