

Child and Family Centre

Dr Caleb Knight

Educational Psychologist

2206 Technology Plaza

651 King's Road

Quarry Bay, Hong Kong

Tel: 2543-0993 Fax: 2543-0996

Email: cknight77hk@yahoo.com

www.childandfamilycentre.com.hk

Social Stories Instruction

Social Stories describe situations in terms of relevant social cues, and define appropriate responses. They are also used to communicate expected behaviours in social situations as well as define expected behaviours at school or home with regard to following routines, staying on task etc. Traditionally they were developed for children with Autism/Asperger but can be useful for many children with developmental/behavioural difficulties such as Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

Reduces the direct person to person interaction needed to communicate expectations.

Geared to individual child's needs, written by adults. Used for all ages, even teenagers.

Describes a situation in terms of relevant and appropriate behaviour in a non-threatening way.

Translates goals into steps.

Used to communicate routines, appropriate school behaviour, reduce compulsions etc.

How to get started using Social Stories

Observe situations that are difficult for the child (take the child's perspective too). Select an appropriate title.

Social Stories use 3 types of sentences.

Descriptive (define the situation, who, what, where, why).

Perspective (reactions, feelings of others).

Directive (state desired responses).

Should be 1 directive sentence and the rest 2-7 descriptive/perspective.

Do not over use directive sentences.

Have the child read the story once or twice a day near the time when the behaviour is expected.

Stories can be read to young children.

Including photo or picture cues with some children can be very helpful.

Parents can read the stories with their children at home

Example Stories:

Assembly at School

We have assembly at school on special days. The whole school goes to the same big room. Music is playing when we walk in and we sit on the floor with our class. The Principal talks about the week at school and shares his star book. At the end of assembly the music plays and we line up and go back to our classroom.

When we are in assembly everyone tries to be quiet and sit nicely. That means staying seated and not talking or shouting. Sometimes someone else makes noise while Mr. Walton is talking and I want to make noise too.

If I talk too loud or make noise, my teachers, The Principal and the other children will not like it. They will be happy if I can sit nicely and try to stay quiet. I also need to listen to see if my name is in the star book.

I will try and stay seated and be quiet during assembly. My teachers will be happy and my friends will feel good if I can stay seated and be quiet during assembly.

Following and Chasing People

Sometimes if I want to talk to someone I might look for them, follow them if they are in front of me with their back turned. I can find them, say their name and we can talk. If the other person stops and answers me that means they would like to talk to me.

If I want to talk to someone and I keep following, chasing and saying their name and they don't answer, that person does not want to talk to me. If I keep following and chasing them they will feel uncomfortable and not happy with me.

It is OK for me to look for someone and try to talk with them but if they don't answer or move away, then I know they don't want to talk now. When this happens the right thing to do is stop, don't chase or follow them and go do something else.

Moving Around The Classroom

There are times when I need to move around the classroom.

Sometimes I need to go to my bag or tray or get other things.

I need to see where other children are before I move to another place.

If I move carefully and I do not disturb others they will be very happy. My teacher and my parents will be happy as well.

I will try and be careful and look where I am going when I move around the classroom so that I do not disturb others

Lining Up After Break Time

Everyday at break we go out to play. We climb and go down the slide and have fun together.

When the teacher claps her hands, most of the children climb down and sit on the floor and then line up.

Sometimes I want to keep playing and climbing as long as I can and forget to climb down and line up quickly. My teacher may not think I'm listening if I take too long to climb down, sit and line up.

I will try to listen for the teachers clap and climb down, sit and line up with the other children. If I can do it my teacher will know that I am listening and she will be happy.

When I Get Mad

I like to have fun at school and other places when I'm playing. We learn new things at school and I get to be with my friends.

Sometimes I don't like what other kids do. They might say something I don't like or mess up my toy or project. I may get mad at other children or adults and yell at them to stop or hit them.

When I get mad and yell at my parents, teacher or classmates they feel unhappy and may not want to play with me.

When I don't like something or feel angry with someone, I can tell myself to calm down, ask them to stop or tell the teacher I don't like it.

When I do this everyone will be happy and know that I have stayed calm. Then I will get my smiley face and mom will let me do fun things at home.