



# Social Stories™



## What is a Social Story™?

Social situations and expectations can be difficult for individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) to understand. Social Stories™ was developed by Carol Gray as a method for helping individuals with ASD better understand social situations. Social Stories™ are short stories that are written for a specific individual. They outline the situation and the expected behaviors, as well as strategies to cope with any difficulties that may occur. Social Stories™ are a visual way of clarifying information and allowing the individual to review it repeatedly until it is understood. Social Stories™ is one of the strategies that fall under the Social Narratives category of evidence-based practices for individuals with ASD.

## What can Social Stories™ Teach?

Social Stories™ can address almost any situation or skill, including:

- Simple social skills (e.g., taking turns, asking for help, playing with a friend)
- Social expectations (e.g., waiting in lines, ordering food at a restaurant)
- Responses to others behaviors (e.g., what certain situations mean, how to handle change, how to solve simple problems).

## Elements of a Social Story™

1. Social Stories™ are written in first person
2. The story should be personalized to the individual's comprehension level as well as including people/places that are specific to him/her
3. Make the story specific—address specific locations, characters or situations
4. Ensure the strategies or wording used is appropriate to the skill level of the individual
5. Repeat key information so the individual understands the main ideas
6. Increase the relevance of the social story to the individual by involving him/her, when appropriate
7. Use pictures/graphics to make the story easier to understand.
8. Build in specific times to review the story frequently.

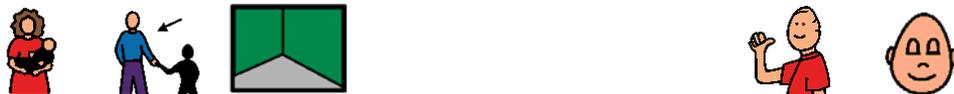
## Sentence Types in a Social Story™

Carole Gray recommends using 2-5 descriptive or control sentences for each directive sentence

1. **Descriptive:** provides information about the individual, the environment, and the situation
2. **Directive:** describes how the individual should respond in the social situation.
3. **Perspective:** identifies the feelings or reactions of others in the social situation.
4. **Control:** provides analogies of similar situations using nonhuman references.

# Example

Sometimes mom or dad leaves the room, but I am still safe



They go into a different room because they have something to do. Then they come back.



I can remind myself that it is okay to be in a different room than they are.



I can keep doing what I was doing before they left the room.



If I feel worried, I can take some breaths or think of something happy.



It is okay to be in a different room than my mom and dad are in.



## Books & Articles

- Baker, J. (2001) *The Social Skills Picture Book*. Future Horizons: Arlington, TX
- Crozier, S. & Sileo, N. (2005). Encouraging Positive Behavior With Social Stories: An Intervention For Children With Autism Spectrum Disorder. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 37(6), 26-31.
- Gray, C. & Attwood, T. (2010). *The New Social Story Book, Revised and Expanded 10th Anniversary Edition: Over 150 Social Stories that Teach Everyday*. Future Horizons: Arlington, TX
- Gray, C. A., & Garand, J. D. (1993). Social stories: Improving responses of students with autism with accurate social information. *Focus on Autistic Behavior*, 8(1), 1- 13.
- Swaggart, B.L., Gagnon, E., Bock, S.J., Earles, T.L., Quinn, C., Myles, B.S., & Simpson, R.L. (1995). Using social stories to teach social and Behavioral skills to children with autism. *Focus on Autistic Behavior*, 10(1), 1-15.

## Websites

[www.carolgraysocialstories.com](http://www.carolgraysocialstories.com): Official Home of Carol Gray and Social Stories™

For online modules or more information on how to implement the evidence-based practice of Social Narratives see [www.autisminternetmodules.org](http://www.autisminternetmodules.org) and the National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorder s <http://afirm.fpg.unc.edu> modules on Social Narratives.

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Adapted from fact sheets originally developed by Illinois Autism Training and Technical Assistance and Illinois State University.

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