



Visual supports

Using visual supports at playgroup

What are visual supports?

A visual support is a simple visual form of communication using words and pictures/photos. We all use visual supports every day such as a diary, labels and road signs. Children benefit from visual supports because many children are “visual learners”.

Why use visual supports?

- many children are “visual learners”
- simpler to understand than spoken language
- even for children who do understand spoken language, visual communication is an additional reminder
- visual communication does not go away like spoken communication does
- visual communication comes from a neutral place without emotion

The image at right shows a visual chart titled 'I am feeling'. In practice, children can be asked to identify how they are feeling by pointing at the image that best represents how they are feeling. These type of activities are best supported when working with children to build their emotional literacy.





Who benefits from visual supports?

- People who may have difficulty with understanding spoken language/ children with language delays
- People who do understand spoken language but who are overwhelmed by the sights and sounds going on and so might not understand spoken language at the time, or quickly forget it.
- People who are deaf or hearing impaired
- People with Autism and ADHD
- People who speak languages other than English

Some visual supports that may be helpful at playgroup include Social Stories, Visual Schedules, 'First, then' and Keyword Signing.