

## SHOW and TELL!

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"The teachers complain that he has not settled into the routine at school although it has been a few months into the academic year! He does not sit in his place during class time, does not follow instructions for a task, dislikes circle activities with peers and seems restless & upset most of time"-a worried mother reported of her son Raghav to the counsellor during one of the Parent meeting/counselling sessions at the therapy centre that he goes to for Communication therapy.

The next one hour was consumed in helping Raghav's mother to understand how the use of pictures (what we call VISUALS) would address the issue at hand.

VISUALS are real objects/items or representative pictures- in the form of real photographs/clipart/line drawings/print (the size of which will depend on the age and skills of the child)- used within a particular situation (for example--during routine activities at home/ during class time at school/ during homework time at home/at a supermarket/at a coaching centre etc.) for a specific purpose/ with a specific intention (for example-to encourage communication/ to encourage participation in an activity/ to encourage a certain type of response/ to prepare for an activity/ to adapt to a new or

unusual circumstance etc.)

Considering that Raghav's school was open to the idea of supporting him in any way that was required for him, the parents approached the teachers with the strategies and methods suggested by the consulting professional.



A VISUAL SCHEDULE (appropriate for Raghav) was prepared and displayed in his classroom. The teachers used this in order to prepare the child for an activity, as a visual reminder of what activity is being done and what will come next. The same visual schedule was used by the parent at home (the previous evening) or on the way to school (the same morning) in order to prepare him and set the stage for the day.

In a couple of weeks' time, both the teachers and parents noticed that the child was such a different boy! His anxieties with respect to the new school and new people reduced.

He was calmer during class hours ensuring that he was attending to instructions given by the teachers, was sitting for most part of a class and was beginning to participate in and enjoy group activity with peers as part of the schedule.

The story does not end here! There was

collateral victory that emerged from the use of the visual schedule in Raghav's classroom. The teachers reported that the other children in his class also took to the pictures in the schedule, understood them and followed them. The VISUALS encouraged the children to enjoy learning, participate and respond better than before. The teachers found that ALL the children were "easier to handle" during academic based tasks within the classroom.



Most children are visual learners. They watch. They observe. They imitate. They replicate. They reduplicate. They grasp concepts, register them in their minds, are able to organize their thought process and participate in their social situations better if their learning is VISUAL.

SHOW and TELL! Feel free to show them pictures/videos/live demonstrations of what

you mean or what you might want them to learn, along with what you are saying or instructing them to do. Visuals only COMPLEMENT speech. They are not a supplement for speech. So we need not worry about visuals hampering the growth of the child with respect to speech or other areas of development.

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