

Information Sheet

Visual Supports

6. Using Photos of Real Objects to Make Requests

Before using the guidance in this document, please refer to the following:

Visual Supports - 1 Using Real Objects of Reference

Visual Supports - 2 Using Real Objects to Make Choices

Visual Supports - 3 Using Real Objects to support 'Now & Next'

Visual Supports - 4 Using Photos of Real Objects

Visual Supports - 5 Using Photos to Make Choices

It is Important to Remember:

- Using visuals is a **whole team approach** - all adults use visual supports for all parts of the day and routine.
- **Everyone** in contact with the child must have an understanding of the child's preferred form of communication.
- When getting your setting ready for the day/session - this should include checking that visuals supports are accessible.
- Visual supports can be personalised to support individual children.
- Visual supports enable the child to have a visual image alongside the verbal word(s).
- Use of visual supports will help reduce some of the child's frustration and anxiety.
- Visual Supports encourage some independence, as well as develop the child's confidence.
- When using verbal communication, remember the child's **current stage of development** (not their actual age) and their current level of understanding.
- It is important to choose the words you will use with the photo of the real objects of reference - then all adults will use these same **word(s)** with the same **photo(s)**.
 - Photos must be of the real objects within your setting, e.g. toilet, taps, hand towels, etc. This includes photos of the child's real belongings, e.g. water bottle, coat, shoes, wellies, etc.
 - An adult will get down to the child's level and use the child's name to get their attention - then pause, briefly. The adult will use the chosen words while showing the child the photo.

- Take it slowly - start off with using photos of the real object for one purpose, then introduce more once the child is using these purposefully.
 - Remember, that using visual supports doesn't automatically mean the child will co-operate.
- ❖ The following examples are based on a child who is not receiving support from a Speech and Language Therapist. If the child is receiving support from a Speech and Language Therapist, please contact them for advice.

This guidance is for a child who can recognise photos.

Children often get frustration with they are unable to make their needs known. Photo Cards can be used individually or on a to support the child to make requests.

Using Photo Cards to make Requests:

Photo Cards can be used to support a child with little or no language, to make their needs known.

The relevant photo card(s) are placed around the setting, using hook and loop tape, in the relevant areas. These must be kept at the child's height and in the same place every day to enable the child to take it to an adult to make a request.

Always start with just one Photo Card and only increase once the child is using this purposefully, independently and in a variety of different situations.

Always include the words on the photo card (plus the symbol, if you have access to them)

For example (but not limited to):



For this example:

- The drink photo card is kept with all the children's drinks
- The wellies photo card by the door to go outside
- The wash hands photo card near the messy area, etc.

For this example:

The child is wandering around picking up various water bottles and looking at them. The child becomes upset and frustrated when the real owner of one of the water bottles, takes it from the child and says, "That's mine".

In this situation, the adult would use hand over hand to model how to use the Photo Card to make their request. When the child gives the Photo Card to the adult, the adult will use the child's name, pause briefly, and say "want....." and name the object on the Photo Card using the word that the child uses for their drink, e.g. "drink" - "water" - "water bottle" - "juice" - etc.

Example:



Remember the adult must put the Photo Card back in its place, ready to be used again.

Proving a Request Card:

Another way to support to enable the child to make their needs known, would be by providing a Request Card. This is when there are several Photo Cards on a Visual Support Card. This is used as a mobile resource so can be moved around the setting as appropriate, including outside.

Remember to start with one Photo Card and only increase once the child is using this purposefully.

To start with, just one Photo Card is added.

For this example:

Example:



(The photo of Snow White, represent a photo of the child)

Only add another Photo Card once the child is using the first one purposely.

For this example:

Example:



(The photo of Snow White, represent a photo of the child)

Continue adding photos gradually, one at a time.

Example:

For this example:



(These photo of Snow White, represent a photo of the child)

Remember: Every adult must use the same **word**(s) with the same **photo**(s) of real object(s).