

# Social Stories™

(Carol Gray)

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# How can Social Stories be used?

- To develop self-care skills, social skills and academic abilities
- To understand how others might behave or respond in a particular situation
- To understand how your child might be expected to behave
- To help others understand the perspective of a your child and why they may respond or behave in a particular way
- To help your child to cope with changes to routine and unexpected or distressing events
- To provide positive feedback about an area of strength or achievement in order to develop self-esteem
- To develop behavioural strategies and how to manage special interests

# Benefits of using Social Stories

- Uses strengths as visual learners
- Presents information in a literal, concrete way
- Helps to sequence events and with executive functioning
- Can increase structure in your child's life and thereby reduce anxiety

# Getting Started

- Decide the goal of the Social Story
- Select a title - question (e.g. What is lightning?) or statement (e.g. Lightning)
- Plan what your child needs to understand:
  - social reasons
  - where does the situation occur
  - who is it with
  - how does it begin and end
  - how long does it last
  - what actually happens in the situation and why

# Writing your Social Story

- Need:
  - Introduction
  - Body
  - Conclusion
- Use positive language (describe what should happen)
- Should appeal to the interests of your child
- For situations where a particular outcome is not guaranteed, use –
  - sometimes
  - usually
  - most of the time

# Perspective

- If writing for a young child, write from the first person perspective
  - (I will try to wait until it is daytime before I get up in the morning)
- When writing for young people, use the third person perspective
  - (**they, he, she**) and adjust language and presentation accordingly
- Pair age-appropriate photographs, picture symbols or drawings with text to help comprehension and retention for younger children

# Teaching your Social Story

- Present the social story to your child at a time when everyone is feeling calm and relaxed
- Review the story as often as required
- Introduce one story at a time to maximise learning

# Fading your Social Story

- increase the period of time between reviewing story e.g:
  - daily review
  - every second day
  - weekly
- change the content of the story to reflect your child's new skills, e.g:
  - remove directive sentences from the story
  - rewrite them as partial sentences or cloze
  - ask child to recall the information



# Social Story Formula

Sentence Type	What is it?	Examples
<p>Descriptive</p> <p>2-5 sentences (can include perspective)</p>	<p>Answers the 'wh' questions <i>where</i> does the situation occur, <i>who</i> is it with, <i>what</i> happens and <i>why</i>?</p> <p>Descriptive sentences need to present information from an accurate and objective perspective.</p>	<p><i>Christmas Day is 25 December.</i></p> <p><i>Most children go to school.</i></p> <p><i>Sometimes I get sick.</i></p>
<p>Perspective</p> <p>See above</p>	<p>Refers to the opinions, feelings, ideas, beliefs or physical/mental well being of others.</p> <p>Describing the internal stuff, many children with autism do not know about.</p>	<p><i>My Mum and Dad <u>know</u> when it is time for me to go to bed.</i></p> <p><i>Teachers <u>like</u> it when students raise their hand to ask a question in the classroom.</i></p> <p><i>Some children <u>believe</u> in Santa Claus.</i></p>
<p>Directive</p> <p>1 sentence</p>	<p>Gently offers a response or range of responses for behaviour in a particular situation.</p> <p>Provide information about what the student should do to be successful in the target situation.</p> <p>It is important that these sentences have a positive focus and are constructed in ways which allow flexibility (i.e. avoid statements like <u>I must</u> or <u>I have to</u>).</p>	<p><i>I <u>will try</u> to cover my mouth when I cough.</i></p> <p><i>I <u>might like</u> to play outside during lunchtime.</i></p> <p><i>When I am angry, I <u>can</u>: take three deep breaths/go for a walk/jump on the trampoline.</i></p>
<p>Affirmative</p>	<p>Statements that enhance the meaning of the previous sentence (which may be a descriptive, perspective or directive sentence)</p> <p>Can also be used to emphasise the importance of the message or to provide reassurance to the child.</p>	<p><i>(I will try to hold an adults hand when crossing the road). This is very important.</i></p> <p><i>(Thunder can be very loud).This is ok.</i></p>
<p>Cooperative</p>	<p>Sentences which identify how others may be of assistance to the person</p> <p>(developed by Dr Demetrious Haracopos in Denmark)</p>	<p><i>Mum and Dad can help me wash my hands.</i></p> <p><i>An adult will help me when I cross the road.</i></p> <p><i>My teacher will help me to try to stay calm in class.</i></p>

# What are Unexpected Noises?

- There are many noises.

(descriptive)

- Sometimes noises surprise me.

(descriptive)

- They are unexpected noises.

(descriptive)

- Some unexpected noises are; telephones, doorbells, barking dogs, breaking glass, vacuum cleaners, slamming doors, honking horns and thunder.

(descriptive)

- These noises are okay.

(affirmative)

- I will try to stay calm when I hear unexpected noises.

(directive)

- Adults can tell me when the noise will stop.

(cooperative)

# Nightmares (Carol Gray, 1994)

- Sometimes I may have a nightmare when I am sleeping.

(descriptive)

- Nightmares are the same as a dream, but more scary.

(descriptive)

- Events in nightmares do not really happen.

(descriptive)

- They are like pictures in my mind.

(descriptive)

- It is all right if I am scared.

(affirmative)

- I may try telling myself it is all in my mind. It is only a dream.

(directive)

- Adults can help children with nightmares too.

(cooperative)

- It is okay to ask an adult for help with nightmares.

(affirmative)

- When I wake up, I will see that I am all right.

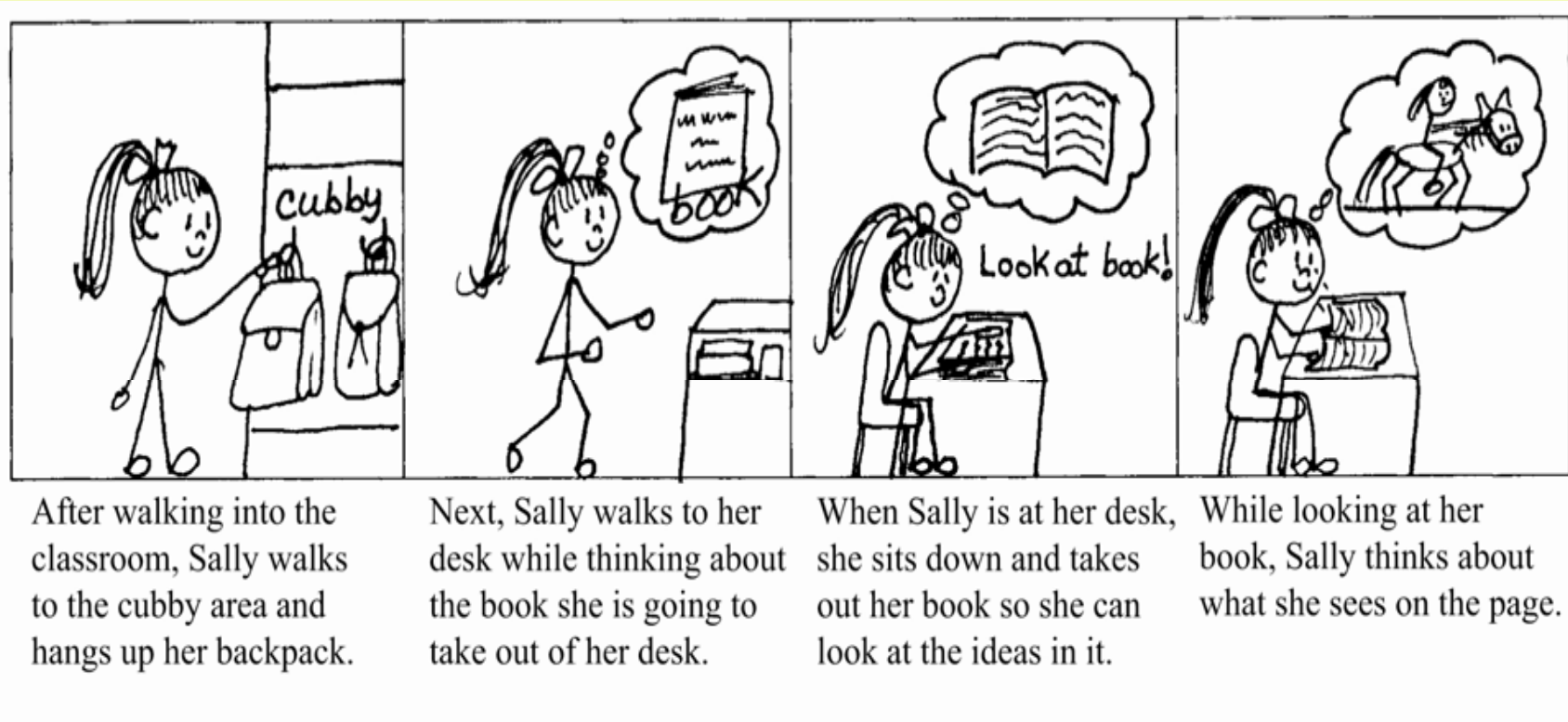
(descriptive)

# Let's Practise – I have to go to work

- Descriptive
- Descriptive
- Descriptive
- Descriptive
- Affirmative
- Directive
- Cooperative
- Affirmative

# Comic Strip Conversations

(Carol Gray)



# Individual or Paired Activity

- Write a Social Story or Comic Strip on your choice of topic
- Examples:
  - When a friend is not actually a friend
  - Wearing your uniform
  - Road safety
  - Doing homework
  - Showering and using deodorant
  - Accepting that others have different views/opinions
  - Managing anger

# Links to Resources

- [Carol's Club](#) (Carol Gray)
- [National Autistic Society](#)
- [Autism Toolbox](#) (Scottish Government)
- [Comic Strip Conversations](#) (NHS Wales)
- Your school!

# Thank You

- Questions?