

# Getting Started with RPM

*A beginner's guide for families new to the Rapid Prompting Method.*

## What is RPM?

RPM (Rapid Prompting Method) is an educational and communication method developed by Soma Mukhopadhyay at HALO (Helping Autism through Learning and Outreach). It is designed for individuals with autism and other communication differences, particularly those who are nonspeaking or have limited verbal communication.

RPM presumes intellectual competence -- that every individual has the ability to learn and communicate, regardless of how they currently express themselves. Sessions use academic content and a letterboard to teach learners to point to letters, spelling out words, thoughts, and ideas.

## How RPM Sessions Work

- \* Sessions are one-on-one with a certified RPM practitioner.
- \* Content is academic and age-appropriate, engaging the learner's intellect.
- \* The practitioner presents information through talking, writing, and tearing paper to maintain the learner's attention and regulate sensory input.
- \* Learners respond by pointing to letters on a letterboard or stencil.
- \* Sessions typically run 30, 45, or 60 minutes depending on the learner's stamina.

## What to Bring to Your First Session

- \* Any previous assessments, therapy reports, or IEP documents (optional but helpful).
- \* A list of your child's current interests, favourite topics, and motivators.
- \* Information about sensory sensitivities or regulation strategies that work at home.
- \* Snacks and comfort items your child may need during the session.
- \* An open mind -- first sessions are exploratory and introductory.

## Tips for Practising at Home

- \* Keep practice sessions short (10-20 minutes) and consistent.
- \* Choose topics your child finds genuinely interesting.
- \* Read aloud to your child daily -- they are listening and learning.
- \* Avoid testing or quizzing; focus on exposure and engagement.
- \* Celebrate any attempt to communicate, however small.
- \* Connect with your practitioner regularly to align home and session goals.

## Glossary of Common RPM Terms

- \* Letterboard: A board displaying the alphabet (and sometimes numbers/words) used for the learner to point to letters to spell out communication.
  - \* Stencil: An intermediate tool between free pointing and letterboard use.
  - \* Prompting: The verbal, visual, or physical cues a practitioner uses to guide a learner toward a response.
  - \* H-RPM: HALO-certified RPM, the original and most widely recognised form.
  - \* Presuming Competence: The core RPM principle that every individual is intelligent and capable of learning, regardless of current expressive communication level.
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