

Using Visual Supports

Visual supports are a great way to aid understanding. They can be used for daily routines, to aid self-regulation or support positive behaviour choices.

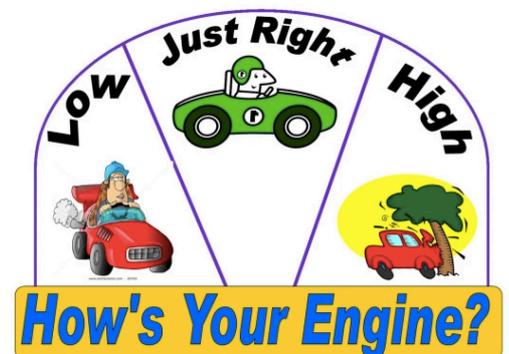


Visual supports assist children and adults, as it means we are not just relying on our verbal understanding. When our bodies are in a stressed state, it is a lot easier to use our visual systems, rather than our verbal systems, so it is ideal for a range of factors. This makes visual supports beneficial for children who may have challenges with comprehension or their language skills, as well as those who may feel worried or stressed, or those who have challenges with processing.

On this website I have provided some examples of visual supports. Some are for designed to support behaviour and self regulation, however you are welcome to design your own. The aim is to keep them simple and think about what would work best for your child, be it a photo, picture or even text,

How to use 'How's Your Engine Running?'

'How is your engine running?' chart is used in The Alert Program® a program designed to assist a child to self-regulate their emotions and behaviours. This chart is based on the concept of sensory processing and how our bodies (engines) experience sensations in different environments, which make us feel and act in a certain way. You can use this chart as an analogy to ask your child how their body (or engine) is running. For an engine that is running at high speed, we might see a child that is overexcited, out of control and upset or angry. If a child's engine is running just right, they are able to learn, play well, make green choices and participate with their peers. It is important to remember that everyone's 'just right' is unique and that each child's engine runs differently, requiring different sensory stimulus to change their speed.



Engine changes may include:

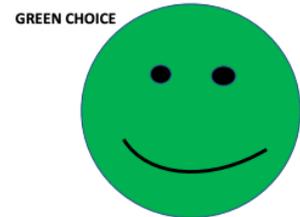
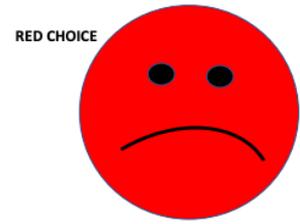
There is a range of sensations (moving, touching, smelling, tasting, listening and looking). that can assist a child to change their engine speed. These can include doing yoga, running, smelling some lavender, tasting a sour lemon, listening to music, or turning down the lights if they're too bright. If you like more information about Alert Program®, you can search the YOUTUBE channel of "Lil Peeps OT".

How to use 'Green choice, Red choice'

'Green choice, Red choice' visual support helps to teach a child on about making choices, self-discipline and what is socially appropriate.

Green= good choice **Red**= poor choice.

Discuss with your child what green and red choices mean, as well as some examples and outcomes of both choices. Throughout the day or week make your child aware if they are about to make a red choice and give positive reinforcement for green choices. At the end of the day/week a small reward could be used if they have had more green than red choices. Ensure to discuss their positive and red choices to solidify their learning and understanding of the concept. This could be as simple as some verbal positive reinforcement.

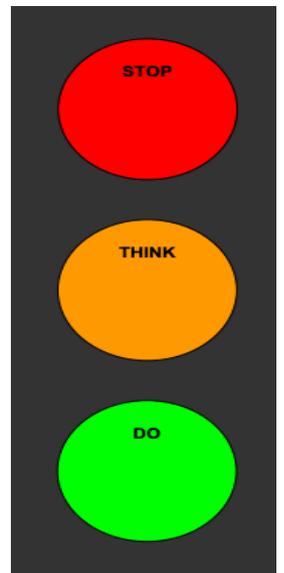


How to use 'Stop Think Do' Lights

Stop Think Do aims to take the emotions out of problem areas (behavioural, learning, social and moods) and redirect that energy into problem solving. Emotions are identified and expressed early at the **STOP** stage, ensuring the brain has the opportunity to **THINK** about options to solve the problem. The **THINK** stage motivates and skills the child to **DO** it.

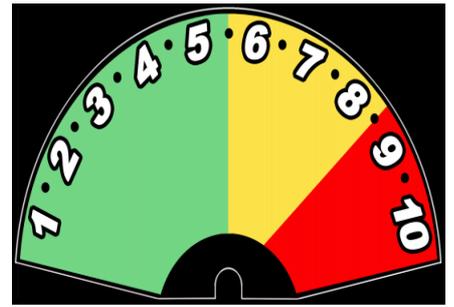
If you recognise your child is about to make a red choice or is looking upset or angry say **STOP**. Ask them to count to ten, take slow deep breaths, take a break if they need one. Then get them to **THINK**. What is the problem? What are the choices? What is it that they need to do. Then **DO**.

Now that they've weighed up their options encourage them to make a green choice. Give verbal positive reinforcement for green choices. If they don't make a green choice follow up with **STOP** and **THINK** again.



How to use the 'Problem Meter' and 'Problem Solving Wheel'

Problem solving visuals will support your child to work through social conflicts, identify 'big' and 'small' problems and develop their ability to solve problems independently. If your child is looking upset or frustrated with a situation ask them to identify where they think the problem sits on the 'problem meter'.



Support your child to problem solve and make a green choice through discussion of the situation, give examples of 'big' and 'small' problems and perhaps what you would do in this situation. The 'Problem Solving Wheel' follows the same concept, providing suggestions on how to solve a social conflict. Support your child to solving their own problem by discussing the suggested actions in the wheel and the outcome of each action.

