

14 Social Stories



INCLUSION IS
EVERYONE'S
BUSINESS

TIP SHEET

What is a social story?

A social story explains social situations, events and activities that help children learn what to expect and why. Social Story™ and Social Stories™ are trademarks originated and owned by Carol Gray.

What are social stories about?

- Behaviours
- Social situations
- Routines and activities
- Events

How can social stories be helpful?

- They can help with understanding how to respond and behave in a particular situation.
- They can assist with transitions and coping with changes.
- They can assist with developing social skills, self-care skills and skills for learning.

How to write a social story

Social stories are usually written in the first person and in the present tense. However, they can be written in future tense to describe an upcoming event.

Things to take into consideration before you start writing

- Comprehension level of the child
- Use of appropriate pictures
- What is the purpose of the story?

Types of sentences to use

1. **Descriptive sentences** define where a situation occurs, who is involved, what they are doing and why, e.g. "I am going to go to swimming at 4 o'clock."
2. **Coaching sentences** gently guides behaviour, e.g. "When I am angry, I can take three deep breaths".

Tips

- Ensure that it has a title, body and conclusion.
- Ensure that it answers: where, when, who, what, how and why.
- Use supportive language and avoid words that may cause distress or anxiety.
- Use terms that the child is familiar with and is at their language level.
- Use short sentences.
- Use pictures that are clear in terms of the activities needed to be followed or completed.
- Keep points to one or two per page.
- Ensure that the story appeals to the interests of the child.
- Present the story at a time when everyone is feeling calm and relaxed.

Additional Resources

Carol Gray - Social Stories <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/about-2/carol-gray/>

Refer to the [Social Story template](#) for an example.