
Advice Sheet 31

SOCIAL STORIES™

Social Stories™ is a concept which has been devised and developed by Carol Gray. It is a strategy for helping pupils who have poor social skills to understand and develop a range of social skills by presenting appropriate social behaviours in the form of a story. The concept was first developed in 1991 in the USA for use with children with autistic spectrum disorder (ASD) and involves writing individualized stories which describe a specific social situation in terms of the relevant social cues and responses. Each story follows a specific style and format and is written in the first person with the goal being to describe the situation and possible responses rather than to direct the pupil. Four basic types of sentences are used in writing the story: descriptive, perspective, directive and affirmative. The suggested ratio for the sentences is 0-1 directive, 2-5 descriptive, perspective and/or affirmative.

Although Social Stories™ were first developed for use with children with ASD, the approach has also been successful with children, adolescents, and adults with ASD and other social and communication delays and differences, as well as individuals developing normally. More recently, Social Articles™ have been developed for use with adolescents and adults. These still follow the guidelines and criteria for writing a Social Story™ but are written at a more age-appropriate level and format.

An example of a Social Story™:

Leaving the Classroom Safely to Use the Bathroom

1. Sometimes I need to go to the bathroom.
2. It is not safe for me to leave the classroom without asking the teacher.
3. When I want to go to the bathroom I can ask my teacher.
4. When my teacher says "yes you may go" I may leave the room.
5. When my teacher says "wait" I need to wait to leave the room.
6. When I leave the room I will come straight back when I have finished in the bathroom.
7. Then I will be safe and my teacher will be happy.

For more:

<http://www.thegraycenter.org/> Official home of Carol Gray and Social Stories™

<http://www.thegraycenter.org/socialstories.cfm> Examples of Social Stories™

http://www.frsd.k12.nj.us/autistic/Social%20Stories/social_stories.htm

<http://ourworld.compuserve.com/homepages/mdenoncourt/ss.htm>

<http://www.adders.org/socialstories.htm>

<http://www.fcps.k12.va.us/ss/its/howtos/socstor/socstories.htm>

http://www.speechmark.net/speechmark/New_Titles/writing.htm Book: "Writing and Developing Social Stories"