

Sharing a Social Story with a child

Top tips for parents and carers

Aim for a positive introduction

It's important that your child has a positive and supportive experience of Social Stories. If this is your first time using a Social Story, start on a positive note....

- Think of a recent example of something positive that has happened. This might be something your child has achieved or something they did that made you proud. Write them a short story or card and share it with them, reading out what you've written.
- Introduce the Social Story at a time when both you and your child are calm, and there are minimal distractions. Sit side by side so you can read the story together.



Monitor how it's received

Treat the Social Story as a work in progress. Your child's feedback is key.



- Introduce the Social Story simply, e.g. 'I have written this story for you. It's about hand-dryers. Let's read it together'.
- Encourage your child's feedback: 'It's your story, if there is anything you don't agree with or don't like we can change it together'.
- Monitor how the story is received. There might be things that you need to add or change after reading it with them – that's ok! It's important that the story makes sense to them.
- You may need to read the story with your child several times to help their understanding.

Find ways to support the story

Back up the key messages from the Social Story to help your child's memory and learning.

This might be a poster or a simple visual of the key message e.g. 'hand-dryers are safe for people to use'.



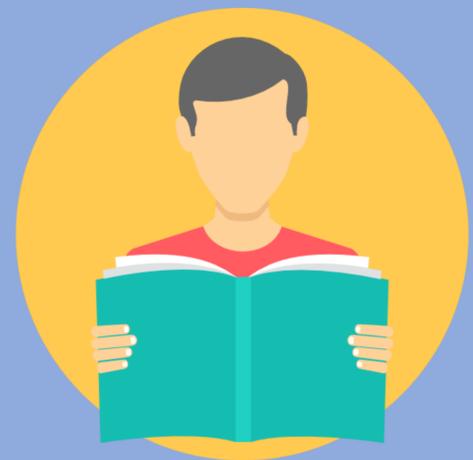
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Be flexible around your child's needs

You know your child best! Some children may find it hard to sit down and read a story with you. Don't be afraid of adjusting the language and format to suit your child's needs.

- Using a child's own interests can be a great way to get them interested in the story. Try adjusting the story to include a favourite character or topic.
- For children who find demands difficult, it is often better to use stories written in the third person, e.g. *'children wear a uniform when they go to school'* rather than *'I wear a uniform when I go to school.'*
- Sometimes phrasing a demand as a rule can be helpful, for example *'it's the rule that/the government say that.....'*



Take your time

Don't worry if your child doesn't want to look at the story, or it doesn't go to plan.



- Don't force them to read the story with you, if they don't seem interested, try another time.
- Some children may find the direct demand of sitting down with you to read difficult. Try leaving the story around for them to look at.

Further information

Website of the founder of Social Stories, Carol Gray
www.carolgraysocialstories.com

Information about using Social Stories on the National Autistic Society website:
www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx

