

10 TIPS FOR CREATING A SOCIAL STORY



Social stories are a good way to help children prepare for upcoming changes in routine. They can help children understand what is going to happen throughout their day, which helps ease anxiety. Social stories can also help model proper responses to different situations, such as asking for help or a break when needed.

1. Think about the different routines that will occur throughout your child's day. Pick one routine, usually the one that is new or may cause the most anxiety.
Example: *Going back to school or Going to see the doctor.* You can create multiple social stories for different routines.
2. Once you have picked the routine for the social story, think about how your child will travel. *Who will greet them upon arrival? What transitions will happen throughout their day? Will they meet new friends? See old friends?* Use the answers to these questions in the social story.
3. Take pictures of your child in familiar places. Also, include pictures of people and things they will see along their route and when they arrive. If you are unable to take pictures, then you can also use pictures from online. Try not to mix real pictures and graphics.
4. Use one picture for your cover page and give your social story a title. It should represent the theme. The cover picture and title can also include your child's name.
Example: *My First Day of School or Zaria Goes to the Dentist.*
5. Arrange the rest of your pictures in chronological order. Example: Riding the bus to school will come before having lunch.
6. Write brief and descriptive sentences to accompany each picture. You don't have to write a paragraph. One to two sentences per picture works. Reassure your child and let them know that what they are feeling is okay.
7. Make the language simple for your child to understand.
8. Model responses to events that may occur throughout the day. *What should your child do if they need help? Have to use the bathroom? Is feeling overstimulated or uncomfortable?*
9. Laminate each page of the social story or put it in a binder. You want it to last a long time and be easy to access when you are on the go.
10. Review the social story with your child during the days leading up to the event and on the day of the event.