



# Parent's Guide: Engaging Your Child

**SG ENABLE**  
Inclusive society. Enabled lives.

**Parent's Guide: Engaging Your Child** puts together some ways for you to better engage your child in your daily life.

Through this handbook, you will find out more about the following tools, and how they can be used to support your child in his or her natural environments:

- Social Stories
- Visual Supports
- Token Economy
- Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS)

Additionally, you will also learn how to identify and manage meltdowns.

We hope this resource will help you engage your child more effectively.

## Helping Your Child Adapt Better Using Social Stories

### Navigating Changes

- In a new environment or situation, your child might not know what to expect, and how to react or respond accordingly
- Other than that, you may also wish to teach your child new behaviours, or correct existing behaviours from time to time
- These may give rise to stress or anxiety, if your child is not equipped to handle these new circumstances
- Social Stories is one tool which can help your child better anticipate and handle changes



### Social Stories



- Tool which helps prepare your child for new situations/environments, and learn new positive behaviours
- They are short and structured pictorial descriptions of an event or activity, to teach your child what to expect, and how to react and respond
- Information is presented in the most literal way, to improve understanding and minimise ambiguity
- You can build Social Stories for almost every scenario, and design it in such a way that it is easiest for your child to understand, .e.g. using your child's favourite cartoon characters

For more information on Social Stories, visit:

<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/what-is-it/>

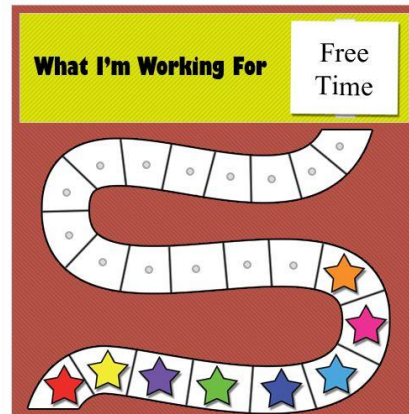


## Engaging Your Child Using Visual Tools

### Token Economy

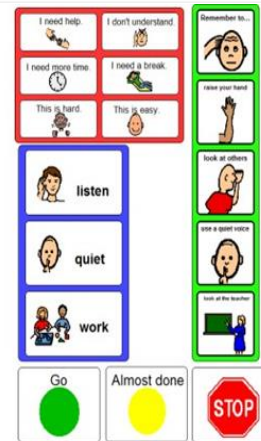
- Encourage your child to display positive behaviours through reward system
- Your child will gain a token immediately after each time he/she demonstrates a particular behaviour, or does a certain act
- Your child can redeem a reward each time he/she earns a certain number of tokens

### "What I'm Working For" Token Economy



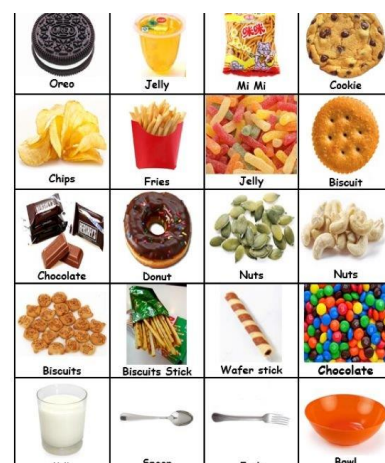
### Visual Supports

- Use pictures or visual items to enhance communication with a child who has difficulty understanding and using language
- Can come in the form of pictures, physical objects, drawings, written words, videos, symbols
- Allows your child to better express opinions, understand his/her schedule, make decisions



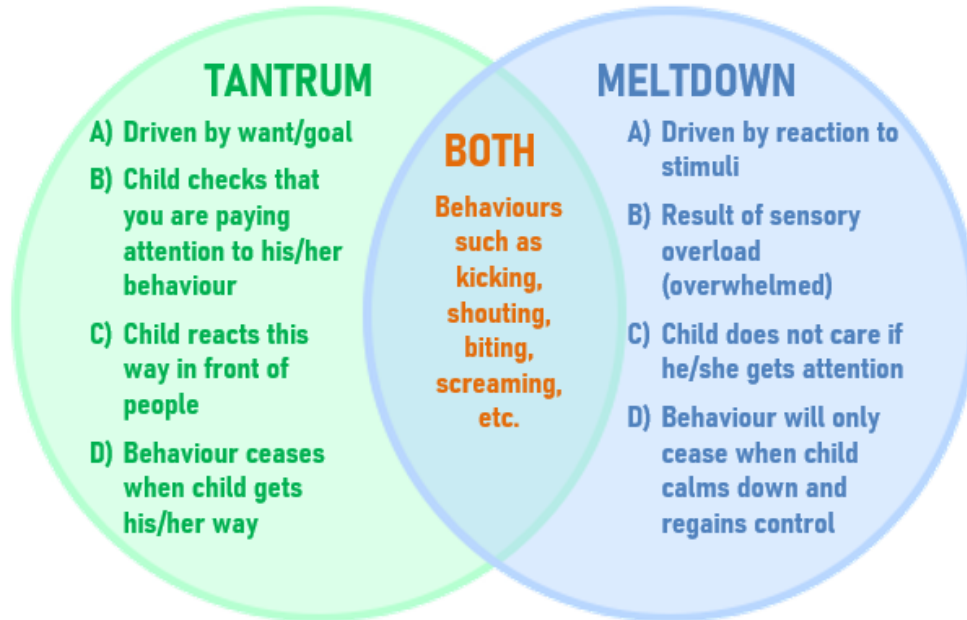
### Picture Exchange Communication System

- Allows non-verbal child to communicate via pictures
- For a start, your child will make his or her by giving you a picture associated with that particular item
- Over time, this can be expanded to making comments/expressing opinions, forming sentences



## Identifying and Managing Meltdowns

Knowing the difference between a *tantrum* and *meltdown* is half the battle won:



Here's what else you need to know about **meltdowns**:

- During a meltdown the child loses control of his/her behaviour, and may unknowingly put himself/herself in danger
- Every child is different: you need to observe and learn how best to calm your child down

What to...SAY	What to...DO	What to...AVOID
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Speak in a calm voice</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Give your child space (move to another room/space if needed)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Reasoning with your child - remember, your child is not in control</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Keep sentences short</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Ensure your child's safety (remove obstacles, breakable objects)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Getting frustrated or worked up</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Use reassuring words, e.g. "You're safe", "I'm here for you"</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Divert your child's attention (use calming music, a favourite toy, calm down jar)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Using harsh words or shouting at your child</li> </ul>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>□ Encourage calming actions, e.g. "Take a deep breathe", "Relax your hands"</li> </ul>		