



USING PHOTOS TO HELP COMMUNICATION

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Once your child understands and responds to real objects, the next step is to introduce photographs which will enable them to understand a much wider range of experiences.

At first, your child may have no interest in pictures or may not respond to them as you might expect. You may need to teach them that a photo links to an item or event. Make sure the photos are of that object or place and not of your child having dinner or playing on a swing etc. To do this you will need to:

- 🚩 Show the picture before they are in that situation and say the word.
- 🚩 Show the picture whilst they are having that experience and say the word.
- 🚩 You can also show a picture when you are completing a daily routine.

The child may not seem to be paying attention to the picture, but if you continue to pass it in front of their eyes they will slowly start to associate it with the experience or item. You can even Velcro pictures to the back to the car seat when you are going out or hold the picture whilst in the buggy.

Remember

Your child may not want to go that place, so although you are helping them to understand where they are going, they may still be frustrated as they would rather go to somewhere of their own choosing. Make these photos accessible for you to show at the appropriate times. Then use them daily, several times, with highly motivating things that your child will respond to.

To start with you may want to choose a few highly motivating places and objects.

Later on, your therapist may suggest line drawings or symbols instead. These will help your child accept a wider range of experiences eg a picture of a shop could then be any shop, not just Tesco.

IMPORTANT: These pictures are for you to support your child in understanding, not for them to choose what they do or do not want to do. Try not to let your child use these pictures as a toy or to request something as they will then lose their meaning for your child. If we are also supporting your child to communicate with pictures then we will present this in a different way.

