

# Social Stories



Social stories™ were created by Carol Gray in 1991. They are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why.

The terms 'social story' and 'social stories' are trademarks originated and owned by Carol Gray.

Social Stories Can be used to describe a specific skill or event.

- \* Help people with autism to develop social understanding and skills.
- \* Can be used to explain why we have to do something – for example why we have to wash or have our hair cut.
- \* Can be used to prepare someone for a new situation (and reduce anxiety) – for example going on holiday or going to the dentist.
- \* Need to tell someone what they 'should' as well as what they 'should not' do they will not know this unless you clearly tell them. –
- \* Can be used on a daily basis and may need to be read many times.
- \* You do not need to use pictures but it may help someone with autism understand the text.

## **EXAMPLE 1 : WHAT TO DO WHEN ANOTHER CHILD IS CRYING**

Sometimes when a child is hurt or upset they cry. Usually this is because it has happened suddenly and the child is shocked. Many times when a grown up comes the child starts to feel better and stops crying quickly.

A child's cry is made to be loud so that a grown up will come to help. This is why it is difficult to ignore. Sometimes when another child cries it may be uncomfortable for my ears.

When a child is crying, I may ask them if they need a grown up. If they say yes I may tell a grown up that someone needs help. This is a kind and friendly thing to do.

Using my headphones/earphones will usually make the crying quieter. I will work on staying calm. Here are two things that may help me stay calm:

Feeling my Paperclip/marble/fidget cube in my pocket.

Counting to 10 penguins.

I am learning what to do when another child is crying.



## **EXAMPLE 2: LEARNING TO WAIT AT THE CHECKOUT**

Sometimes Mum and I go to a supermarket to buy some shopping. A supermarket is a big shop that sells food and drink and lots of other things too. Tesco is a supermarket and Sainsbury's is another supermarket. There are lots of different things to buy in a supermarket.

Mum and I put the shopping in our shopping trolley. When all the shopping is done it is paid for at a checkout. The supermarket usually has many checkouts. Only one person can be served at a checkout at a time.

Taking turns is a fair way of sharing one thing that everyone cannot use at the same time. To take turns the people line up by a checkout with their shopping.

Sometimes the queue is short, sometimes the queue is long.

Waiting patiently in the checkout queue is an important skill to learn. Many people find it difficult to wait patiently at a checkout. I am learning to wait patiently at the checkout. When there is an empty seat near the checkout Mum will tell me to sit there.

Here are some things that may help me wait patiently while Mum pays for the shopping:

- \* Playing with my games or toys from my checkout bag
- \* Listening to my music with my earphones
- \* Counting to 10,20,30
- \* Playing on my phone, tablet, game

When the shopping is all paid for and packed into bags, Mum and I put the bags in the car and go home.

## **EXAMPLE 3: ANGER**

Sometimes I get angry. I get angry when someone moves one of my toys, when mum tells me its time to stop playing on my Xbox and I get angry when I lose a game.

When I get angry I might hurt myself, break something or hurt someone else.

It is ok to get angry. But, it is not ok to hurt myself. It is not ok to break things. It is not ok to hurt someone else.

choose one or 2 of the following:

When I feel angry I can try to take deep breaths and count to 10.

When I feel angry I can go to my bedroom and punch my pillow or beanbag.

When I feel angry I can try blowing the clouds away with big breaths.

When I feel angry I can try playing with something from my calm down basket.

When I feel angry I can talk to my grown up about it.

Next time I feel angry I will try to remember what to do.



## Further information and publications

National Autistic Society - Social Story information and guidance

<https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx>

Social Story book by Carol Gray 2015 edition

<https://www.amazon.co.uk/Social-Story-Revised-Expanded-Anniversary/dp/1941765165>

Successful Social stories for young children with Autism

<https://www.jkp.com/uk/successful-social-stories-for-young-children-with-autism.html>

Printed, laminated books and keyring versions of Social Stories available to buy from eBay

[https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/i.html?\\_from=R40&\\_trksid=m570.l1313&\\_nkw=social+story&\\_sacat=0](https://www.ebay.co.uk/sch/i.html?_from=R40&_trksid=m570.l1313&_nkw=social+story&_sacat=0)

ASD Bright Ideas website with social stories, visual timetables etc

<https://asdbrightideas.co.uk/>

To find this and other useful resources please visit [www.northlancsdirectionsgroup.com/downloads](http://www.northlancsdirectionsgroup.com/downloads)



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