Objects of Reference (OOR)

Objects of reference (OOR) are objects that are used to communicate a meaning the same way as words and pictures. Objects of reference need to be meaningful, motivating and frequently used. They can signify a person, object, location or event (POLE).

Types of Objects:-

Real life object that is used in activity - arm band (swimming) library ticket (library) sponge (bath), spoon (lunch)

Real life object that is not used in the activity - key (car), plastic cup (cafe)

Object with a shared feature – scarf (going to Granny’s who always wears a scarf),

Abstract object – rope (physiotherapist)

The 3 stages of OOR development

Stage 1 - Child or young person shows little tolerance of OOR, ignores, drops or throws it

Stage 2 – Child or young person holds/feels/carries OOR but demonstrates little understanding

Stage 3 – Child or young person begins to show understanding of one or more OOR

Benefits

- Help develop an awareness and understanding of the environment
- Can support understanding of timetabling or sequencing the activities of the day or week
- Develop choice making
- Develop early thinking skills

Key Points

- Start with just a few objects of activities/events that occur frequently
- Have a consistent approach with everyone using the same key words.
- Keep OOR easily accessible
- Present OOR immediately before the start of POLE
- Accompany presentation of OOR with key spoken words and sign
- When at the POLE the OOR should be taken away or put in OOR bag
