# The Right Stuff
### Resources to Help Realize the Promise of Each Vermont Child

**VERMONT**
**AGENCY OF EDUCATION**
**VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS**

**Topic:  Make Learning More Powerful with Visual Supports**                    **Issue No. 31 May 2019**

*"Teachers help children learn in many ways. They use examples, teach specific routines, and provide verbal explanations. Some young children, including children with disabilities or those who are learning English, need additional supports."* These words begin a fabulous article below (**Take a Look! Visual Supports for Learning**) that tells and shows how visual supports, such as photos, drawings, objects, gestures, and print and environmental cues, can help children know what to do, learn new skills, and feel included.

This issue of **The Right Stuff** offers information about how educators and families can use visual supports to promote each and every child's and family's full participation and potential. Read on to learn how to use visual supports to:

- help a child who is new to a setting to understand the daily routines and expectations;
- give a child with a disability another way to communicate instead of relying on verbal communication;
- provide a child who is a dual language learner with additional information; and
- build comfort and cohesion with the homes and traditions of culturally diverse families.

## Take a Look! Visual Supports for Learning
https://fpg.unc.edu/sites/fpg.unc.edu/files/resources/presentations-and-webinars/Take_a_look_visual_supports_for_learning.pdf
In this article/photo essay, the authors define visual supports and show how they help all children to understand rules and expectations, engage in daily routine, navigate transitions, communicate thoughts, feelings and needs, and increase independence in childcare routines and activities. Educators and family members who read this article will get insights and ideas about how to ramp up their support for many children.

## Visual Supports Checklist
https://ccids.umaine.edu/wp-content/uploads/sites/26/2017/01/Visual_Supports_Checklist-20160210.pdf
This handy resource is based on a review of current literature, practical knowledge, and reported experiences from early childhood educators on the topic of visual supports. Use it to see how your setting is using visual supports like photos/pictures/text in home languages to label cubbies, shelves and room areas and social stories to help individual children interact with others.

## Using Visual Supports with Infants and Toddlers
https://www.ctdinstitute.org/sites/default/files/file_attachments/TnT-News-VisualSupports-Oct12.pdf
Because infants and toddlers may find it difficult to communicate using words, visual supports can provide them with a system for communication while also teaching them important daily activities and routines. Visual supports provide supplemental information, cues, and directions to children who may communicate through their behavior or are unable to read. This newsletter describes visual supports that have been used successfully in childcare centers and preschools and shows how they can also be used in the home with younger children.

## Creating Environments That Include Children's Home Languages and Cultures
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/sites/default/files/pdf/dll-creating-environments.pdf
This handy idea sheet offers examples of how to use environmental print, images (pictures, photos, graphics), and home artifacts to support the comfort and success of each child.

## Classroom Visuals & Supports
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/children-disabilities/article/classroom-visuals-supports (English)
https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/es/ninos-con-discapacidades/articulo/elementos-visuales-y-de-apoyo-para-la-clase (Spanish)
This website offers a library of visual supports for teachers to use with children in the classroom. Look for illustrations of toys, art materials, daily schedule pictures, problem solving cue cards, and classroom certificates, to name just a few. Each one can be downloaded and printed out for immediate use.

## Social Stories
http://headstartinclusion.org/social_stories
Social Stories are short 1-page "visual stories" that are tailor-made for a child who is having difficulty with a specific activity, rule of the class, transition, or a daily event. The idea behind Social Stories is that through use of the visual sequence of prompts a child will better understand and have consistent reminders of the expectations in a target situation. This website has information about what Social Stories are, when and how to use them, examples of Social Stories that teachers have used, and graphics that can support anyone to create Social Stories of their own.

## Using Multimedia to Promote Vocabulary Learning: Supporting English Language Learners in Inclusive Classrooms   http://www.readingrockets.org/article/using-multimedia-promote-vocabulary-learning-supporting-english-language-learners-inclusive
A recent research study shows that using multimedia video in conjunction with traditional read-aloud methods may improve the vocabulary growth of English language learners. An example of how to implement multimedia during classroom read-alouds is described in this article.

## Visual Supports
https://www.iidc.indiana.edu/pages/visualsupports
This collection of visual supports and other resources provides examples of various strategies that can be used to support students on the autism spectrum, as well as others with and without disabilities.  Many of the visuals may also be used at home.

## Visual Supports Learning Links and Templates
https://ccids.umaine.edu/resources/visual-supports/
This annotated collection of resources includes a treasure trove of ideas and examples.