Take Home Tips

Early Learning
Visual Timers

Visual timers are a specific type of timer. Visual timers allow you to "see" the movement of time through clear, visual signals. Visual timers include *sand timers* where sand falls in an hourglass and *Time Timers* where a colored dial or disc disappears as time passes.

Visual timers are effective tools to use in school or at home. Educators can use these timers to help children manage their time and stay on task, as well as help them transition from one activity to another. At home, visual timers can be used to help children move along with a task or chore, or even to set a specific time for activities like reading, playing, or screen time.

Why Use Visual Timers?
Visual timers have many uses and benefits. They can:

- Give children an understanding of time concepts without them having to be able to tell time. When using a visual timer, children can see the time remaining without having to figure out the hands on a clock – brushing their teeth for two to three minutes, for example.

- Teach the concept of "How much longer?" Children can look at a visual timer and know for themselves "how much longer" without having to ask – knowing they have only a few more minutes left to clean up their rooms, for example.

- Help children who have difficulty moving from one activity to another to anticipate and be ready for the change. If children know that an activity is almost over, they can begin to prepare to switch to a new activity.

- Improve children's focus on tasks and activities. When they complete an activity, using a visual timer, children can see time passing and can use their time better.