

## Here's How to... Use Now and Next Boards

<b>What is it?</b>	A Now and Next board is a simple visual aid that adds structure to an activity. This can be presented with symbols or using actual objects (objects of reference) from activities.
<b>Who is it for?</b>	<p>In Early Years settings they support all children both verbal and pre-verbal and particularly:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Children presenting or diagnosed with communication difficulties including Autistic children.</li> <li>- Children new to the setting</li> <li>- Children with EAL</li> </ul>
<b>How do I use it?</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Start by presenting a child with a 'now' so that they start to engage with an adult suggested activity- this will likely need to be motivating and very short- you are building the child's tolerance of attending an activity not of there choosing.</li> <li>2. Once the child is consistently engaging with the 'now' you can then start to make this a 'now' and 'next' where the now is non preferred and the 'next' is something the child will be motivated by.</li> <li>3. Remember these can be presented using actual objects from the activity if the child does not yet have symbolic understanding.</li> </ol>
<b>Why would I use it?</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- They work well from children who struggle to participate in certain activities as they offer a motivating 'carrot' to encourage the child to engage with the first activity. Backwards chaining alongside this will also be supportive.</li> <li>- They are a also a useful strategy to support a child that struggles with transition, moving from one activity to another.</li> </ul>
<b>Top tips</b>	<p>REMEMBER a Now and Next board is best used as a mini reward system and not just to capture a shortened timeline of the day</p> <p>DO ensure that you know the child's interests so you are able to ensure the 'next' is something movating to them</p> <p>DO makes sure the 'next' activity is available and provided quickly after engagement with the non-preferred activity</p> <p>DO consider the childs' level of understanding when preparing your support- remember symbolic understanding takes time to learn and objects of reference may be best for our more complex learners.</p> <p>DO make a list of the objects of reference you are using for the child and ensure everyone uses the same ones so they start to become linked to those activities.</p> <p>DO persevere- it can take time for the child to become familiar with this method</p> <p>DO think about the transitions you need to support through the day and have visuals prepared and readily available at these times</p> <p>IF the child is reluctant to engage with this strategy try using <b>backwards chaining</b> (further information available on the MIDAS website._</p>