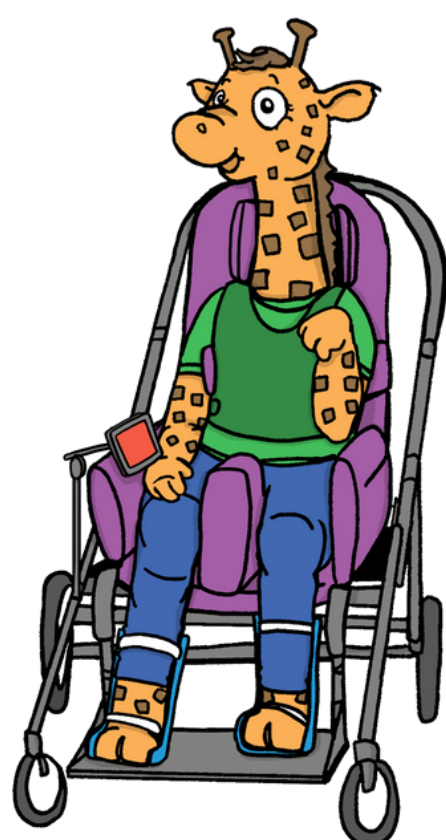


# The Seven Stages of Switch Development

## Information sheet



### Stage 2

Intentionally make happen  
Journeying Jiao the Giraffe  
Square/Orange

#### Definition

Journeying Jiao is the stage where you start to intentionally make something happen when using switches. You will increasingly understand that when you press – or press and hold – a switch, it causes the activity/effect to happen.

Through lots of repetition, you will also start to develop the motor skills to press the switch with your body.

This stage has two steps, the knowing (cognitive) step and the doing, motor skill (physical/body movement) step. It is important to first focus on the knowing step. Activities need to be fun and of interest to you, with the switch being placed where you can most easily reach it.

The knowing step is when you start to show anticipation and understanding about the switch activities. Moving the switch to different locations for you to use different parts of your body helps you to know that wherever the switch is, when you press it, the activities are still activated. Moving a single switch also prepares you for the next stage (playing with two switches) and provides you with more options for using switches in the future. For example if you get tired or hurt from using one switch site you can change to another.

Now that you know more about what the switch does, you need to practice repeating the body movement until it becomes automatic. This happens when you succeed and have the desire to keep using your switch. It is a good idea to have a main and backup switch location, but it is also important to try out other options regularly. At this stage, the switch activity should now be completely abstract from the switch.

#### Milestones

- Anticipating cause and effect: You will understand that pressing the switch causes a specific activity/effect to happen
- Developing motor skills: You will have developed the motor skills necessary to press the switch intentionally with your preferred body part
- Moving the switch: You will have experience of the switch being moved and activated by multiple body parts. This helps you to understand that regardless of the location, the switch still activates activities. This will prepare you for the next stage (using a second switch)
- Abstract switch activities: You will know that the switch can cause something to happen that may not be directly related to it – a toy moving on a table away from the switch
- Increase in time: You will be able to engage in motivating switch activities for longer periods of time



## Top tips for working with switch users



- Provide ample opportunities for the switch user to use switches throughout the day. Frequent repetition will develop motor skills and automaticity
- To keep the switch user motivated, use a variety of different switch activities that are of interest to them
- Experiment with different switch locations and body parts for activation
- Avoid saying the phrase, 'press the switch'. Instead, give them verbal encouragement related to the activity (e.g. 'can you turn the light on?' or 'let's make the toy move/dance/sing!')
- Optimise the environment to support the child's success with the switch, including positioning the switch at an accessible height/distance and minimising distractions. Regularly assess and adjust the environment as needed to support progress
- Consider the child's sensory and regulation needs and provide appropriate supports
- Focus on building the child's understanding and ability to intentionally press the switch rather than just focusing on how they press it
- Identify and provide a primary and secondary switch site, but also encourage exploration of alternative options

## Activities

Use a range of switch adapted toys

Use an iClick/Energizer/Click-on/ to connect household appliances, such as a mixer, hair dryer, or sensory lights

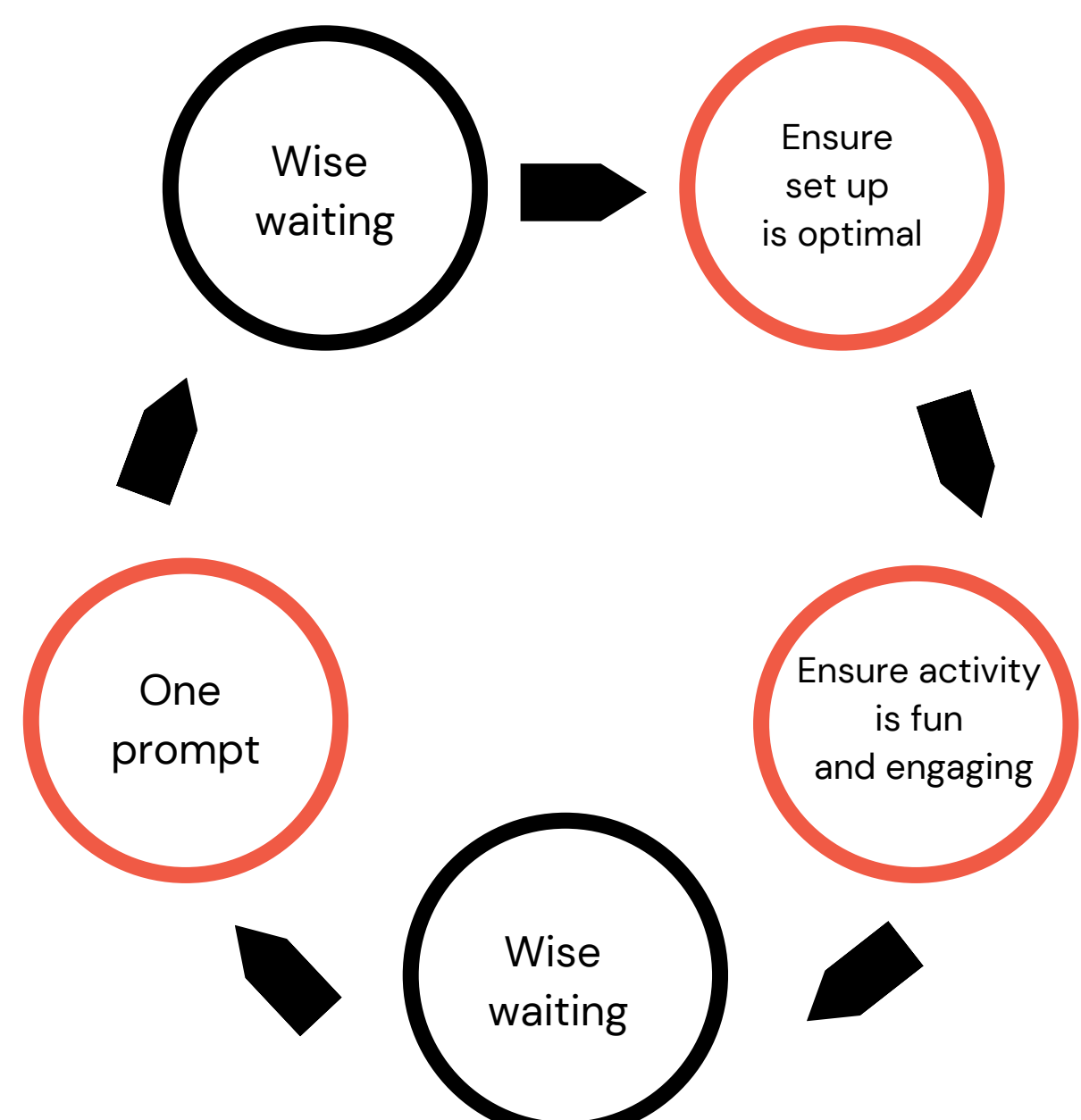
Use a voice output switch to record a range of motivating commands, such as 'tickle me Mummy!' or 'more bubbles'

Use a voice output switch to take part in a story, adding a recording such as, 'turn the page' or say a repeated line of the story

Computer games: for example games that require the child to press a switch to make things happen, such as cause and effect or simple story games. Create a gameplay on Tar Heel Gameplay to allow the switch user to continue playing their favourite YouTube video

Sensory activities: activities that allow the child to control sensory stimulation by pressing the switch, such as bubble machines, vibrating pillows, or sensory balls

Instead of a prompt hierarchy where the type of prompt increases in support level, we recommend our one prompt switch session support cycle



If you would like additional support, please contact us directly via [AT@thepacecentre.org](mailto:AT@thepacecentre.org)