



# Early Years Inclusion Team

## Making Choices

### Early Stages

- The aim is for the child to experience making choice and to understand what the outcome of a choice is.
- A response should be required but the response does not have to be spoken.
- The adult should hold two choice items in front of the child - holding them at a distance from each other. Say "Do you want ....(holding the item forward) or .....", and then wait.
- Watch carefully - the child may point with a finger, nod towards an item or eye point. They may reach for the preferred item or lean towards it. Accept the slightest indication as a choice. Say "You want the .... and give the chosen item. If it was a song choice - sing the chosen rhyme. Remove the remaining item as soon as the choice is made.
- Then offer the two choice items again. Repeat this as often as the child's concentration lasts or at opportunities throughout the session, e.g. when the child has a drink, reading a book together, song time etc...
- If the child indicates by crying etc... that the item is not what they wanted, make the duration very brief - one section of orange, one sing through, it is important that the child starts to understand the consequence of making a choice.

### Next Steps

- The aim is for the child to make a definite choice between two items. As before, offer the two items but start with offering one favoured/preferred item and an item the child is unlikely to select e.g. a car and a scouring square (know your child!). Make sure you don't always offer the preferred item in the same hand. Again, it is important that you give the child what they choose.
- When you see them use their own form of pointing, whatever that may be, use your hand to take their hand to the indicated object and say "you want ....." Over time, reduce the physical support given until the child is making a definite choice. Then introduce two preferred items so that a real choice is being made!

### Moving On

- As the child becomes more able to make a choice, you can start to offer more objects; build up slowly - one at a time.
- You will also be able to move the items closer together once a definitive choice is being made.
- You could also start to use photographs and at a later stage line-pictures (symbols) of things rather than real objects.

All these stages can be supported by the use of signing where appropriate, but it is vital that you model the appropriate words, even if the child makes no attempt to vocalise.

**Most important - start where the child is at and go at their speed/pace!**

### Making Choices Videos on YouTube



Here is one for you to watch.....

<https://youtu.be/VinL5cxTCDs>

*Please note, Greenwich has a Visual Support Policy which we recommended you follow for consistency.*