

Social Stories

**Techniques developed by Carol Gray -
Future Horizons, Arlington, TX**

Social Stories & Developmental Disabilities

- ▶ Social Stories were developed predominately for individuals who have Autism or a Pervasive Developmental Disorder.
- ▶ Many of the principles are useful with clients who have developmental disabilities.

General Thoughts

- ▶ ABANDON ALL ASSUMPTIONS
- ▶ There are two equally valid assumptions:
 - ▶ YOURS
 - ▶ THE STUDENT WITH AUTISM

A Social Story is ...

- ▶ A short story written in a specific style and format. Each social story describes a situation or skill in terms of relevant social cues and common responses.

Why do Social Stories Work?

- ▶ Visual
- ▶ Provide accurate information
- ▶ Identify relevant social cues
- ▶ Describe expected behaviors
- ▶ Subtract social interference

Basic Social Story Sentences

- ▶ Descriptive sentences
- ▶ Perspective sentences
- ▶ Directive sentences

Descriptive Sentences

- ▶ Explain what occurs and why
- ▶ Paint the backdrop of the social story
- ▶ Point out relevant features
- ▶ Often begins a social story
 - ▶ Example: My name is Chad. I work at XYZ Company. I live in a brown home.

Directive Sentences

- ▶ Individualized statements of desired responses or social skills.
- ▶ Often follow descriptive sentences, telling a child what is expected as a response to a given cue or response.
- ▶ Often begins with “I can...” or “I will...”
 - ▶ Example: I will talk quietly when inside.
I can talk quietly when others are sleeping.

Perspective Sentences

- ▶ Describe the reactions of other people in a target social situation.
- ▶ They may relay the feelings of others depicted in a social story.
- ▶ They should be honest statements.
 - ▶ Examples: The workers should walk quietly so they don't disturb people working in other rooms. Some people have fun at work.

The Basic Social Story Ratio

- ▶ 0-1 Directive sentence
- ▶ 2-5 descriptive and/or perspective sentences

Basic Steps to Writing Social Stories

- ▶ Target a situation
- ▶ Gather information
- ▶ Share observations
- ▶ Support new responses and/or revise story based on student's response

General Guidelines for Writing Social Stories

- ▶ Positively state desired behaviors
- ▶ Write at or slightly below a student's comprehension level
- ▶ Write in “reality”- mention variations in routines
- ▶ Functionally/visually define ambiguous terms
- ▶ Carefully write from a “first person” perspective- the client describes

Writing Social Stories- Con't

- ▶ Use caution with illustrations
- ▶ Consider “Wh” questions as titles and subtitles
- ▶ Be specific. Use “sometimes” and “usually”, state desired responses carefully
- ▶ Consider incorporating student interest

Reinforcing Concepts in a Social Story

- ▶ Accompanying audio cassette tapes
- ▶ Bookmarks
- ▶ Signs
- ▶ Posted illustrations
- ▶ Group home social stories