

Visual Aids

A Resource Pack for Out of School Clubs and Playschemes

Why use a visual aid?

Some children have difficulties with the understanding and use of language, and awareness of social rules. When faced with a situation where there are expectations to play, socialise, follow rules and where routines can be unpredictable, the child's anxiety can rise which can quickly lead to them displaying behaviours which are of a concern.

Visual aids are a simple and cost-effective resource which can be used as part of a child's **'Positive Behaviour Support Plan'** as a **Primary Prevention Strategy**. When children feel safe and have choice and control, their anxiety and frustration is reduced and undesirable behaviours are much less likely to occur.

Visual aids can be useful for all children including those who have a higher cognitive ability. When a child is under stress, they are unable to think clearly so visual aids can help during this time, reducing the likelihood of the situation escalating.

Visual supports can be used in three ways:

1. To help teach social skills to children who don't understand social rules when they interact with others
2. To support a child who has difficulty understanding and following spoken instructions so that they know what we expect from them.
3. To help a child to understand routines and prepare them to transition from one activity to another

TIP: Check with the child's parents/carers and school if visual aids are already used. Try to use the same systems and symbols that they use for a consistent approach

This Visual Aid Resource Pack contains an explanation and template for each of the following:

- 'First and Then' Strip
- 'First, Next and Then' Strip
- Sequencing Board
- Visual Timetable
- Choice Board
- Feelings Board
- Good Choice, Bad Choice Board

Plus, a selection of pictures to use with the templates to start you off.

Please note that some children may have difficulties generalising and if you use a picture of an object which is different to the one familiar to them, they may not understand it. Using your own photos instead can help with this.

How to use this Visual Aid Resource Pack

You will need:

- A4 Paper
- Scissors
- A printer
- A laminator
- Circular hook and loop stickers 15-20mm diameter

How to make your visual aid:

1. Download the visual aid template you wish to use and print. Cut out and laminate
2. Download the pictures or symbols. Cut out and laminate.
3. Apply the hook side of a sticker to the visual aid template in the blank squares, and the loop side to the picture or symbol.
4. The visual aid can then be made which is individual to the child and their needs.