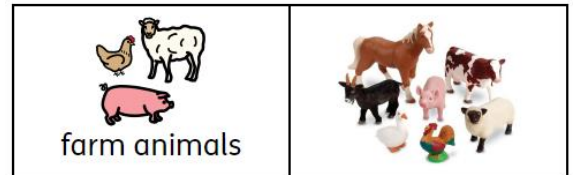


# Help Sheet

0 – 25 Specialist Teaching And Support Service

## How to support a child to tidy up.



### Why?

- Children with SEND often need support with transitions from one activity to another. Tidy up time can be particularly difficult because it involves finishing an activity that they are engaged in.
- Tidy up time can be a busy and overwhelming sensory experience.

### How?

- 'Tidy up' is an abstract phrase – 'apron on peg' or 'car in box' are more useful phrases.
- Use positive phrases not requests e.g. 'show me where this belongs'.
- Have clear 'homes' for objects e.g. template shelves, labels with pictures on baskets.
- Use Numicon to support learning whilst tidying up e.g. 4 pencils with a Numicon four.
- Make it a game e.g. 'ready, steady...go!'
- Reduce the number of objects in baskets to make the tidying up more manageable.
- For children who like tipping, provide acceptable tipping activities. Encourage the child to tidy up the things s/he tipped out (often children who like tipping / scattering also enjoy heaping). Use distraction to break the tipping cycle.
- Model how to use the areas with small groups – select, use then return resources.
- Have one or two weeks where practitioners focus on modelling / supporting tidying up 'in the moment' throughout the session.
- Use distraction to refocus children back to tidying before they move on.
- Be animated – make tidying up an exciting part of the activity,

### Tidy up time can be busy and noisy. To support a child with SEND:

- Before stopping the class to tidy up, pre-warn the child about tidy up time using visuals (see section below).
- Stop the class in the same way every time the class are going to tidy up e.g. shake bells.

# Help Sheet

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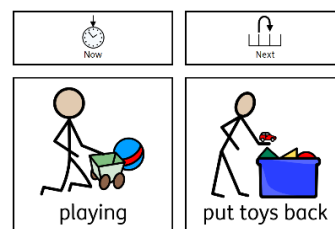
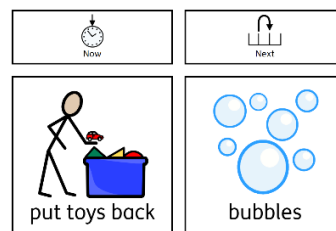
- Give clear instructions using minimal language and in the order events will happen e.g. 'trains finished – trains in box'.
- Avoid 'tidy up music' as this can contribute to sensory overload.
- Consider choosing an area to tidy up that interests the child or make them an 'expert' at tidying up a specific area – think about which areas are quieter and less busy.
- Model tidying and make the task achievable. Choose one category e.g. 'put the ducks in the basket'.
- Celebrate success early and before the child loses interest.
- Provide a choice supported with a visual prompt e.g. 'cars in box or sit in your calm space'.
- Use 'now and next' with a motivator e.g. now – cars in box, next – bubbles.

### Using 'now and 'next as a pre-warning.

A pre-warning can support the transition between playing and tidying

up. Some children may need a countdown to tidying up. Try one of the following:

- three pictures of toys velcroed next to 'playing' that are removed as a countdown.
- a sand timer.
- two or three verbal and visual reminders.



### Evidence base – informed by:

Jean Piaget, Psychologist – Piaget's Theory 1952