

🌟 How the Children's OT Team Can Improve Their Website on Visual Supports

🎯 1. Start with a clear, parent-friendly explanation
Families often hear “use visuals” without understanding what that means. Suggest adding:

- A simple definition of visual supports
- Why visuals help children with sensory, communication, or processing differences
- Examples of everyday situations where visuals reduce anxiety and increase independence

This grounds the page in real-life relevance.

🧩 2. Organise content by key topics families search for
Recommend structuring the page around the most common OT areas, such as:

- Self-care routines (toileting, dressing, brushing teeth)
- Emotional regulation
- Transitions (home → school, activity → activity)
- Sensory strategies
- School readiness
- Community participation (haircuts, medical appointments, shopping)


Each topic can have a short explanation plus downloadable visuals.

3. Provide ready-made, downloadable visual resources

Families value resources they can use immediately. Suggest including:

- First–Then boards
- Visual schedules
- Step-by-step sequences
- Choice boards
- Calm-down menus
- Social stories (non-copyrighted or locally created)

These should be printable, simple, and adaptable.

 4. Use warm, accessible design

This is where your expertise shines. Recommend:

- High-contrast, uncluttered layouts
- Clear icons or photos
- Consistent colour coding
- Minimal text
- Options for symbol-only, text-only, and mixed formats
- A4 printable versions

This ensures the site works for families with different needs.

 5. Include guidance on how to introduce and use visuals

Visuals only work when families know how to embed them.

Suggest adding:

- Tips for introducing visuals gradually
- How to model and reinforce their use
- How to personalise visuals for the child
- Common pitfalls (e.g., too many steps, inconsistent use)

This turns the page from “resources” into “practical support”.



6. Add a section on collaboration with school and home
Families often struggle with consistency across settings.

Recommend:

- Encouraging shared visuals between home, school, and short breaks
- Templates that professionals can adapt
- Examples of how visuals support EHCP outcomes

This aligns with your wider goal of strengthening partnership working.



7. Offer digital-friendly versions

Many families use phones more than printers. Suggest:

- Phone-friendly schedules
- Visuals that can be saved as images
- Links to trusted free apps for visual timetables

This increases accessibility for families with limited resources.

8. Include lived-experience insights

You can gently encourage them to include:

- Quotes from parent carers
- Real examples of how visuals helped a child

- Short videos demonstrating use (if appropriate)

This makes the content relatable and human.

9. Provide signposting to further support

Recommend linking to:

- National charities (e.g., CBF, NAS)
- Local SENDIASS
- Early Help
- Sensory processing resources
- OT referral pathways

This helps families navigate next steps.

