

Understanding visual supports

What can educators do?

Further information and links to resources are available on the Inclusion Support QLD website



What are visual supports and why are they important?

Visual supports are tools that increase our understanding of language, expectations, the environment and to provide structure and support.

We all use visual supports to improve our understanding of the world around us, to help organise information and to express ourselves.

Children benefit from information and real objects that they can SEE, as it can enhance and support the communication process.

Using a variety of visual supports, alongside verbal cues, can provide children with time to process what is being communicated as well as the opportunity to communicate reciprocally.



What visual supports are you using to support communication?

Prompt cards or cues



Prompt cards can be used in situations where you want to communicate a choice or expectation. This may include:

- ▶ Using the holding hands card to promote gentle interaction between children
- ▶ Using the mealtime card to prompt children to what is happening next
- ▶ Using the toilet card to prompt children to use the toilet

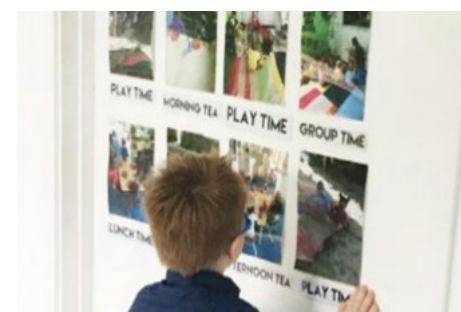
Social stories



Social stories include pictures and descriptive narratives that are used to support children to build concepts around specific occurrences. These created stories provide clear and easy to understand information that can be used consistently by multiple people. This may include:

- ▶ Taking turns or sharing toys
- ▶ Managing emotions and understanding how others feel
- ▶ Dealing with conflict or making decisions in social situations

Visual programs and routines



Visual programs and routines communicate a daily routine or schedule to support children's understanding of what will happen next. They also allow children to understand and plan for changes in their routine.

Visual programs may include a visual daily routine with activities such as group, meal, rest and play times. If there are changes to the routine, a red cross can be placed on the activity and an arrow can be used to show a replacement activity.

Task sequencing boards



Task sequencing boards provide sequential, visual steps to complete a task or activity. Task sequencing boards can be used to allow children an opportunity to complete tasks independently. This may include:

- ▶ Washing hands
- ▶ Toileting
- ▶ Packing away

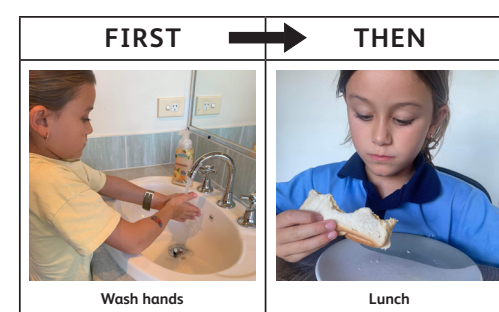
Regulation supports



Regulation supports assist children to recognise their emotions. This builds the child's ability to identify and understand their own body cues and to be able to communicate their needs. This may include educators supporting children to:

- ▶ Identify their feelings
- ▶ Develop strategies to regulate their emotions

First/then boards



First/then boards can be used when moving through a challenging transition or task. The first visual encourages the child to complete the initial activity before moving on to the next. This may include:

- ▶ **FIRST** Wash hands **THEN** Lunch
- ▶ **FIRST** Pack up **THEN** Outdoors

Where can I access support?

Talk with your Inclusion Professional

Phone 1800 811 035 **Visit** www.inclusionsupportqld.org.au

The Australian Government funded Inclusion Agency is managed by KU Children's Services, in partnership with Cairns and District Child Care Development Association Inc

