

How to Use Five Star Waiting:

Some children have difficulty waiting. This can be because for a lot of reasons; their bodies feel like they need to move, they are very excited to do the thing that they are waiting for, or it's hard to watch someone have the thing they want the most! Another reason that it can be hard to wait, is that time is a very difficult concept to learn. If there are no visuals, and often there are only subtle time visuals, the child that is trying to wait might feel that they will just have to wait forever!

Five star waiting is used to give the child a visual of how long they have to wait. It takes some time to learn, however, it can be a very powerful tool to let kids know just how long they have to wait.

The key is for the child to learn, once that last star goes is placed on the strip, the waiting is done. For many children, this concept is new, so we won't expect them to wait very long the first couple of times that we introduce it. Here's how it might look the first time it is introduced:

Materials: five star waiting strip, five stars, a toy car, the child and a caregiver

Caregiver: It's my turn with the car! You can have it back once ALL the stars are on the strip. (Show the strip and the stars)

*The caregiver then holds the car and places all the stars on the strip within about 10 – 15 seconds. Once the last star is down, they give the car back. (If your child can wait longer, you may want to take a bit longer to put all the stars down, it's just important that they are **successfully** waiting in that time)*

Caregiver: There, all done, your turn!

The caregiver gives the car back to the child and takes the stars off. The child gets to play with the car for a while, a reward for good waiting before the caregiver takes their turn again.

Caregiver: Ok, now it's my turn. It's your turn when all the stars are down!

The caregiver then holds the car and places all the stars on the strip in about 15 -20 seconds. Once the last star is down, they give the car back.

Keep repeating this procedure, slowly increasing the amount of time the child has to wait. Go up in small increments, so that you notice that they time is increasing, but the child doesn't.

Eventually they will learn that 'The last star means I am done waiting'.