

How to use a choice board with a person-supported.

A choice board helps adults with intellectual disabilities (ID) or autism make independent decisions, reducing anxiety and behavioural frustration. It works by visually presenting options to overcome communication barriers.

Here is how to design and use one effectively.

1. Design the Board

- **Limit choices:** Start with 2 or 3 options to prevent overwhelm.
- **Use realistic visuals:** Use clear photos of the actual items or environments. (Or symbolic objects if that is what the person understands).
- **Incorporate text:** Pair pictures with simple, bold words to support literacy.
- **Make it durable:** Laminate the board and use Velcro for easy updates.
- **Keep it accessible:** Ensure it is within their physical reach or always carried with them.

2. Introduce the Concept

- **Pick a high-motivation moment:** Start during favourite activities like snack time or leisure.
- **Offer preferred items:** Put two things they love on the board so any choice is a win.
- **Point and name:** Show the board, point to the options, and read them aloud.
- **Avoid open questions:** Say "Pick one" instead of "What do you want to do today?"

3. Respond and Reinforce

- **Honour the choice immediately:** Give them the selected item right away to build trust.
- **Accept any clear signal:** Acknowledge pointing, eye gazing, or grabbing the icon.
- **Block changing minds gently:** Once a choice is made, stick to it to teach cause-and-effect.
- **Do not test them:** Use it for real communication, not to quiz their knowledge.

4. Advance the Skills

- **Increase options:** Move from 2 choices to 4 or 5 as their confidence grows.
- **Introduce "Something Else":** Add a blank icon or "other" option for flexible thinking.
- **Structure the day:** Transition from choosing items to choosing the order of daily tasks.