My Brain Tumour History

Diagnosis

When I was 3 years old I was diagnosed with a brain tumour called a pilocytic astrocytoma. It was grade 1, meaning the tumor grew slowly and didn't spread to other parts of my body.

Surgery 1

I had brain surgery which removed the entire tumour.

After surgery

After the surgery, the left side of my body became weak and hard to move. This was called hemiplegia. This happened because my brain become swollen after the surgery.

Surgery 2

2 days after the first surgery I needed a second surgery to help my brain become less swollen. This got rid of the weakness in the left side of my body.

Physical health now

I don't have left sided weakness anymore. I am 12 years cancer free. I don’t have any problems with my body. I’m not on any medications for my brain tumour.

My Strengths

I have a lot of strengths including...

Social skills

- I have great social skills and lots of friends!
- I work well with others and enjoy being part of a football team!

Practical skills

• I am good at practical work like building furniture, fixing things around the house, and driving tractors around my family farm!
• Once I've learnt these skills I can do them independently.

My challenges

As a result of the brain tumour the following thinking skills are challenging for me.

Processing speed

- It takes me longer than other people to understand what I read or hear
- I need more time than others to think, respond, or finish tasks.

Working memory

- It's hard for me to keep in mind lots of information.
- Holding in mind long instructions with multiple steps is difficult.
- If someone says "Turn left, then right, then left," I might forget after the first turn.
- My memory is significantly better after a short delay.

Language

- I find it hard to understand what people say or what I read.
- I find it hard to find the right words for things.
- It can be hard to explain my thoughts or respond to questions with lots of detail.
- Learning new words is challenging for me.
- Its difficult for me to understand slang words.

what helps me

knowing the end goal ⚽🎉

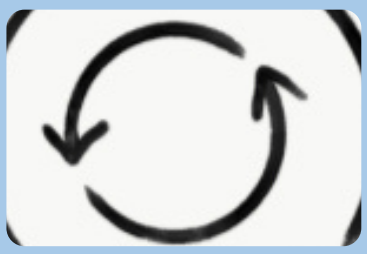
• Knowing the end goal of a task helps me remember the steps to get there.

Regular breaks ⏰😴

• A 5 minute break every 30 minutre.

Repitition 🔁🔁

• Repeating new information several times



Extra time ➕⏰

• Having extra time to process new information, respond to questions, and work through unfamiliar tasks.

• People slowing down when they are talking to me (it is ok to ask them to slow down!)

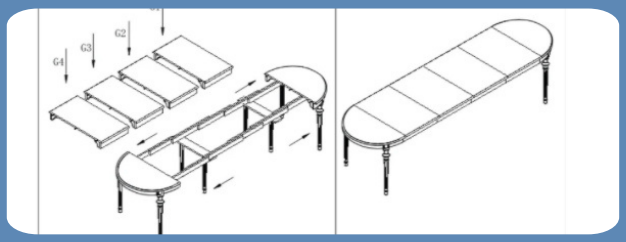
what helps me learn

Hands on learning

- I learn by doing. It's best to have someone talk me through it as I'm doing it.
- Hands on learning helps me understand the process and remember the steps.

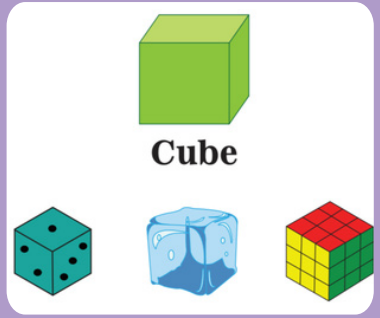
Pictures

- Having information in picture form.
- when im learning something new I can take a photo of each new step on my phone to help me remember.
- Using step-by-step picture instructions when I can (example: furniture instructions)



Real life examples

Having real life examples. For example, learning what a cube is, it is the same shape as a dice.



What I want others to know

I need extra time to understand what there saying ...

How I can tell them...

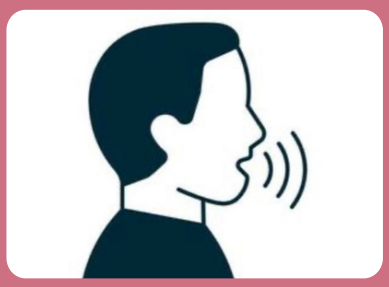
I can say these 2 sentences...

1 - I had brain tumour when I was younger.
2 - Now it takes me longer to understand things.

How I can ask for help...

I can say this sentence...

3 - Please be patient and give me extra time.



How I can ask for help without speaking ...

I can give someone my laminated card that explains I need extra time to understand.

I can show someone my notes app where I have written these 3 sentences explaining I need some extra time.

1: I had a brain tumour when I was younger.

2: Now it takes me longer to understand things.

3: Please be patient and give me extra time to understand.