

Communication Resource Pack

St. Michael's House Speech and
Language Therapy Department



Introduction

This Communication Resource pack has been designed as a resource for St Michael's House service users, staff, families, and anyone involved with supporting people who use St. Michael's House services.

How to use this pack:

It is important to get to know a person's communication before using this pack. Please be mindful that not all of the resources will suit everybody's communication profile.

St Michael's House advocates for a total communication approach whereby all forms of communication are equally valued. Please refer to the St. Michael's House Total Communication Policy for more information. People use a variety of ways to communicate such as body language, objects of reference, facial expressions, high tech devices, eye contact, writing and many more. This pack focuses on visuals, Lámh, Talking Mats and Communication Passports.

How do I find out about someone's communication?

In these extraordinary times, you may find yourself working in a different setting with service users you are getting to know for the first time. Here are a few tips to get you started to find out a bit more about their communication:

- Talk to the person to get a sense of how they prefer to communicate.
- Talk to staff who know the person well and/or their family about a person's communication.
- Check if the person has communication guidelines and/or communication supports in place.
- Check if the person has a communication passport or a transition passport (usually young adult).
- Find out if the person has an 'All about me', this will provide some information on their communication.

If you are unsure whether a person has communication guidelines or not, please contact the SLT department.

What should I know before using the resources in this pack?

Not everyone will have communication guidelines in place, however by using the tips above you may have found out more information about a person's communication. Here are some ways to identify if a person can use the resources offered in this communication pack.

Visuals

Before starting to use visuals with someone, please ensure that the person is able to use and recognise the visuals you are using. This means that the person has built up an association that a photograph represents something real e.g. food/activity/object. This resource has included some real photographs. Please be mindful that these are generic and may not mean the same thing for every person who uses visuals. You may need to develop pictures tailored to the person. Other people may use board maker symbols.

Visuals can be used in the following ways:

- **Choice boards:** can support an individual to make choices using visuals. This leads to greater independence and participation
- **Visual schedules or first/then boards:** can give a person more control and predictability over their life. They are visual reminders of what is happening next
- **Talking Mats:** The Talking Mats approach also often uses pictures to allow people to explore and communicate their feelings and opinions about certain issues

Lámh

If a person uses Lámh as part of their communication, chances are you may notice them using signs during their day. It is important to communicate with people as much as possible using their preferred mode of communication. You can now access Lámh online. Information on how to access Lámh signs can be found in this resource pack.

Please note that when using Lámh, the word needs to be signed and verbally spoken at the same time (please refer to the Lámh rules on their website).

You may notice that some of our service users use *idiosyncratic* signs, which are signs that are different from the Lámh sign. If they do not already have a Lámh dictionary, this may be a good time to start one.

Please note, that for some of our service users, they may use Lámh signs to support their understanding. For more information about Lámh, please visit: <https://www.lamh.org>

I am still not sure how a person communicates

If you are still not sure about a person's communication, a communication passport might be a good place to start (please find on p. 25). This will help you gather information about a person's communication.

Aims

This is our first version of the resource pack. The aim of this pack is to provide families, staff and anyone who is involved with our service users the supports they need to communicate. This pack includes:

- An index of resources
- A visual pack and template for choice boards, visual schedules, first/then boards as well as yes/no visual supports
- Information about how to access Lámh online
- Talking Mats resources
- Information on making a communication resources and a communication passport template and example

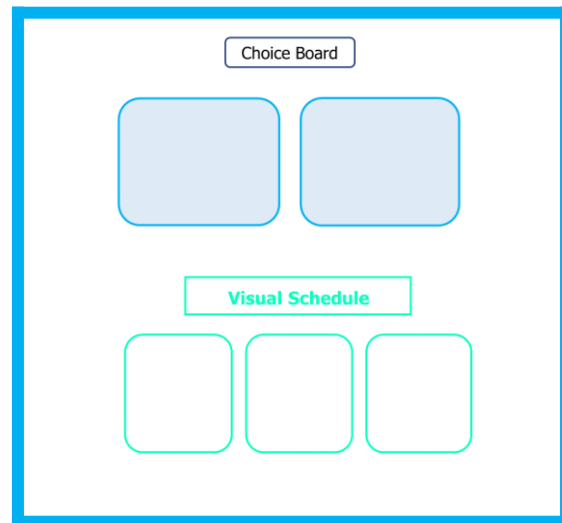
We hope you will find this resource useful to support the communication of service users and their communication partners.

St Michael's House Speech and Language Department
April 2020

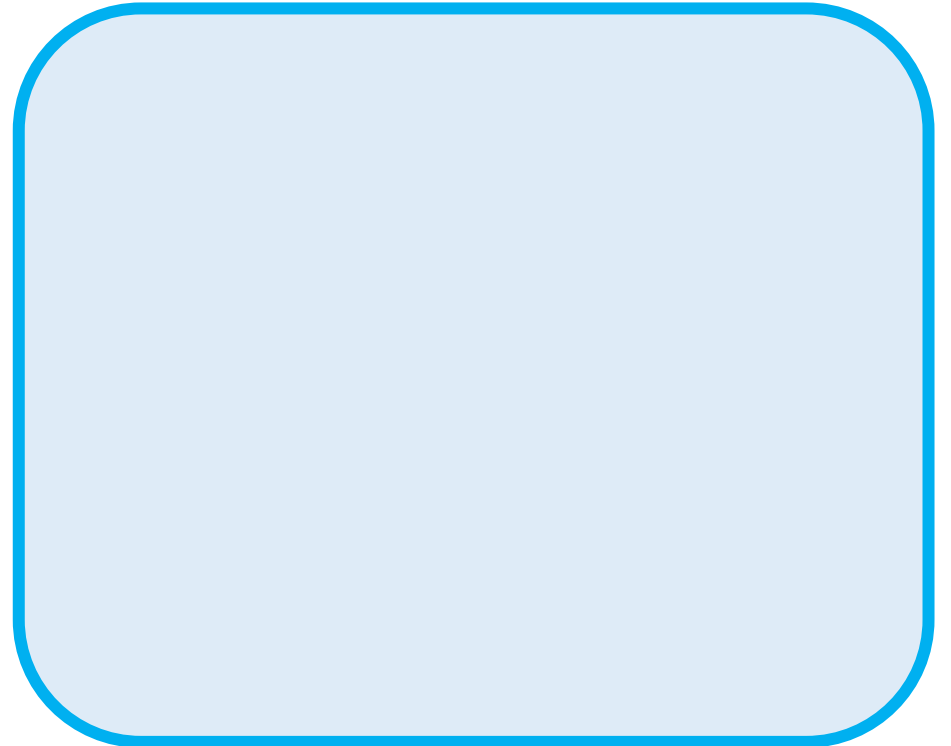
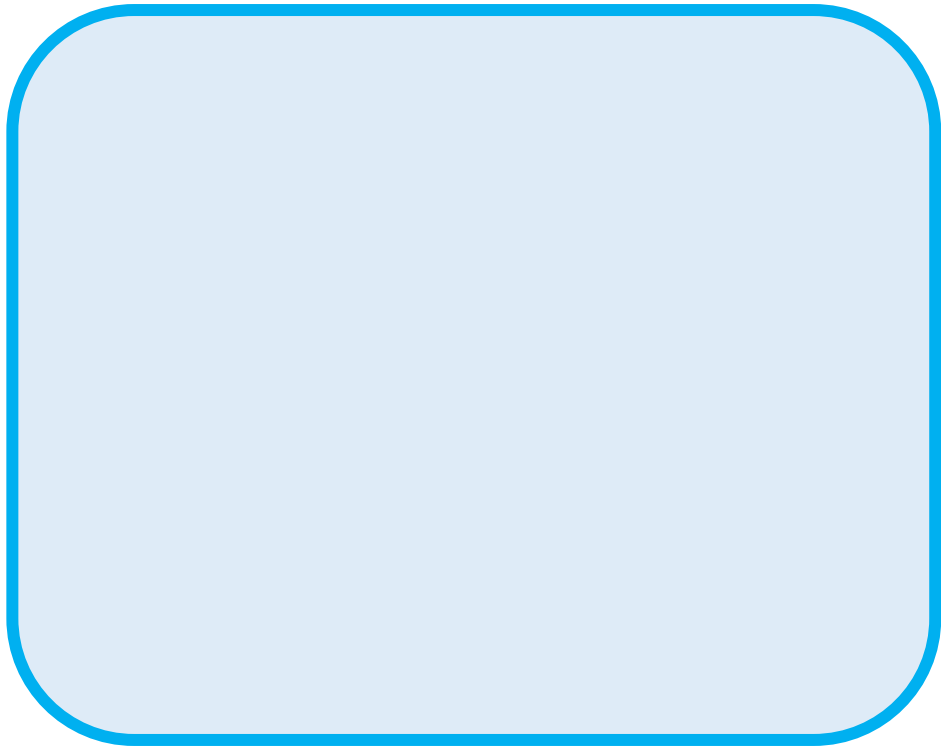
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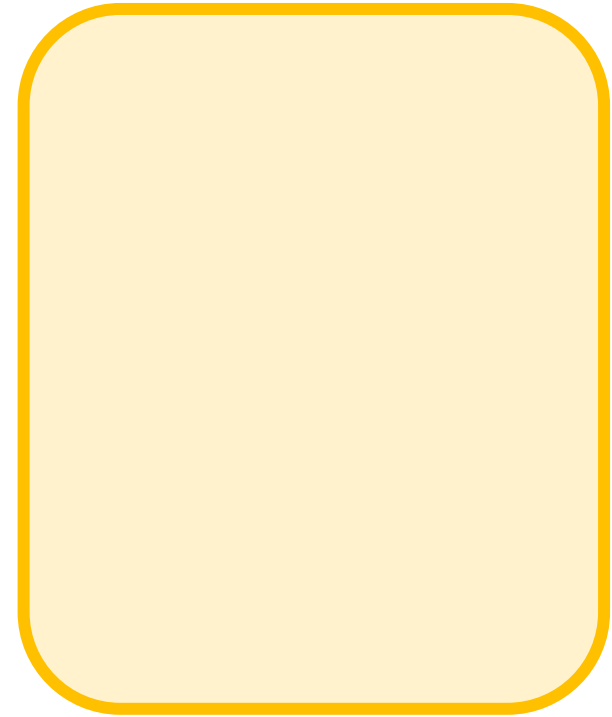
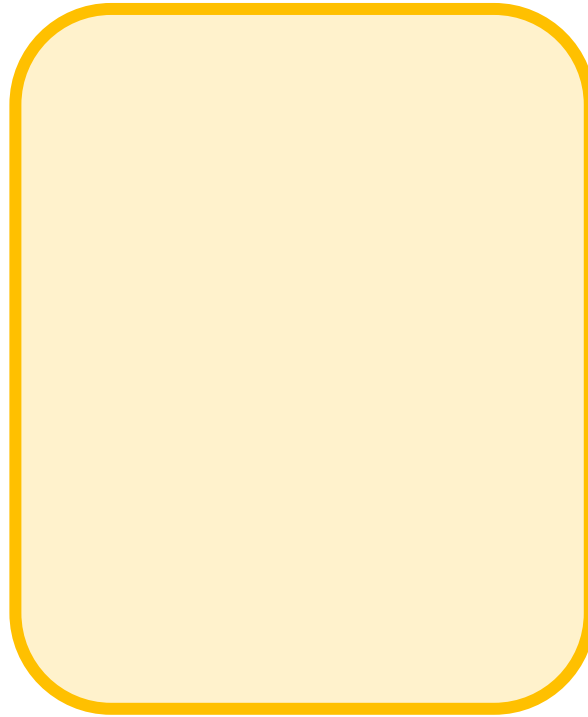
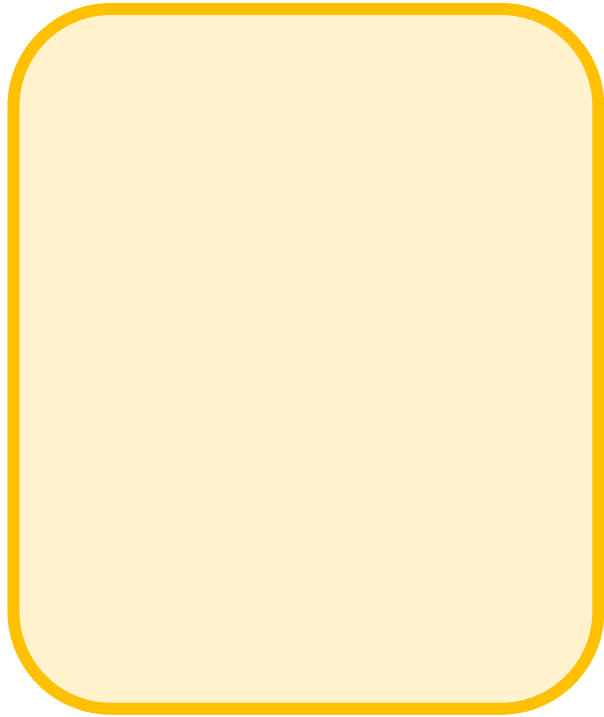
Templates



Choice Board



Choice Board



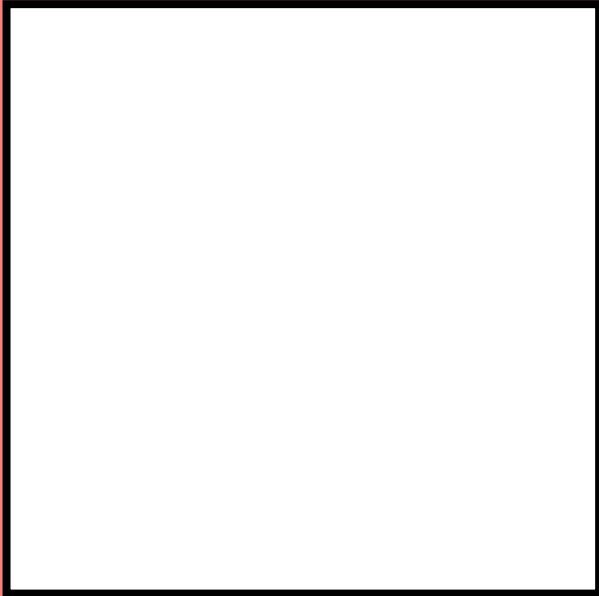
First



Then



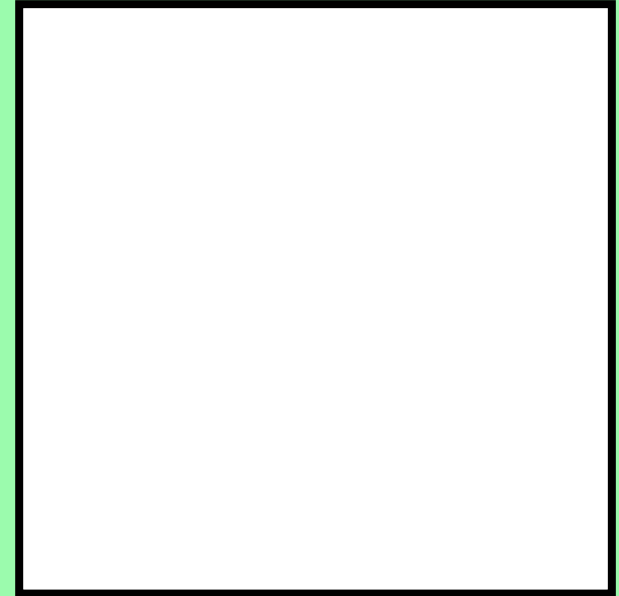
First



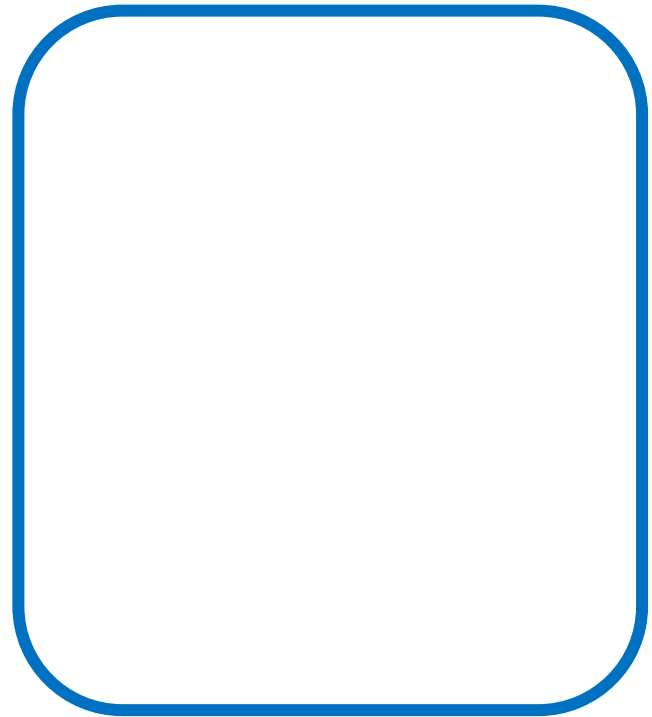
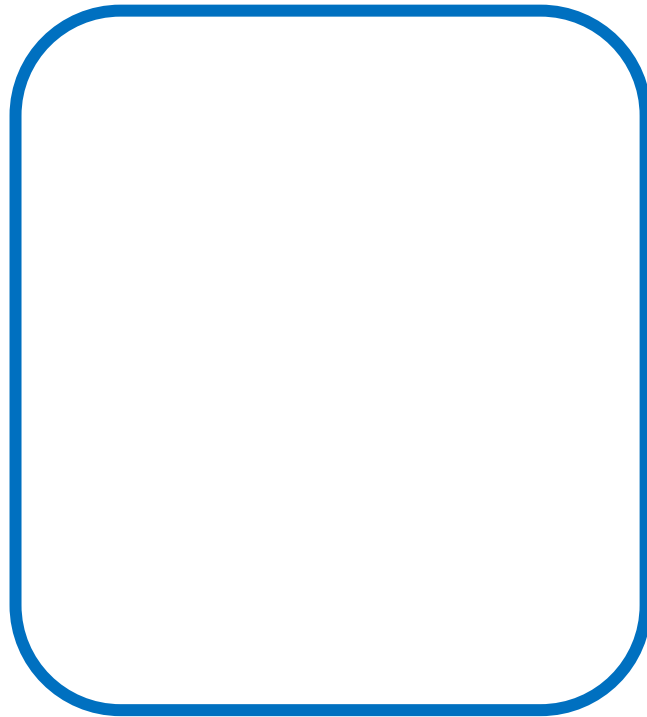
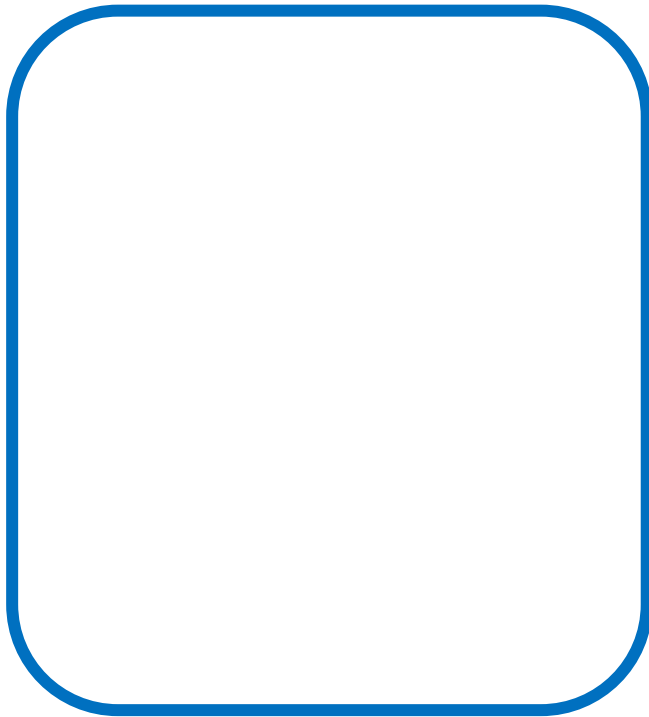
Next



Then



Visual Schedule

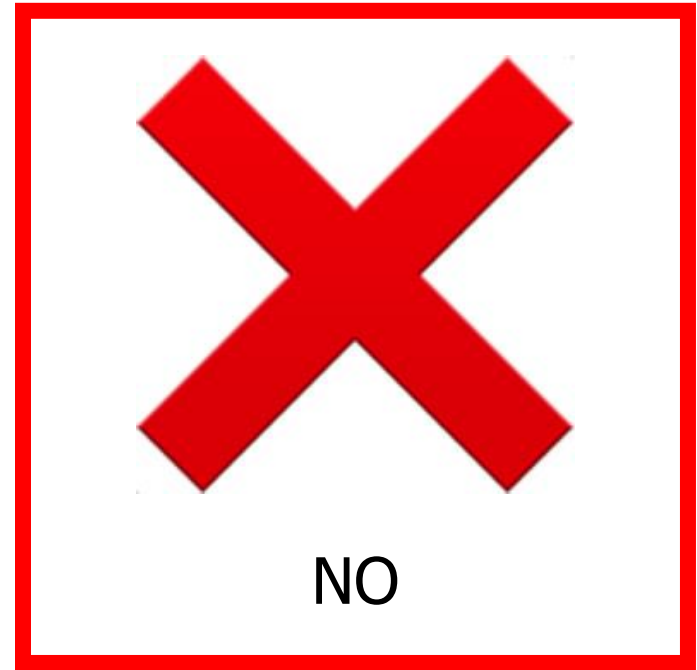


Visual Schedule



Visual Schedule

A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a visual schedule item.A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a visual schedule item.A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a visual schedule item.A large, empty rounded rectangular box with a thick black border, intended for a visual schedule item.



YES

NO



YES



NO

Lámh





31 Mar 2020

Free and Open Access to Lámh Signs Online until May 31st 2020

With children and families staying home amid the pandemic, Lámh is offering free and open access to Lámh Signs Online until May 31st 2020. This resource has videos of all 580+ Lámh signs, including timely signs like Wash Hands, Space, Hot, Clean, and Doctor.

1. Go to www.lamhsigns.org
2. Click on Apply for Membership
3. Enter the code: **lovelamh**
4. Fill in your name and email
5. Check your emails to get the link to create your own password
6. Login and see all signs.

Usually Lámh users and families start to learn Lámh signs face-to-face at a training course with tutor support. Currently Lámh training courses are postponed, routines have been upended, and families are at home. We hope that during this unsettling time, this temporary access will give support to all those who use Lámh signs.

#lovelamh #sharethelamh #LamhSignsOnline

Personal Lamh Dictionary

Example:

Sign	Unmodified (same as official Lamh sign)	Modified (give details)
Chocolate	✓	
Cake		✓ (left hand "l" shape palm facing upwards, right hand "l" shape palm facing downwards. Right hand on left hand)
Friend	✓	

Sign	Unmodified (same as official Lamh sign)	Modified (give details)

Sign	Unmodified (same as official Lamh sign)	Modified (give details)

Talking Mats



Introduction to Talking Mats

What is Talking Mats?

Talking Mats is a visual tool for supporting people to talk about their preferences and make choices. It involves having a structured conversation with people using visual supports (such as photographs or boardmaker symbols) and a 'mat' on which these visual supports are placed. The mat can be a laminated white sheet of paper or it can be colour coded (green/red). The colour coding can act as a further support to the person in remembering which side of the mat is yes/no, happy/unhappy etc. The type of visual support you use is important and should reflect the level of understanding of the individuals you are working with.



How do we use Talking Mats?

Not everybody can use Talking Mats. The person should understand the particular concepts being used e.g. like / don't like, happy/unhappy, yes / no, before using them on a talking mat. Some people can easily understand having a third category e.g. unsure / I don't know / maybe, whilst other people will only understand and be able to work with two categories.



What kinds of pictures should we use?

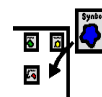
Using photographs as opposed to boardmaker symbols will probably enable more people to access the images you use with the Talking Mat. Good places to find images include 'Google images'. In addition, the SLT department has placed a large selection of photographs on the intranet on the IP site which might be useful. These are photographs of local buildings and places of interest such as shops, cinemas, as well as residential and day centres. You can access these photographs by going onto the intranet, then clicking the 'IP support' button, then clicking on the 'SLT resources' button and finally selecting 'Photos'. There are some board maker based resources for Talking Mats also available on this website also.













You will probably need to take some photographs yourself as well or find a volunteer who is interested in photography to help you take additional photographs.

A few ideas for running Talking Mats groups.

- ❑ You can use Talking Mats to talk about who is absent and present in a day or residential service.
- ❑ You can use wrappers of favourite treats to support people to make choices about what they would like from the shop.
- ❑ You can use pictures of drinks (e.g., cappuccino, tea, orange juice, apple juice) and food (e.g., sandwich, soup) to facilitate people in placing an order at a local café or at McDonalds.
- ❑ You can use talking mats with colours to plan what colour makeup e.g. eye shadow, mascara, hair dye etc people would like applied during a pamper day.
- ❑ Using the logos or photograph of familiar shops to talk about where people like to buy clothes or where people went on a recent shopping trip.
- ❑ You can use cuttings of different hairstyles/clothes from magazines or from google images to talk about hairstyle preferences for the fashion conscious!

Step-by-Step Guide to Talking Mats



1.	 Introduction	 We are going to do a Talking Mat to find out what you think about.....
2.	 Talk about the top scale	 Things you feel happy about / Things you want = 'yes'  Things you feel unhappy about / Things you don't want = 'no'
3.	 Making choices	Show John the first picture in making his choice (e.g. 'coffee'). Support John to place the picture of 'coffee' on the 'yes' or 'no' side of the Talking Mat to indicate his preference. Next, show John the next picture in making his choice (e.g. the non-preferred item). Support John to place this picture on the 'yes' or 'no' side of the Talking Mat to indicate his preference.
4.	 Check and  Change	 Start with the unhappy/ don't want / 'no' ones  you are unhappy / you don't want/ are saying 'no' to  you are happy / you want/ are saying 'yes' to  Give time for change



Happy



Not sure



Not sure



Yes



No



Yes



No



Yes



Yes

Communication Passport

My Communication Passport



Last updated on: 01/10/2015

Communication Passport

What is a Communication Passport?

A Communication Passport describes in detail how a person communicates and how others should communicate with them. It is a practical and person-centered document. Information is clear and easy to understand and presented in an accessible way that is meaningful to the person. A Communication Passport is helpful when new/temporary staff or volunteers meet the person, to get to know the person's communication better and how best to help them communicate.

Who is the Communication Passport for?

A Communication Passport aims to support people with complex communication difficulties. Many people with complex communication difficulties use informal ways of communicating such as touch, movements, sounds, smells, objects and experiences. It is important that this informal communication is recognised, valued and respected. A communication passport is a way of recording these forms of communication and passing on valuable information to others.

How is a Communication Passport different to the 'All About Me'?

A Communication Passport only contains information about a person's communication. There is no extra information such as likes/ dislikes, hobbies or interests etc. An All About Me contains information about the person's likes/ dislikes, interests and hobbies, people in their life etc.

Who makes the Communication Passport?

The person, where possible, should be involved in putting together their Communication Passport. There are many people who will know the person's communication. Think about those that know the person in different environments too (e.g. day service, residential service, community, at home etc.). All these people should have input into the passport.

How to present the information in a Communication Passport:

- Written in the 1st person (e.g. **I** use Lamh to get my message across).
- If the person uses any speech, the words / grammar they use should be reflected in the passport.
- Include photos, symbols, pictures etc if it will aid the reader's understanding of what is being described.

Possible sections in a Communication Passport

- Cover page
- How I communicate with you
- How I make choices
- How you communicate with me
- Things I like to communicate about
- How I communicate during my favourite activities

Not all of these sections will be applicable to every person. You may wish to add or change sections depending on the person you are working with.

Prompts for Communication Passports

Cover Page

My name is

I like you to call me

This is my communication passport

Please read it

It will help you understand how I communicate and how you can communicate with me

My Communication

'How I communicate with you'

- I communicate using (body movements- walking to the kitchen when I want a drink, words, facial expression- smiling, lamh, pictures....)
- I let you know if I want/like something by....
- I let you know if I don't want/like something by ... (push object away, makes a specific facial expression, pursing lips, Lámh etc)
- Include any communicative signs which might be confusing for new staff e.g. 'When I hum loudly this means I am upset'

'How I make choices'

- Staff support me to make these choices by ... (showing objects, pictures, using words)
- Things that are important for me to choose are... (what I wear in the morning, what I have for my lunch)
- Do they need to experience something in the moment to be able to make a choice or can they make choices outside of the situation?

How people in my life communicate with me

- E.g. My friends and family use short sentences and sometimes pictures and gesture to help me understand what they are saying.
- How much does the person understand? Long sentences? Short simple sentences? Do they need pictures or objects to support their understanding?
- Are there any systems in place to support communication? Pictures, objects of reference?
- Does the person need extra time to respond to questions?

Things I like to communicate about/times I like to communicate

- I like to talk about... (Family, weekend, holidays, friends)
- What times are best for the person for interaction? E.g. hand massages, swimming,
- What supports the person to help them to share that information?
- How are situations set up to encourage the person to communicate?

How I communicate during my favourite activities

- How does the person communicate during a favourite daily activity?
- E.g. if the person enjoys having a hand massage, how do they communicate that they like it?

My Communication Passport

Insert Photo

Last updated on:

My name is
I like you to call me
This is my communication passport.
Please read it.
It will help you understand how I
communicate and how you can
communicate with me.

My communication.

How I communicate with you

How I make choices

How people in my life
communicate with me

Things I like to
communicate about/times I like to
communicate

How I communicate during my favourite activities

My Communication Passport



Last updated on: 01/10/2015



My name is Christopher.

I like you to call me Christy.

This is my communication passport.

Please read it.

It will help you understand how I
communicate and how you can
communicate with me.



My communication.

How I communicate with you

- I communicate with words. If you don't understand me, ask me to say it again or to show you what I mean.
- I communicate using body language, eye contact and facial expression. I move my chair back and forth to get your attention.
- I move my head a lot. This means different things. I might be excited or I might want to leave. Ask me or my key worker if you're not sure.

How I make choices



- I make my choices using words. I will tell you what I want.
- If you don't understand me, you can show me some objects or pictures and ask me to choose. I can point at what I want.
- It helps me when you offer me choices in the real life context (i.e. give me options about dinner when I'm in the kitchen)
- It is important to me to choose what I wear, what I eat, and what I am going to do in the evening.

How people in my life communicate with me



- My friends and family use short sentences and sometimes pictures and gestures to help me understand what they are saying.
- People understand that communication is hard for me so they pay attention when I try.
- My friends and family give me extra time to finish my sentences so I don't feel under pressure.

Things I like to communicate about



- I like to talk about my family, especially my sister Ann
- I like to talk about things I get up to with my friends especially down in the village
- I'd like you to ask me about the GAA. If you take out the paper and we look at the pictures together, we can have a great chat.

How I communicate during my favourite activities



- One of my favourite things to do is spend time with my friends.
- I'm really enjoying this when I smile and laugh with the person. I'll make sounds and use my words too.
- Sometimes I'll make sounds while you're talking. This means that I'm really enjoying our chat. I probably feel strongly about what you're saying.

Emotions





Tired



Upset



Upset



Happy



Stressed



Shocked₄₃



Angry



Happy



Excited



Confused



Scared

Visuals



Activity Visuals



Dancing



Reading



Music



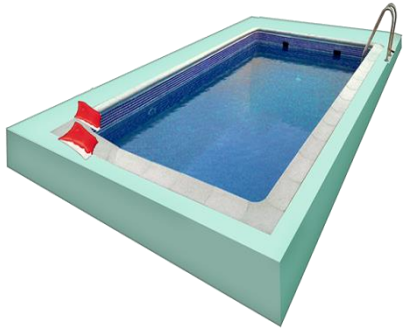
Bike



Video Games



Playing Cards



Swimming
Pool



Playing Guitar



Gardening



Chess

BINGO				
16	8	70	5	13
3	54	88	78	4
12	49	★	18	11
44	87	14	30	9
51	36	65	73	5

Bingo



Painting



TV



Jigsaw



Baking



Bowling



Yoga



Park



Coffee



Exercise



Football



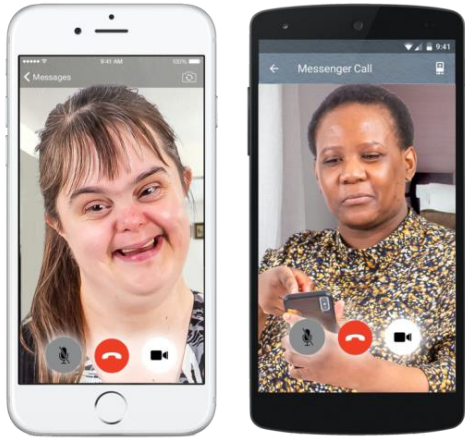
Running



Tennis



Trampoline



Video Call



Staying home

Food and Drink Visuals



Food



Food



Supermarket



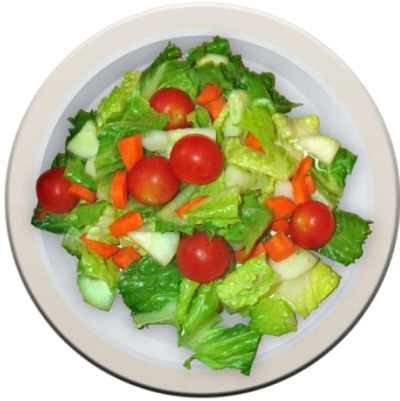
Toast



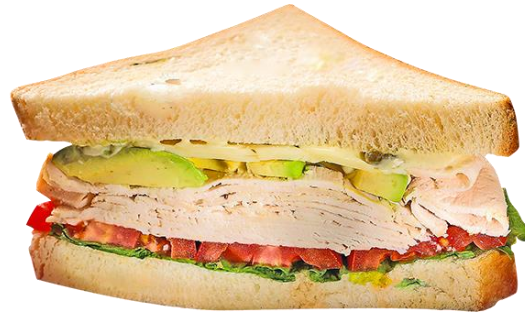
Sweetcorn



Tomato



Salad



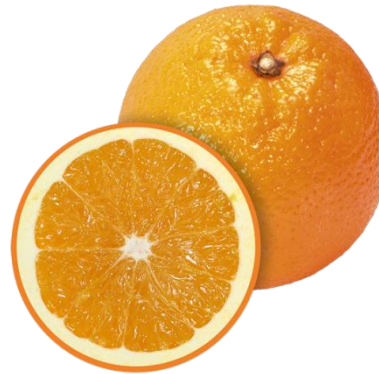
Sandwich



Plate



Pineapple



Orange



Milk



Cake



Bread



Biscuit



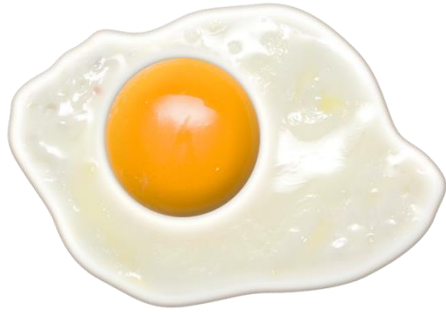
Banana



Pizza



Ice Cream



Egg



Sausages



Cheese



Chips



Soup



Chicken
Nuggets



Pasta



Sweets



Water



Strawberry



Yoghurt



Tea



Coffee



Takeaway
Coffee



Kettle



Crisps

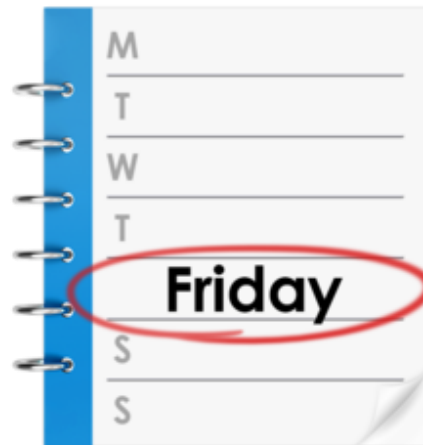
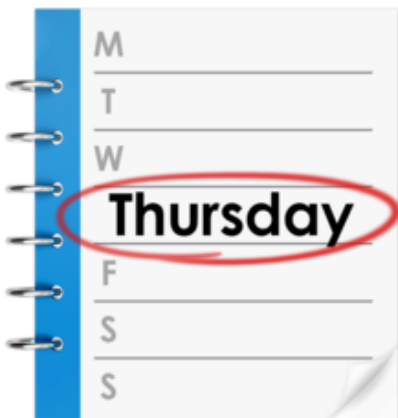
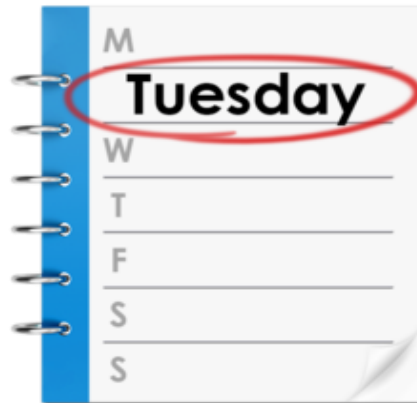


Biscuits



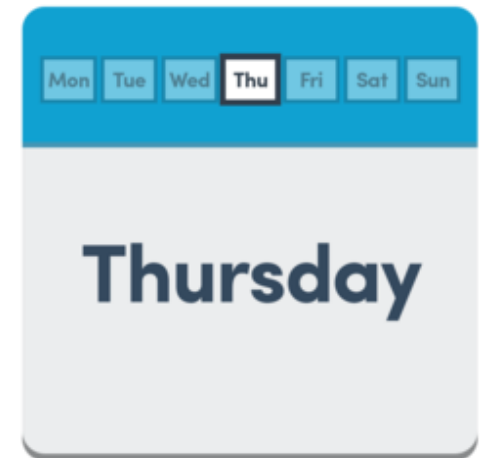
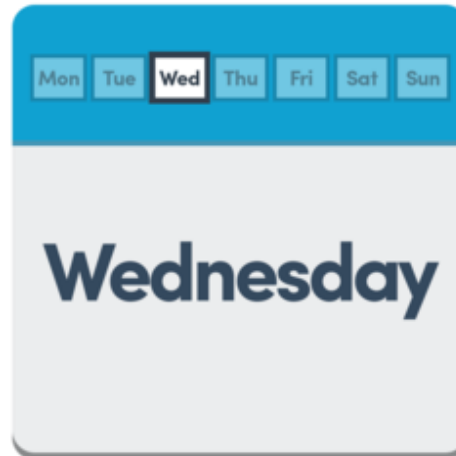
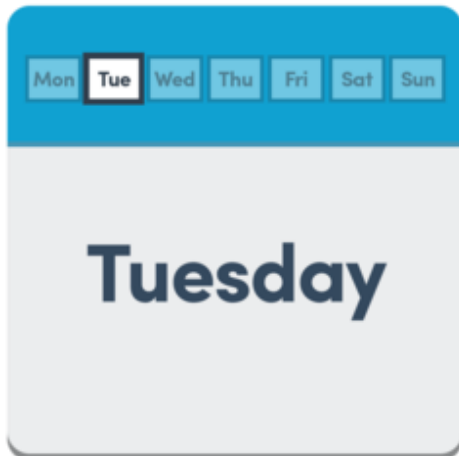
Chocolate

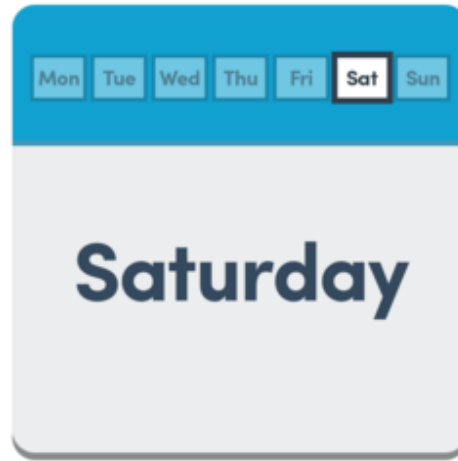
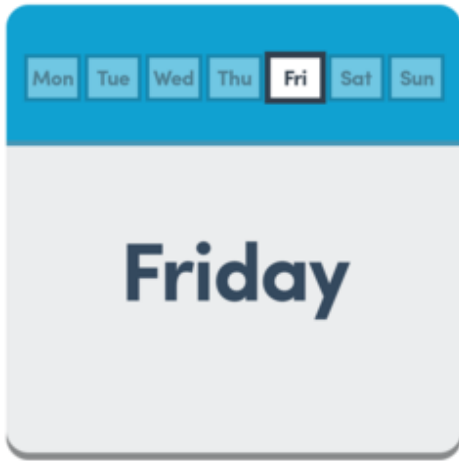
Days of the week visuals





	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday	Sunday
MORNING							
AFTERNOON							
EVENING							





Day



Night



Wake up



Bedtime

Doctor Visuals



Doctor



Blood
Pressure



Feeling
Sick



Stethoscope



Taking
Bloods



Doctor
65



Weighing Scales



Vaccine



Surgeon



Medicine



Tablets



Doctor



Feeling Sick



Coughing



Headache



Fall



Protective Clothing

COVID 19 hygiene visuals



Wash hands



Don't touch face



Cleaning



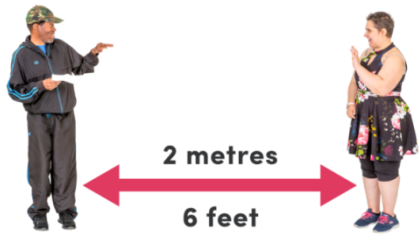
Tissues



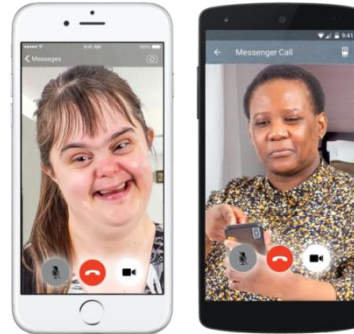
Cough and sneeze
into tissue



Bin tissues



Social
Distancing

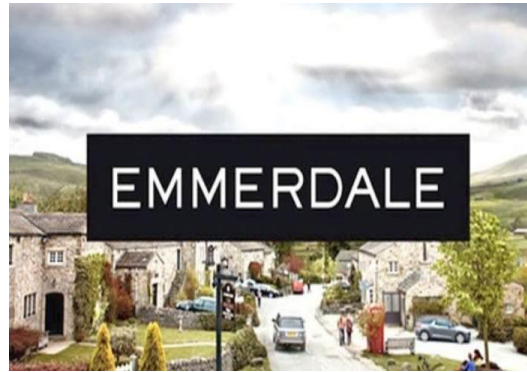


Video Call

Television visuals



Coronation Street



Emmerdale



EastEnders



Fair City



RTÉ News



The LATE LATE Show



Mrs. Brown's Boys



Emmerdale



Room to Improve



Dancing with the Stars



Winning Streak



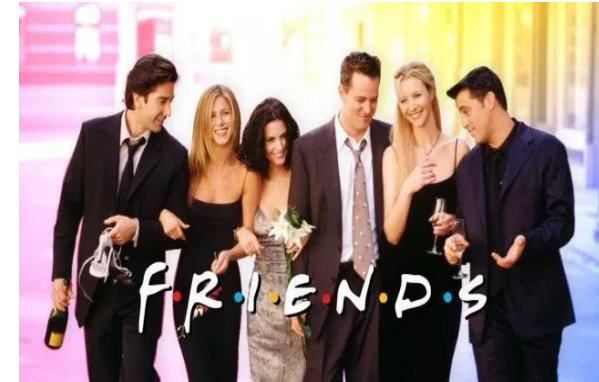
Prime Time ⁷³



Ireland's Got
Talent



Home and Away



Friends



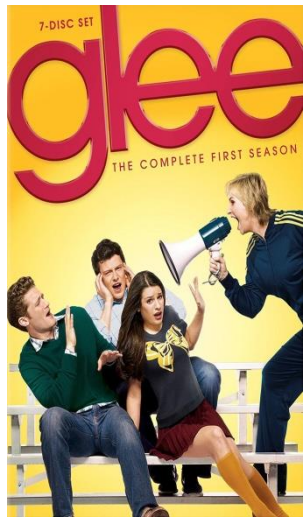
Game of
Thrones



The Simpsons



Strictly Come
Dancing⁷⁴



Glee