

Working Towards Boards

Why use Working Towards Boards

A **working towards board** supports children to be able to engage in short activities by collecting tokens for each part of a task to exchange for a reward. Working towards boards are a type of visual support that helps the child to:

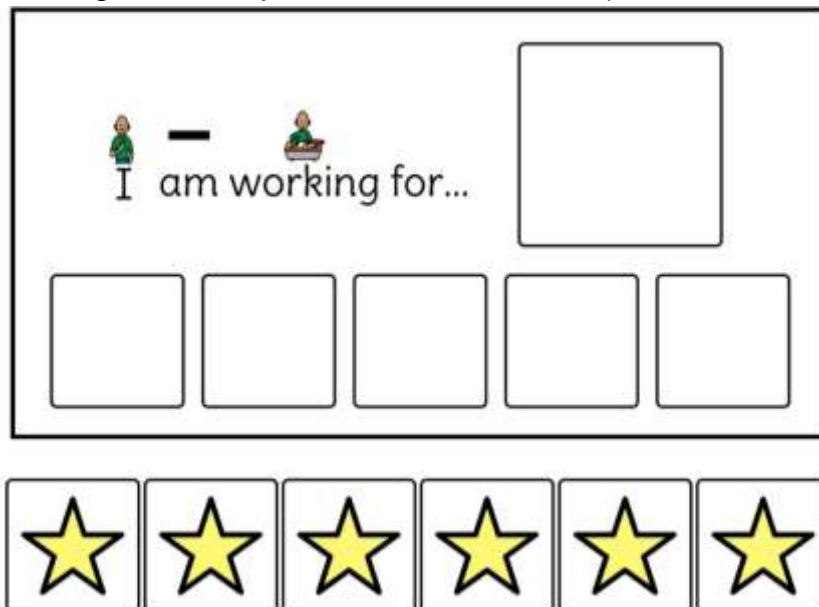
- See how many steps they need to complete in order to get a reward
- Understand that rewards are not always immediate
- Help your child engage in learning activities as they have something motivating happening once they have completed a certain amount of tasks.

Working Towards Boards are most commonly used with pictures or symbols but they can also be used with the written word.

How to introduce Working Towards Boards

Working Towards Boards are used for children on a one-to-one basis.

- Make sure that you have a board ready with available symbols for a motivating item that the child chooses.
- Ensure that you have tokens to place on the board to fill each box (which should be the number of steps needing to be completed before the reward).



- First, let the child choose what they will be working for and place this symbol, draw a picture or write the word in the large box. This should be a motivating item or activity.
- Initially start off by breaking down a larger task into small steps. The child only has to complete one small step before a token is awarded. Once the child has completed the first step, give them a token to place on one of the smaller boxes (these are usually made with Velcro backing).
- Each time the child completes another step, give them another token to place on their Working Towards Board.

- Once the child has collected enough tokens (five in the example above) they are then able to have their 'reward' that they have been working towards. You may need to start off with a smaller number of steps (e.g. three or four) before getting the reward.
- The reward will be different for each child and it is important that they have chosen this themselves so that it is motivating for them. It could be bubbles, time on an iPad, a favourite toy or a story etc.
- Working Towards boards should first be completed fairly quickly (within an activity) however you may be able to gradually build up so that they can complete elements of a routine (learning or home) before they get the reward.
- Once your child is familiar with how a Working Towards Board is used, you can increase the length, demand or difficulty of the small steps that they need to complete for each token.

Top Tips for Working Towards Boards:

- Be consistent with your expectations so the child knows what they need to do before they get a token.
- If you don't have a Working Towards Board printed, you can use a whiteboard or piece of paper by drawing out the number of boxes (the tasks that need to be completed) and drawing/ writing what the child is working towards. Once the child has completed each part, you can tick or place a sticker/ stamp in each box to show how many parts are left of the activity before the reward.
- Working Towards Boards can be used alongside other Visual Supports. See *our advice sheet on Visual Timetables and First and Then Boards*.

