



Social Stories™

A Practical Guide for Parents and educators

Social Stories™ are written by parents or professionals to assist individuals in understanding a variety of situations. They help the individual by identifying important cues, describing abstract concepts or another point of view, defining a routine or rule, explaining the rationale behind expectations, or outlining an upcoming event. As the authority on Social Stories™, Carol Gray, has developed the following criteria and guidelines:

A Social Story™ should...

1. meaningfully share social information using a patient and reassuring tone.
2. have an introduction that clearly identifies the topic, a body that adds detail, and a conclusion that reinforces and summarizes the information.
3. be literally accurate. Think of the text as a promise to the reader.
4. answer “wh” questions.
5. be written from a first or third person perspective
6. use positive language. Focus on what the reader should do, rather than what they should not do.
7. describe more than direct. The number of sentences that describe should be double the number of sentences that direct/control.
8. have a format that is tailored to the abilities and interests of its audience
9. include individually tailored illustrations that enhance the meaning of the text, if the level of the reader requires them.

It's important to put your knowledge of Social Stories™ together with your understanding of the child for whom you are writing the story. You should adjust the vocabulary, perspective, length, and content to suit the child's comprehension level, interests, and abilities.

References:

Hodgdon, L. (1995). Visual Strategies for Improving Communication: Practical Supports for School and Home. Troy, MI: QuirkRoberts Publishing.

Quill, K. (1995). Teaching Children with Autism: Strategies to Enhance Communication and Socialization. New York: Delmar Publishers, Inc.

The Gray Center for Social Learning and Understanding--Official Home of Carol Gray and Social Stories™
www.thegraycenter.org

Here's an Example Social Story™ : **At the Grocery Store**

Many people go to the grocery store to buy food and other things.

At the grocery store I will see lots and lots of people and food.

There might be things that I want to touch or eat at the grocery store, but it is important to let Mom and Dad get the food off the shelves.

Going to the grocery store can be fun if we follow the rules.

