**Picture Exchange Communication System (PECS) @ Kimi Ora**



**What is it?**

* The use of pictures or symbols as a form of communication
* A person must be able to pick up the picture, pass it to another person in exchange for an item for it to be considered PECS.
* The above is initiated by the child and is achieved without any prompting. This includes statements such as “Which one?” or “choosing…”
* Choosing by point between two or more pictures is not PECS
* The system has six phases each of which needs to be achieved before moving to the next phase.
* The phases are as follows:
  + Phase 1: learning how to communicate. Learning that if you pick up the piece of card and hand it to the other person you will get something great
  + Phase 2: Distance and Persistence: This is when a student learns that sometimes you may need to look for a person to give the picture to, or for the picture.
  + Phase 3: Discrimination: To begin with a student is learning to discriminate between preferred and non-preferred and then with preferred and preferred. Learning that not all pictures are the same and you require a specific one to get a specific item.
  + Phase 4: Sentence Structure: Learning to use the ‘I want’ strip
  + Phase 5: Attributes: Learning colours and shapes
  + Phase 6: Commenting: Learning that Communication isn't always about wants but can have a different purpose.

**Who is it for?**

* PECS was created for those children who are not intentionally communicating and students who haven’t yet made the connection that they need to communicate their message to someone.
* At Kimi Ora we follow this principle and students who may be able to learn PECS are determined by their Speech and Language Therapist.

**What is the process?**

* A student is identified by their Speech and Language Therapist
* They are then started on the first Phase of PECS.
* All members of the team will be involved in creating communication opportunities, allowing students to have lots of time to learn and practice the skills.
* The progress will be recorded using record sheets and in notes and the Speech and Language Therapist will track the progress within each stage in liaison with whanau and school team.
* The Speech Language Therapist will let others know when it is time to move up a phase.