



Communication Tools for children with SEND

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Welcome...

We'd love you to participate but please use the 'raise hand' facility to ask questions and contribute when others are talking.

Please be considerate to others – this should be a safe, open and reflective space to learn.

If you need live captions, click on the 3 dots at the top of your screen.

Please do take 2 minutes to provide us with some feedback – we love to hear what you think. The QR code and link will be provided later.

Some of these Practice Week sessions are being recorded for learning purposes. Your presenter will let you know at the start.

Thank you!

Learning Outcomes:

- To learn about the importance of relational and individualised practice in effectively communicating with children and young people with SEND.
- To learn about practical tools and resources you can use to support communication with children, young people with SEND.
- To build your confidence in creatively gaining the voice of children of children and young people with SEND
- To have a clear understanding of the role we all play in ensuring that Inclusive practice is embedded in our direct work.

On a scale of 0-10 where 10 is you feel confident to use a wide range of tools and resources to support your communication with children with SEND and 0 is that you feel that you have limited knowledge of any tools and resources to help support you to communicate with Children and Young People with SEND – Where would you scale today?



Creative Communication

There are lots of ways in which people communicate with one another, both in verbal and non-verbal forms.

Children and young people will often be attuned to noticing body language, tone of voice, posture and positioning. This may be more enhanced, based on their individual needs and experiences.

It is important within the very early conversations with children, young people and their families, that we ask the right questions to help us to effectively communicate with them.

Get to know and understand their likes, interests and communication styles.

SUPER POWER



- Self-Worth
- Resilience
- Reflection
- Sense of Identity
- Acceptance
- Self-Confidence
- Strength
- Containment
- Connection
- Understanding
- Curiosity
- Sense of Belonging

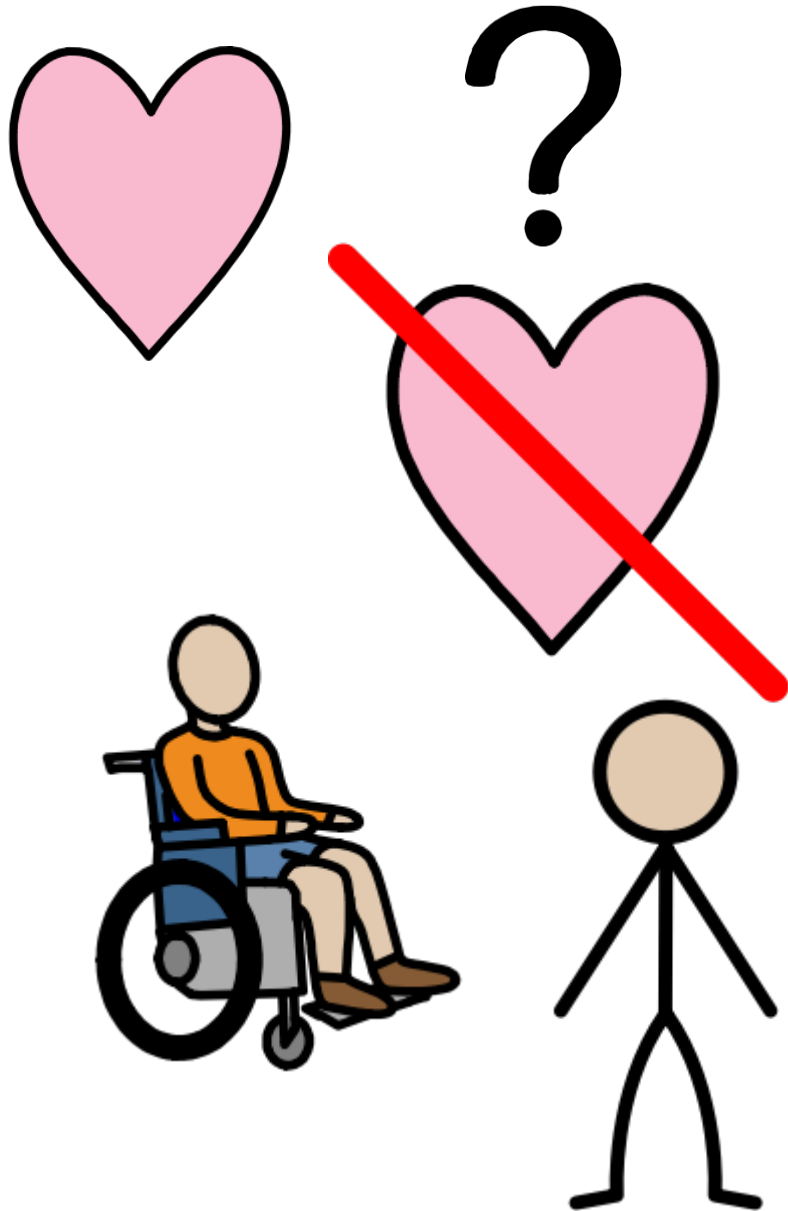
CONNECTION

- Clear language
- Facial expressions
- Hand signals/signing
- Playful approaches
- Body Language
- Being on their level
- Sharing interests
- Responses to cues (verbal/non-verbal)



RELATIONSHIP

- Understanding
- Trust
- Safety
- Consistency
- Active listening
- Healthy boundaries
- Respect
- Open communication



Where to start:

- Think about the child you are working with
- What are their likes/dislikes?
- How do other people communicate with them?
- Visit and observe them at home and school to see whether there are differences in the way others communicate with them.
- Speak to the people who know them best – parents/carers/teachers.
- Watch their body language, actions, noises and facial expressions – as well as any words

Introductions

Dear Owen

This is a letter from your Occupational Therapist

I hope you are ok

Owen - I am pleased to say Boris Johnson - the prime minister has said we can start to meet some people again

di is looking forward to seeing you again

Owen- I will visit you at home, this **Thursday 15th April at 4pm**

I will bring some small drums I have for us to use together

Maybe you can show me how to play a sound on the drums

Best wishes

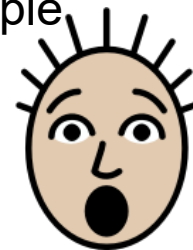
Date: 12th April 2021

Norfolk County Council
at your service

Letters and Profiles



New People



Add Photo Here

Hello Leo, My name is Kate Cushion. (Yes like a Cushion you sit on!!!)



I am an assistant practitioner in the Children's services team. I work with your social worker, Rebecca.

Add Photo Here

Rebecca has asked whether I will come to see you to help you have some fun and help things in your family.

Mostly I will come see you at school, but I might come and see you at home too!



I love dogs and I have a dog called Willow.

I also enjoy building lego.



I am looking forward to finding out the things that you like doing so that we can do some of these together.



Sorting & Matching

These sorting bean bags provide a sensory experience, whilst also promoting relationships, connection and communication. These could be used in a variety of ways to gain knowledge and insight into the child/young person's experiences.

- Understanding Emotions
 - Network Mapping
- Social Skills & Development
 - Feedback/Scaling



Talking Buttons

These talking buttons can be used in a variety of ways to help children and young people hear, respond to, and create their own sounds and instructions.

They are a great tool to use for facilitating communication and interaction.

You can record words/phrases for children/young people to respond or react to and encourage them to create their own sounds or words to hear back!

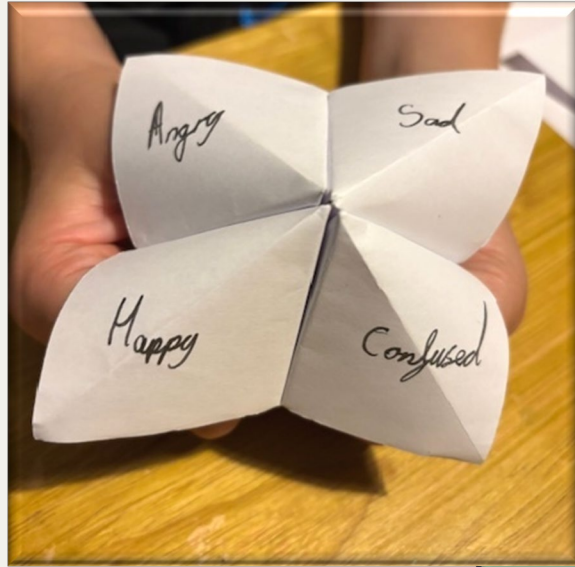
(don't worry, they come with instructions)





Buttons





Fortune Teller

These fortune teller communication tools are a fun and interactive way to connect and learn about the child/young person.

You can choose a variety of topics to add, such as;

- Emotions
- Food
- People
- School Subjects



Games

These are just two examples of games that can be used to create relaxed and safe spaces to build relationships.

Games provide a sense of fun and can distract from possible anxiety about a visit.

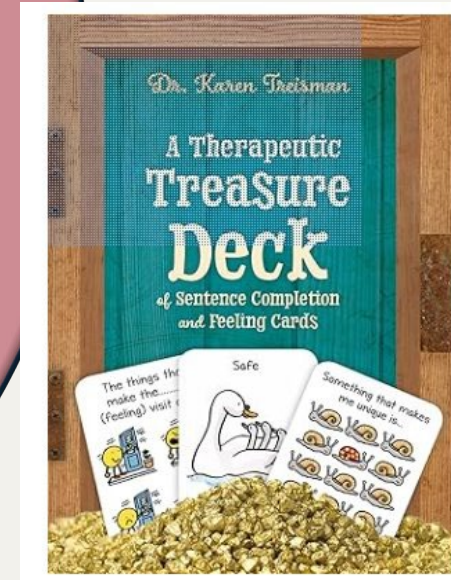
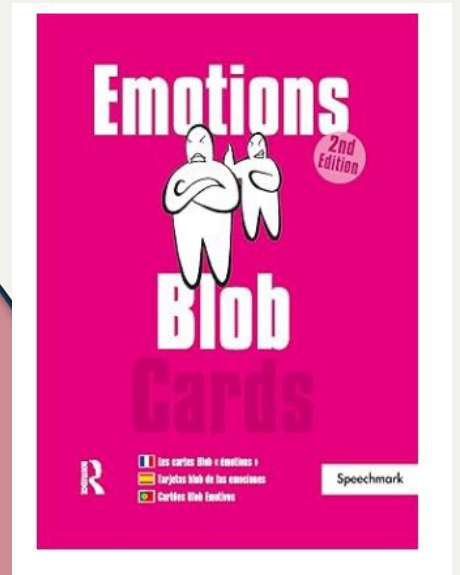
They can also enhance communication skills such as;
turn-taking, waiting, celebrating success, and offering support and encouragement.

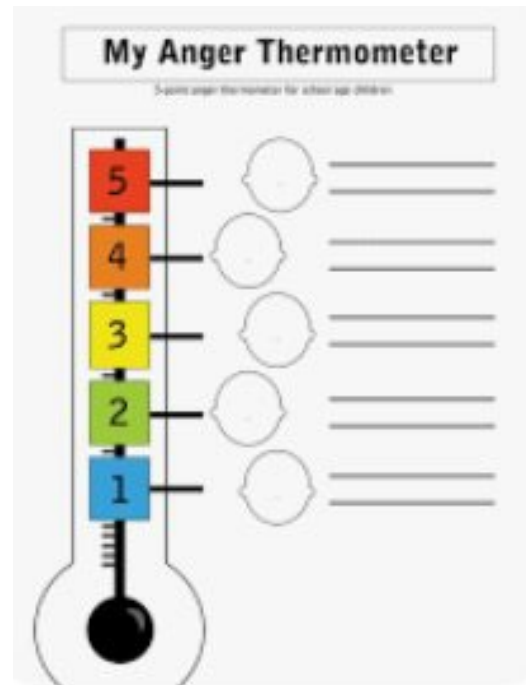




Emotions Cards/ Scrap Books/ Mood Boards

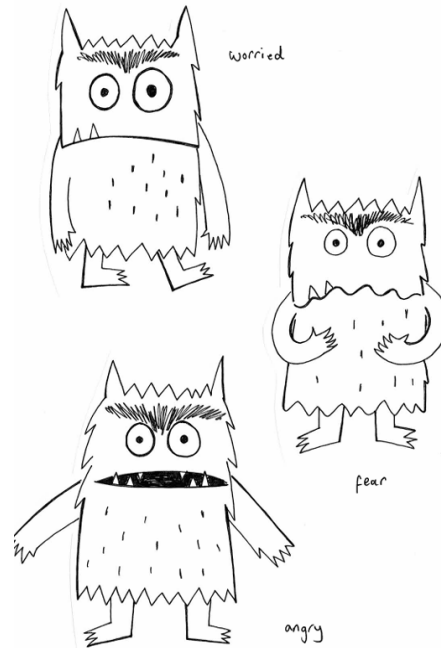
- Emotion cards: name and recognise feelings
- Scrapbooks: share feelings through pictures
- Mood boards: express emotions visually
 - Less pressure/ active task
- Enables communication without voice
- Starts conversations with adults





What Zone Are You In?

Blue	Green	Yellow	Red
			
Sick Sad Tired Bored Moving Slowly	Happy Calm Feeling Okay Focused Ready to Learn	Frustrated Worried Silly/Wiggly Excited Loss of Some Control	Mad/Angry Mean Yelling/Hitting Disgusted Out of Control





Tactile and Sensory Play

- Sand/ Play Dough/ Bubbles and Fabric
- Provides non-verbal ways to express feelings and preferences
- Sensory trays: explore textures, build fine motor skills, identify likes/dislikes
- Sensory stories: link experiences to real objects and sensations
- Gloop & cloud dough: hands-on play with textures and smells
- Sound containers: teach cause-and-effect and turn-taking skills





Play Bags

- Silver foil: encourages sensory exploration and descriptive language (shiny, noisy, soft)
- Game: supports turn-taking, listening, and interaction skills
- Bubbles: promotes attention, requests, and simple communication (e.g. "more", "go")
- Timer: helps with understanding routines, waiting, and transitions
- Small figures: encourage imaginative play and storytelling
- Stories and songs: develop listening, vocabulary, and expressive language



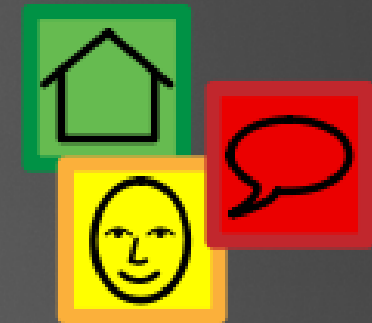


► [assystNET - Widgit Inprint](#)

► Comprehensive design and layout features make InPrint 4 ideal for creating high-quality bespoke symbolised resources for use in school, at home or within the wider community.

► With access to over 20,000 symbols, a comprehensive vocabulary and 100s of easy-to-use editable templates and ready-made resources, InPrint 4 enables SEN professionals, teachers, health practitioners, parents and carers to create an extensive variety of resources.

► £3 per user per year



    
Charley likes to play fetch in the garden

InPrint3: Writing Content





InPrint3: Templates

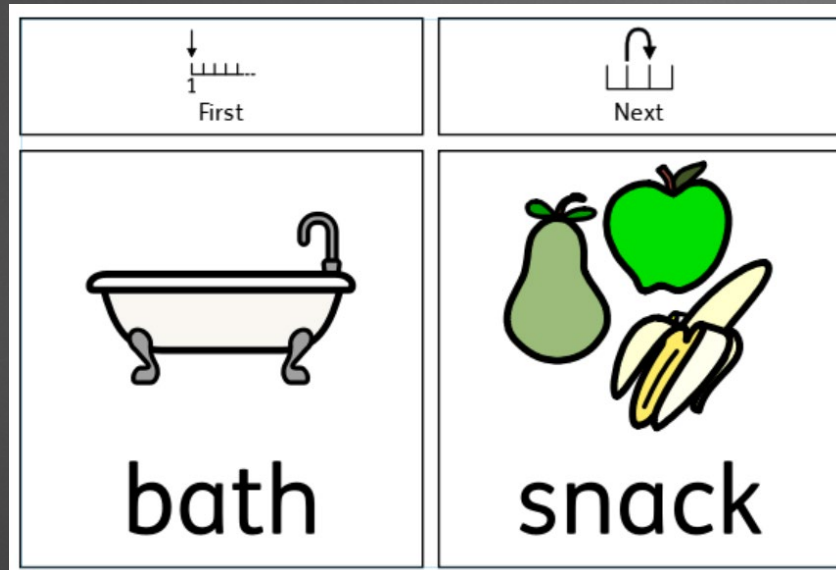


Now and Next Boards

Use a motivator for what comes next



Does the child understand symbols or will you need photos?



Who might benefit from a 'Now and Next' board?

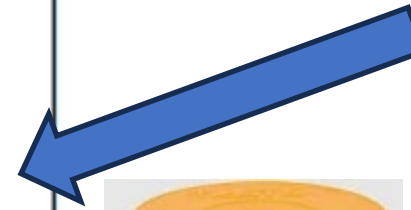
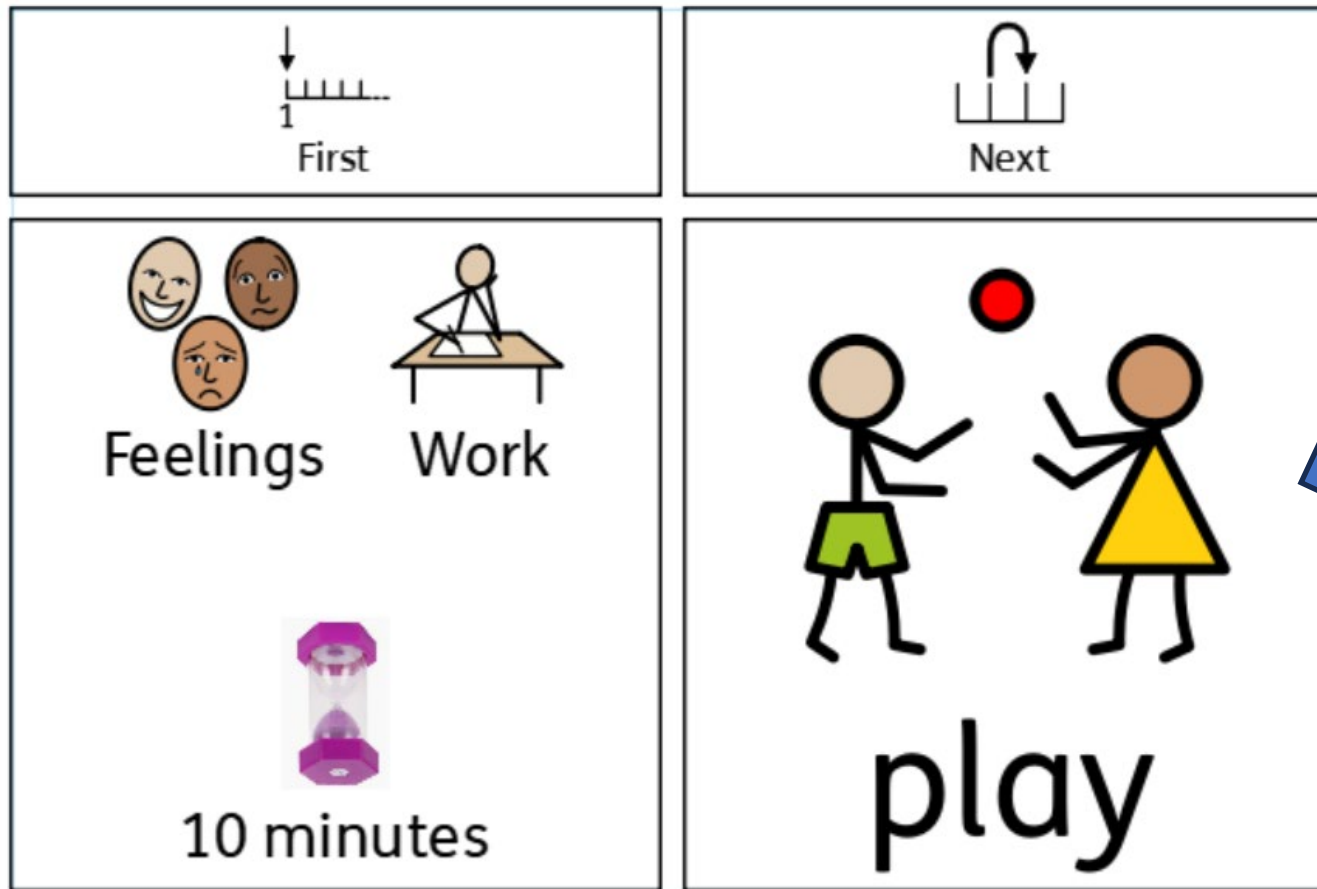
A child who has difficulty in understanding spoken questions, e.g. "What comes next?" and "What do I need to do?"

A child who has difficulty finishing one activity and starting another.

A child who has difficulty with transition and small changes.

A child who has limited attention skills.

Timers



Children may be accepting of doing something they are not keen to do when it is time limited and then there is a motivating activity to do next



Timers can also help with preparing children for changes/transitions



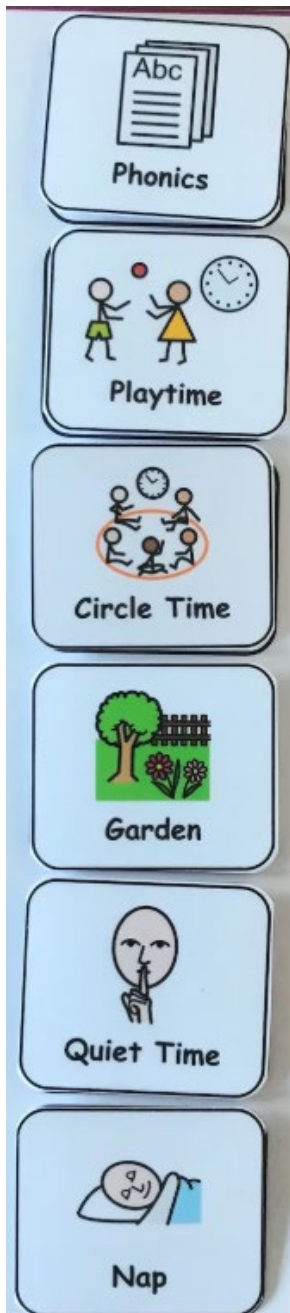
physical objects used to represent a person, place, activity, or idea, particularly for individuals who have difficulty understanding or using other forms of communication, like speech or symbols. These objects act as a symbolic representation of something



Objects of Reference



Objects
Of
Reference



 Breakfast	 taxi	 school	 snack	 playtime	 work	 lunch	
 work	 playtime	 home time	 taxi	 home	 tea	 bath	 bed

Visual timetables

- Photos or symbols?
- Horizontal or vertical?
- What do they currently use?
- Whole day or part of day?
- Removable cards so that you can finish one activity and move on

On Saturday you will be going to
Foxwood



Where you will have your tea:



Then your mum will collect you in the
car to go home.



Some examples available at:
<https://www.socialworkerstoolbox.com/>







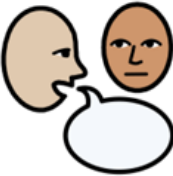
Social Stories

- Use photos or symbols?
- Think about what the child will understand
- How much information?
- A page or a book?



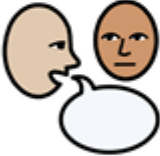




Example from a SCT social story
made using Widgit.

Social Stories examples

	Lucy is an Education and Family worker
	Lucy will work with me to help me understand my emotions.
	Together we can find ways to get through tricky moments.
	I will see Lucy in school every Monday at 11:00am.
	If things change Lucy will let me or the adults around me know.

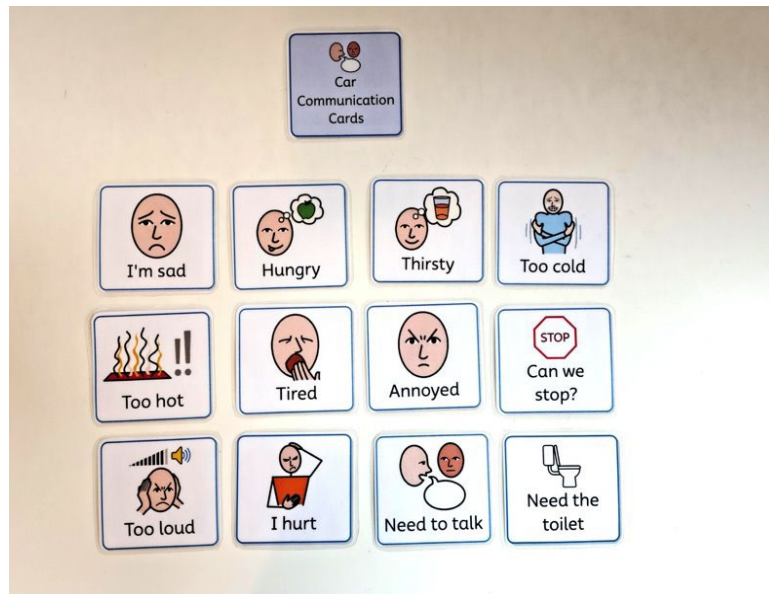
I am  and this is my social story for my sessions ending with my Education and Family Worker.

	Lucy has been my Education and Family worker
	Lucy has worked with me to help me understand my emotions.
	Together we have talked about ways to help me through tricky moments.
	It is Lucy's job to help children with things that they are finding tricky. Because I have made progress it is almost time for Lucy to leave and help some new children now.
	When people that I like leave, it might make me sad and miss our time together.

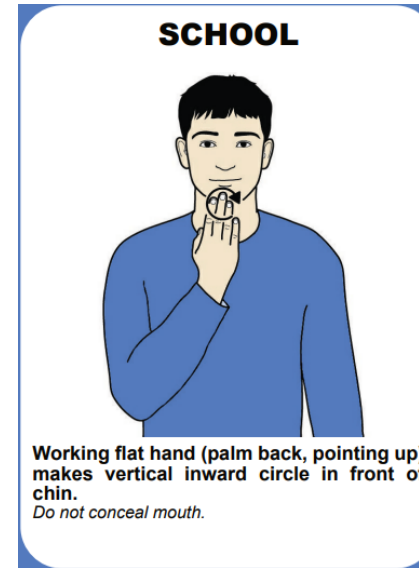
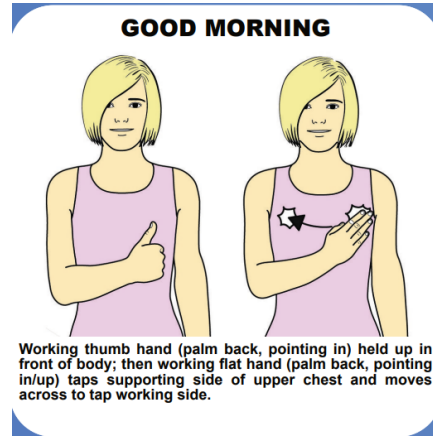
	Lucy will help me with this before she leaves and make sure I have things to take home and remember the work we did together.
	I will have 3 more sessions with Lucy - today, the 20th and the 27th of January.
	Lucy will be coming into the Hive class to teach us about Zones of Regulation for 6 weeks.
	I can still speak to Lucy if I see her and she will try to say hello whenever she is in my school.
	I can be really proud of the work I have done in the sessions with Lucy.

Resources created by Lucy Tanner, Education and Family Worker, SCT.

Social Stories examples



Resources created by Lucy Tanner, Education and Family Worker, SCT.



Signalong

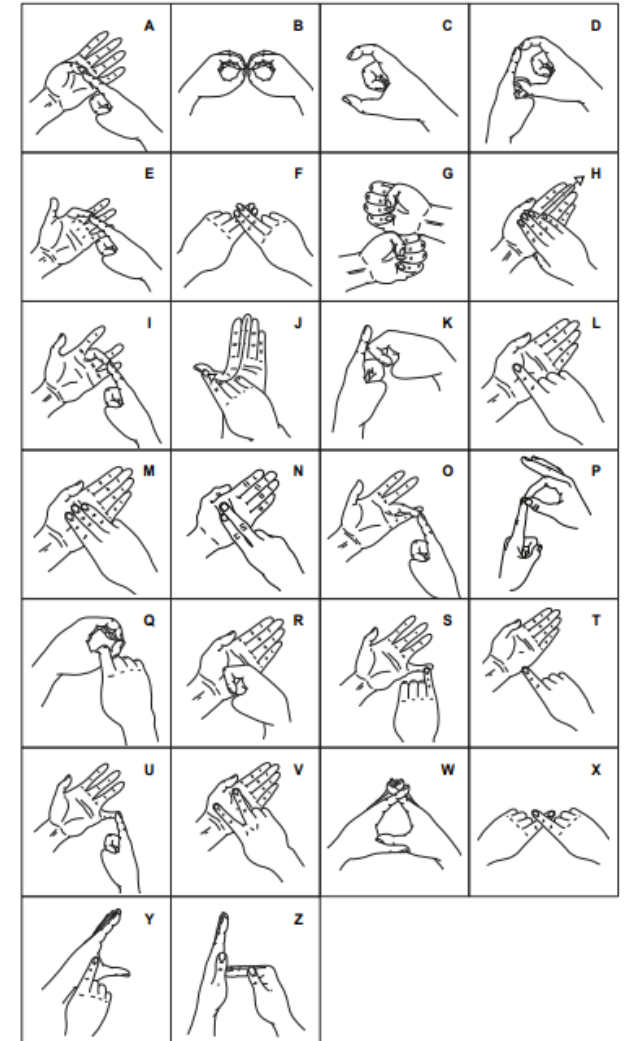
Signalong is a sign-supported communication system

Supports spoken word

Intended for use with people who have language and communication difficulties mainly arising from learning disabilities.

Lots of the schools in Norfolk, for children with autism and complex needs, use Signalong to support communication.

Training can be accessed through MyOracle (no current link) or the Hamlet Centre



Does the child have a PECS book at home or school?

There are 6 phases of use for PECS:

- starting with exchanging a single picture for desired item or activity;
- generalising the skill over different settings/people;
- discriminating between two or more options using PECS book;
- sentence structuring using a sentence strip “I want”;
- Answering questions using PECS book;
- Commenting on “I hear...”, “I see...” using pictures in the PECS book.

Further training:

<https://pecs-unitedkingdom.com/training-and-talks/>



Picture Exchange Communication System

Resources and additional training:

- NCC staff – An Introduction to Communication Tools for Children and Young People with SEND – MyOracle – courses in July/ Sept and Nov
- Talking Mats and Sign Along Training
- Norfolk and Waveney Children’s Speech and Language Therapy Service
- Visual timetables - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council
- Social Stories & Comic Strip Conversations OMG - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council
- Wishes & Feelings Archives - Free Social Work Tools and Resources: SocialWorkersToolbox.com
- Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Practice training - Norfolk Schools and Learning Providers - Norfolk County Council
- Sensory play - Sense

On a scale of 0-10 where 10 is you feel confident to use a wide range of tools and resources to support your communication with children with SEND and 0 is that you feel that you have limited knowledge of the tools and techniques to help support you to communicate with CYP with SEND – Where would you scale today?





**What are your three key
take aways from today's
session?**

Please take 2 minutes to
provide us with some feedback





Norfolk
County Council