

Talking Mats Mythbusters



Talking Mats is only for people who can't speak.

Talking Mats helps people with and without communication difficulties. It allows people with a range of speech and language difficulties to share their views and ideas quickly. People who have no difficulty with their speech value it as a thinking tool, and it has been shown to support decision-making. One of the Health and Well-being topics 'Work and Education' is used by university students to support them to plan their future.

Talking Mats takes a long time to do.

There is no right or wrong time for a successful Mat. Staff frequently worry they don't have the time. Some listeners get lots of information after only 3 or 4 minutes. A cost benefit analysis has shown that using Talking Mats saves organisations money by getting to what matters most to the person quickly. Also by finding out about concerns and issues early, helps prevent them from escalating.

Everyone can express their views using Talking Mats

Some people with severe learning difficulties or advanced dementia enjoy sharing and looking at pictures. Staff can find the mat and symbols help with engagement. However unless the core principles are followed ,e.g using open questions, and people relate the options both to themselves and the top scale, the mat cannot be used as evidence that this is their opinion

It's great to use visuals to support any conversation and our Foundation training course gives you the skills to assess whether a mat is a reliable reflection of the persons thoughts or views. For more information go to our website:

<http://www.talkingmats.com/training/foundation-training/>

And no, a Talking Mat doesn't speak!