Information Sheet

Visual Supports

5. Using Photos of Real Objects to make Choices

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

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 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 <u>not</u> 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.

<u>The following information is for a child who can recognise photos.</u>

Make the Visual Support Card personal by adding a photo of the child.

For example:

Example:

(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

The adult encourages the child to make a choice (consider using hand over hand, initially, to guide the child to make a choice).

To select the photo of the real object, the child may - take the object - point to it - glance at it - etc.

If the child wants both items - The adult can use their tone of voice to make the motivating item more interesting.

Remember: The focus of this intervention is making a choice, it is ok if the child chooses not to play with their choice.

Remember: Keep trying with different highly motivating activities, at different times and in different situations. However, remember not to bombard the child with too many choices.

Offering Choices:

When offering choices, the adult will probably know which option the child will choose - but it is important that the child learns to make a choice.

For this example, the child is observed wandering around the setting during child initiated time / free-play, and not stopping at any activity for more than a few seconds - an adult offers the child a choice of activities that are currently available could support them to access more of the setting.

Always start with activities that you know the child enjoys.

- The adult will add the two choices to the Visual Support Card.

- The adult will get down to the child's level.

- The adult will use the child's name to get their attention - then pause, briefly.

- An adult will use the chosen word(s) while showing the child the Visual Support Card.

- Remember to point to the relevant photo as you say the word(s) and pause between photos.

As with offering choices with Real Objects of reference, start with one photo of a real object that is highly motivating to the child.

For this example: a photo of the child's teddy that they bring in from home.

Plus, another real object that is not motivating or interesting to the child.

For this example: a photo of a piece of plain paper is not interesting or motivating to this particular child.
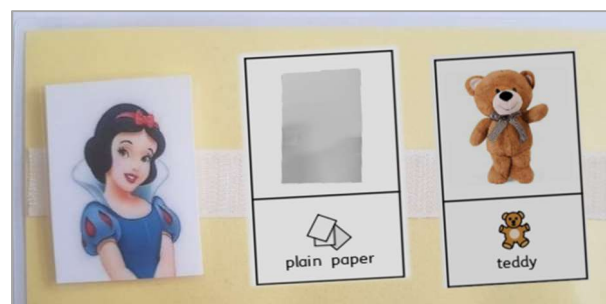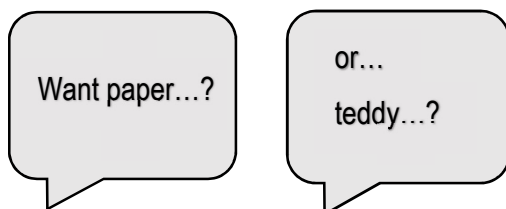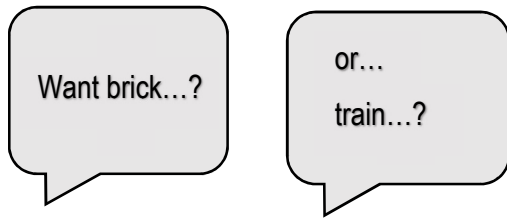

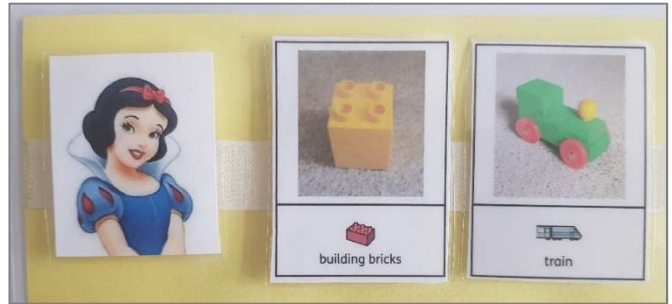(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

As with Real Objects of Reference, use photos of real objects of reference that interests the child. The activity/items on the Visual Support Card must be available straight away.

For this example: The child is observed wandering around the setting during child initiated time / free-play, and not stopping at any activity for more than a few seconds - offering the child a choice of activities that are currently available will support them to know what activities are available.
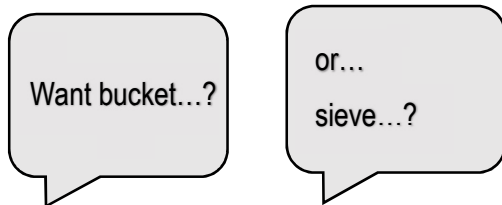
For this example:

Want brick…?

or…
train…?

Example:

(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

For this example:

Making choices in the garden:
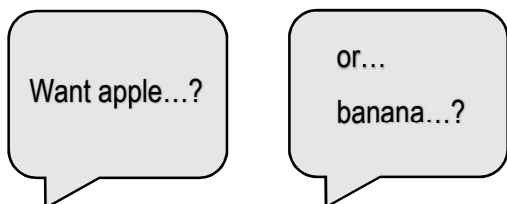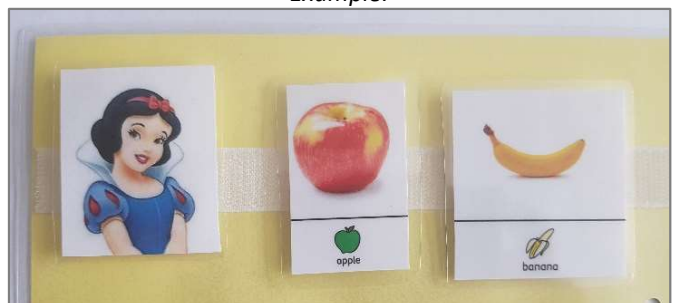
Want bucket…?

or…
sieve…?

Example:

(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

When offering choices at snack time, it is usually better to offer the real object of reference, however some children may prefers to use their choice card.

For this example:

Want apple…?

or…
banana…?

Example:

(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

4.

When a child can make choices from two items, you can gradually increase the number of options.

Example:

For this example:

For use in the garden when making a choice from 3 options:

(The photo of Snow White represents a photo of the child)

Want trike…?   ball…?   stepping stones…?

Remember: The focus of this intervention is making a choice, it is ok if the child chooses not to play with their choice.

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