

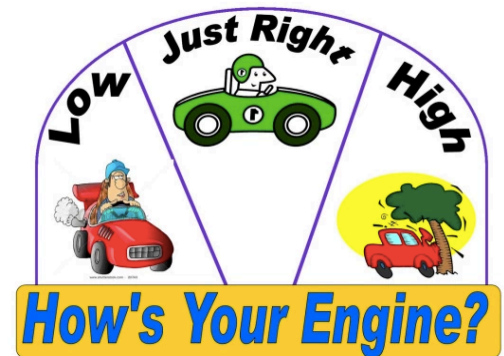
Using Visual Supports

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.



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.



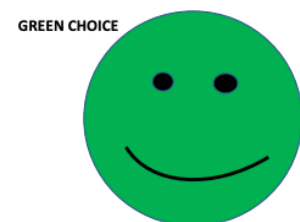
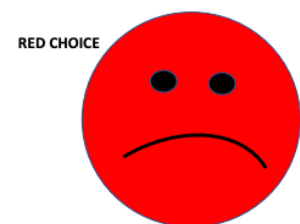
“Engine changers” may include:

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' is this still relevant?

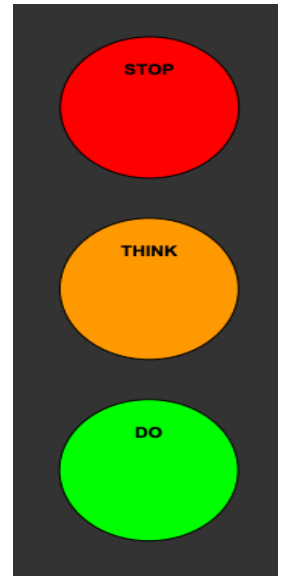
'Green choice, Red choice' visual support may often be used with the intention to support a child with their behaviour. Whilst we think this may be beneficial we also need to consider that we are implying that a child is “making choices” when we witness unexpected behaviour. The fact is, children's behaviour is a communication of their unmet need, rather than being an intentional act to cause harm. If using this kind of support, we need to ensure that the child is hearing lots of “green choices” but also, we need to consider that this still has judgement associated with it and can have a negative impact on the child's positive sense of self if they are consistently told they are making red choices. So use this visual with caution!

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



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 choice. Give verbal positive reinforcement for expected choices. If they find it difficult to make a decision about, then consider giving them two options, and they can choose their action.



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 decision 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 solve their own problem by discussing the suggested actions in the wheel and the possible outcome of each action.

