



## Introducing a communication board

Communication boards are set up to encourage everyday functional communication. You should use the communication board all the time as children need a lot of exposure to develop understanding of the words and picture communication symbols.

### This is what do you need to do

- ✓ Find a motivating activity. Something that makes your child laugh and smile, such as a special toy, book, song, activity or favourite video.
- ✓ Choose a word. Keep it simple and start with something powerful like 'go' uh oh' or 'more' For examples: for 'go' you can make vehicles go, start and stop a song/ video, or do physical things like tickles and hugs.
- ✓ Make sure the board is visible. Put the communication board on the table or floor facing your child so that they have easy access to it.
- ✓ Start modelling. Touch the word on the communication board and say it at the same time. E.g., for your child's favourite music, put the board next to the child and say "go" when you start the music. Stop the music and then say 'go' before you start the music again.
- ✓ Pause. Then have them primed and ready by looking expectantly and maybe holding your hands ready to start the music. Your child will probably look at you. So model again 'go' before you start playing the music again.
- ✓ Praise all attempt, such as smiles, eye contact, or touching anywhere on the communication board. You should encourage any attempt made by your child so that they will continue the game with you!

### **Remember:**

- The only way children learn to use a communication board is if you show them how.
- You need to give many examples before children will know what to do.
- Start **small** with one activity and one or two key words.
- Next, add more activities for the same key words.
- Then, continue to add more core words to keep the communication going!

You can find activity suggestions for individual core words under the **Core** tab on this google site.

