

## How to teach wait using a wait card

### Why use a wait card?

Many children find waiting difficult because they haven't learned how to wait for a desired object or activity. Children need to feel a sense of security that their request will be honoured and once they demonstrate just a small amount of success they will be encouraged to show more. Visual supports give a child something to focus on while they are waiting, thus helping their anxiety decrease. It is important to teach in an errorless way (meaning that they are always successful) so they know they can rely on it and do not become resistant to using it in the future.

### How to introduce:

1. When a child is having trouble waiting for a desired object or activity just show them the card and label the action "We are waiting".
2. After just a brief amount of time peel off the first velcro piece and say "good job waiting!"
3. Repeat for each velcro piece. The whole process may take less than five seconds the first time and this is okay! When finished show enthusiasm and pride for "Good waiting".
4. Slowly extend the time that you expect the child can wait before getting frustrated. You do not want the child to become upset, but proud of themselves.
5. Eventually the card can be substituted with a hand gesture of waiting. You could use your fingers to count down as a visual once they have mastered the card and eventually fading the verbal prompt and use the gestural prompt of your hand.