



Special points of interest:

Promoting Teen Social Skills
Pgs. 1-2

What are Social Stories
Pg. 3

Personalized Story Templates
Pg. 4

Social Stories
Pg. 5-7

Social Narratives & iPad Apps
Pg. 8

Also In this issue:

Summer Camp list **9**

Book suggestions **10**

Visuals **12**

Autism Consultant **12**
Contact Information

March 2017

Volume 5, Issue 6

Autism Agenda



Linn Benton Lincoln ESD-Cascade Regional Autism Program

Promoting Teen Social Skills

What approaches are effective in improving social skills among teens on the autism spectrum?

This is such an important question because social skills become a greater issue as children with autism enter their teenage years. For many teens on the autism spectrum, especially higher functioning kids, their challenges with social skills become more pronounced and noticed in high school as teens become more keenly aware of who “fits in” and who “stands out.” At the same time, many teens on the spectrum become acutely aware of how they differ from the “norm.” One teenage boy told me he thought that everyone in his class was psychic except for him. He’s not entirely wrong in that he was missing the nonverbal cues and the subtle ebb and flow of friendship development – and was starting to realize it. At the same time, parents and school counselors are beginning to think about what skills teenagers need while dating and once they leave school for college or the job market.

Studies have demonstrated the benefits of several approaches for improving social skills. But they also tell us that no single approach works for all teenagers with autism. Moreover, the majority of studies focus on high-functioning boys and men. We don’t know whether these approaches work with teenage girls and young women or lower-functioning teens, because we lack enough research on these groups.



So let’s rephrase your question slightly to: *Which approach should I use with my teenager?*

By far the most common and well-supported intervention for high-functioning kids on the autism spectrum is “structured learning.” Typically done in a group setting, teachers instruct the kids on socially acceptable behavior. The teachers then model the behavior, have children role-play and then ask the teens to use these skills with their peers. Though structured learning works well for many children, I have noticed that subsets of adolescents don’t respond well to this approach. This may be because teens are becoming self-conscious and may feel uncomfortable when instructors tell them how to act or point out how they’re not good at something.

Continued on page 2.

PROMOTING TEEN SOCIAL SKILLS CONTINUED....

To fill this gap, I created an alternative “performance training” model called [SDARI](#) (for Socio-Dramatic Affective Relational Intervention). I originally founded the program with Karen Levine at the [Spotlight Program](#) at the Northeast Arc in Danvers, Massachusetts. Today, it’s used in many programs around the country and has shown promising effects in a [series of studies](#).

SDARI has three core components, which I think are good examples of the different ingredients that instructors can adapt for teen social skills programs.

First, we use improvisation games that tap into skills that tend to be difficult for teens, without specifically “calling out” the issues. Second, we “embed” rewards into the social experience. For example, rather than rewarding kids by allowing them to go off on their own to play a video game, we build video games into the curriculum, while ensuring that the teens play them together. By doing this, we hope to associate positive social experiences with the games they enjoy.



Third, we’ve trained counselors to avoid the traditional teacher-student relationship. Instead they focus on connecting with the teens, sharing interests and developing a positive relationship. In this way, the teens can use social connections they make with the counselors as a bridge to forming social connections with peers.

I want to emphasize that SDARI and “structured learning” are far from the only approaches that can be used to promote social skills. The take away from our program is that teens differ in how they respond to different interventions. It’s also important to assess each individual’s interests and match those to the intervention that best “fits.”

Our ongoing research, which you can learn more about [here](#) and [here](#), focuses on identifying which subsets of teenagers respond best to which elements of the intervention. Ultimately, we’d like to build evidence-based interventions that are also tailored to individual needs and characteristics.

For now, I would encourage parents to look closely at the content and structure of their teenager’s social skills programs and think about ways in which the program may or may not be a good match for their child. Think about the things that matter to your child. Talk to your therapist, counselor or group leader about how to tailor the program to your child’s needs. If your child is not responding to a social skills program, don’t give up. It may be that a different approach might work better for him.

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/blog/2012/08/24/promoting-teen-social-skills>

**HAPPY
ST. PATRICK'S
DAY!**

WHAT ARE SOCIAL STORIES

WHAT ARE SOCIAL STORIES?

Social stories were created by Carol Gray in 1991. They are short descriptions of a particular situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why.

The terms 'social story' and 'social stories' are trademarks originated and owned by [Carol Gray](#).

What are social stories for?

Social stories can be used to:

- develop self-care skills (eg. how to clean teeth, wash hands or get dressed), social skills (eg sharing, asking for help, saying thank you, interrupting) and academic abilities
- help someone to understand how others might behave or respond in a particular situation
- help others understand the perspective of an autistic person and why they may respond or behave in a particular way
- help a person to cope with changes to routine and unexpected or distressing events (eg. absence of teacher, moving house, thunderstorms)
- provide positive feedback to a person about an area of strength or achievement in order to develop self-esteem

As a behavioral strategy (eg. what to do when angry, how to cope with obsessions).

How do social stories help?

Social stories present information in a literal, 'concrete' way, which may improve a person's understanding of a previously difficult or ambiguous situation or activity. The presentation and content can be adapted to meet different people's needs.

They can help with sequencing (what comes next in a series of activities) and 'executive functioning' (planning and organizing).

By providing information about what might happen in a particular situation, and some guidelines for behavior, you can increase structure in a person's life and thereby reduce anxiety.

Creating or using a social story can help you to understand how the autistic person perceives different situations.

Example

My toys

My toys belong to me. They are mine.

Many of my toys were given to me

Some of my toys have my name on them.

I may play with my toys or share them with someone.

I have toys that are mine.



Carol Gray's [The new social story book](#), 2015

PERSONALIZED STORY TEMPLATES

Using the Autism Speaks Personalized Stories Templates

Many children on the autism spectrum need help in learning how to act in different types of social situations. They also benefit from having information presented visually, whether it's through a chart, a booklet, or an electronic device. These personalized stories were developed to provide a visual means of helping children know what to expect in different situations, as well as to learn what is expected of *them* in these situations. Through pictures and simple language, these stories can make everyday social situations more predictable for children, as well as give them strategies for navigating these situations more effectively.

Every child on the autism spectrum is unique. Different children can react more or less successfully to the same type of situation. Words and pictures that are effective for one child may not work nearly as well with another. A story for a child with autism will be more effective if it is personalized for the child and customized specifically for that child's needs.

Microsoft PowerPoint, the widely available business presentation tool, provides functionality that parents and therapists can use to develop personalized stories to explain social situations to children and youth with autism. To demonstrate how this common business and education tool can be used, Autism Speaks and the READI Lab at the University of Washington¹ have collaborated to develop several PowerPoint templates that are available completely free of charge and can be personalized by parents and therapists to meet the unique needs of individual children.

Personalized story templates are available for the situations below:

- Going to a Restaurant
- Going to a Store
- Handling Bullying
- Potty Training
- Taking Turns
- Having a Play Date

The rest of this article explains how to use PowerPoint to personalize these story templates to explain particular social situations to your child:

- Finding and downloading the personalized story templates
- Basic editing tasks to personalize the story
- Replacing photo placeholders with your own personal photos
- Creating your own personalized story



To access the entire article go to:

<https://www.autismspeaks.org/family-services/personalized-stories>

SOCIAL STORIES

by **Barry K. Morris** B.ScWk



Children with autism experience difficulties with **social** interaction. The theory of mind describes the problems they face in seeing the perspective of another person. A common strategy for dealing with this is using **social stories** to help individuals on the autism spectrum to ‘read’ and understand **social** situations.

Appropriate **social** behaviors are explained in the form of a story. It was developed by Carol Gray and seeks to include answers to questions that autistic persons may need to know to interact appropriately with others (for example, answers to who, what, when, where, and why in **social** situations).

A **social** story is designed for the specific child and may include things the child values and is interested in. For example, if a child likes dinosaurs, you could include dinosaurs as characters in a story about going to school, etc. Children with autism are often visual learners, so the story can include drawings, pictures, and even real objects.

How a social story is put together

Carol Gray recommends a specific pattern to a **social** story. The pattern includes several descriptive and perspective sentences.

Descriptive sentences

Descriptive sentences describe what people do in particular **social** situations, and clearly define where a situation occurs, who is involved, what they are doing, and why. An example of a descriptive sentence is “Sometimes at school, the fire alarm goes off. The fire alarm is a loud bell that rings when there is a real fire or when we are practicing getting out of the building. The teachers, janitors, and principal all help us to line up and go outside quickly. The fire alarm is loud so that everyone can hear it. Sometimes I think it is too loud.”

Perspective sentences

This type of sentence presents others’ reactions to a situation so that the individual can learn how others’ perceive various events. These describe the internal states of people, their thoughts, feelings, and mood. Perspective sentences present others’ reactions to a situation so that the individual can learn how others perceive various events. Example of a perspective sentence: “The fire alarm does not bother all people. The teachers, janitors, and principal may not understand how much the fire alarm bothers me. Sometimes they get mad if I do not move quickly or get confused. Their job is to get me outside quickly so I am safe in case there is a real fire.”

Directive sentences

Directive sentences direct a person to an appropriate desired response. They state, in positive terms, what the desired behavior is. Given the nature of the directive sentence, care needs to be taken to use them correctly and not to limit the individual’s choice. The greater the number of descriptive statements, the more opportunity for the individual to supply his/her own responses to the **social** situation. The greater the number of directive statements, the more specific the cues for how the individual should respond.

These are always stated in positive terms and are individualized statements of desired responses. Directive sentences often follow descriptive sentences, sharing information about what is expected as a response to a given cue or situation. Directive sentences often begin with “I can try...” “I will try...” or “I will work on....” Example of a directive sentence: “I will work on staying calm when the fire alarm rings.” Care should be taken not to have too many directive and/or control sentences turn a **social** story into an “anti-**social** story” of demands and commands.

Continue on page 6.

Control sentences

These sentences identify strategies the person can use to facilitate memory and comprehension of the **social** story. They are usually added by the individual after reviewing the **social** story. A control sentence should be written or inspired by the child. Example of a control sentence: "When the fire alarm rings, will think about a the dinosaurs following each other out of the forest to escape the burning meteors."

When the story is put together, you may include pictures that mean something to the child and will help them remember the story. The story can be used as a bed-time story, a story for story time, etc. It may be read daily by the child or read to the child at various times during the week. Carol Gray reports fantastic results with her **stories**.



What is a
Social Story?

Don't have too many directive and control sentences

Two other types of sentences are sometime used: directive and control sentences. These sentences may not be used at all and if they are, Carol Gray recommends using them in the ration of 0 – 1 directive or control sentence (s) for every 2 – 5 descriptive and/or perspective sentences.

Carol Gray developed the **social** story ratio which defines the proportion of directive or control sentences to descriptive and/or perspective sentences. She suggests that for every one directive or control sentence, there should be two to five descriptive and/or perspective sentences. Directive or control sentences may be omitted entirely depending on the person and his/her needs.

How to use social stories

If the individual with autism can read, the parent can introduce the story be reading it twice. The person then reads it once a day independently. When the individual with autism cannot read, the parent can read the story on a videotape or audio tape with cues for the person to turn the page while reading. These cues could be a bell or verbal statement when it is time to turn the page.

The person listens and 'reads' along with the story once a day. When individual with autism develops the skills displayed in the **social** story, the story can be faded. This can be done by reducing the number of times the story is read a week and only reviewing the story once a month or as necessary. Another way of fading is to re-write the story, gradually removing directive sentences from the story.

Social stories can be used for many purposes

Social stories can be used for more than learning how to interact in **social** situations. They can be used to learn new routines, activities, and how to respond appropriately to feelings like anger and frustration. While studies are currently assessing the effectiveness of **social stories**, they appear to be a promising method for improving the **social** behaviors of autistic individuals.

What does research say about social stories?

Research to date indicates that **social stories** may be effective in improving adaptive behavior or reducing problem behavior, especially if used with applied behavior analysis methods. However, children on the autism spectrum will only benefit from this approach if they are able to communicate in sentences that connect different ideas to each other.

Several studies with small groups of school age children on the autism spectrum have reported benefits from using **social stories** (Mirenda 2001). **Social stories** are seen as effective as long as they are suited to the child's communication skills (Richards 2000). As with many interventions for Autism Spectrum Disorders, more empirical research with larger numbers of children involved is needed to fully qualify **social stories** as an evidence-based intervention.

Continued on page 7.

Examples of social sentences

Not listening

It's important to look at people and stop what I'm doing when they have something to tell me.
Sometimes grown-ups tell me very important things that I need to know.
If I don't look & listen I might miss something important and make the grown-ups angry.
I know it's wrong to keep doing what I'm doing when grown-ups want me to listen.
I will listen to grown-ups when they talk to me.

Tuning into people

I only think about what people are saying or doing.
When I remember to do this, I make friends and I know what's going on.
If I think about other things I can get distracted, I might even get stuck.
People will think I'm weird and they won't want to play with me.
I will always think about what people are saying and doing.



Interrupting

I can't interrupt when others are having a conversation or are busy with something.
It's not polite
If it's extremely important, I can tap the person on the shoulder and say excuse me, otherwise I must be patient and wait until they're finished.
Interrupting makes people angry because you stop them from talking and they might forget what they were talking about.
Everyone deserves to talk without being interrupted.
Grown-ups like polite children
They're especially proud of children who do not interrupt.
Sometimes I might think it's important and the grown-up will tell me it's not. If that happens, I need to wait patiently.

Personal space

When I talk to people I need to give them their space and stay away from their faces.
When people come too close it makes other people uncomfortable.
Everybody needs space.
When I make people uncomfortable, they want to get away from me.
They might not want to ever talk to me again.
When I give people enough space, I get to play with and talk to people, I make friends and have fun.

Time out

Sometimes grown-ups send me to a timeout when I don't listen.
What are you supposed to do in a timeout?
What do grown-ups think if you don't listen? A: They think I don't know how to listen.
I can control myself so I don't get timeouts
I can listen to grown-ups.

SOCIAL NARRATIVES

[Classroom Support Materials](#)

Social Narratives

It is our goal to develop a bank of Social Narratives for professionals to draw from. Please contribute to the bank, it will help not only students but your fellow professionals as well! To contribute, please email your submission to kthomas3@kumc.edu. Some of the narratives use icons from Mayer-Johnson LLC. The Picture Communication Symbols ©1981–2007 by Mayer-Johnson LLC. All Rights Reserved Worldwide. Used with permission. Boardmaker™ is a trademark of Mayer-Johnson LLC.

Social Narratives are stories developed to provide learners with insight into social situations. The narrative emphasizes the significant social cues of given social situations. The story provides the learner with examples of appropriate social responses. The value of the social narrative is that they allow educators to pre-teach social situations and provide learners with strategies to respond to those situations. The narrative must be individualized to the learner's needs and interests. Gray (1993; 1995), has identified 6 sentence types (descriptive, directive, perspective, affirmative, control, and cooperative) to construct a social narrative. The Social Narrative Bank provides users with a number of social stories to choose from. The narratives in the bank are in many different formats: Microsoft Powerpoint, Boardmaker, Microsoft Word and PDF. Feel free to use the narratives as they are presented or to individualize according to student need. The National Professional Development Center on Autism Spectrum Disorders (NPDC) has identified Social Narratives as an Evidenced Based Practice. To download the NPDC's Brief Package on Social Narratives please go to: <http://autismpdc.fpg.unc.edu/content/social-narratives>

Please use the following link to access the social narratives already written and available.

<http://www.kansasasd.com/socialnarratives.php>



IPAD APPS & WEBSITES

*Columbia Regional Program has an amazing resource on their website on Social Narratives.

Click or type in the following web link. The password is **crp** to open the live binder.

http://www.livebinders.com/play/play/1503388?backurl=%2Fshelf%2Ffeatured&play_view=play&utf8=%E2%9C%93

*Michelle Garcia Winner has a Facebook page that her company, Social Thinking posts great information and suggestions weekly. The link is: <https://www.facebook.com/socialthinking/>.

Social Story Creator and Library App by Touch Autism

An amazing app for easily creating, sharing and printing educational social stories, visual schedules, and beautiful memories.

Children with special needs often need more direct instruction of social skills. Teaching social skills to any child may be easier and less stressful when visual supports, like social stories are used. The social stories found in this app explain accurate social information and ensures that your child will know what to expect in different situations.

<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/social-stories-creator-and-library/id588180598?mt=8>



2017 Summer Camps and Programs for Kids with Autism and Special Needs

The following camps target kids with special needs. Go to their websites or contact organizations directly for more detailed information. You can also contact your local Parks and Recreation Department or OSU's KidSpirit Camps (<http://kidspirit.oregonstate.edu/summercamp>) for information about camps available to the general population. Additionally, check out the local Bricks for Kids program (<http://www.bricks4kidz.com/oregon-corvallis-albany/>) or Aerospace Camp (<https://www.cwunesspcamp.com/>) in Central Washington, which revolve around Legos, engineering, science and other areas of interest to many kids with ASD.

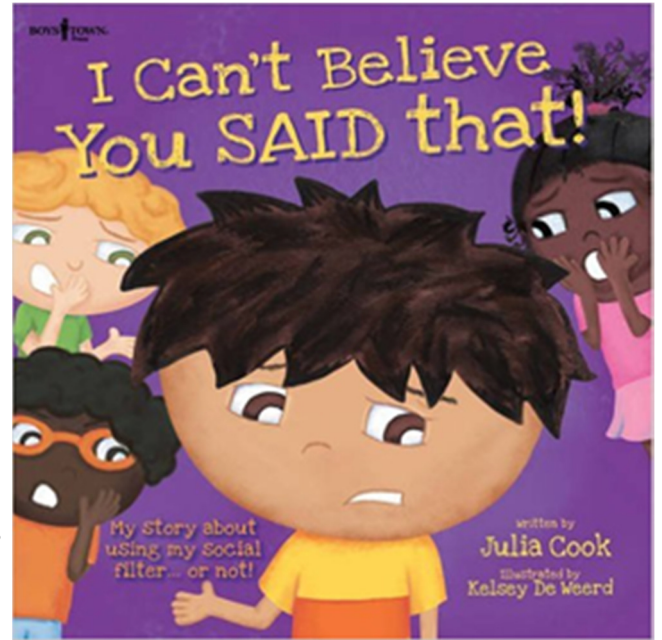


Camp & Location	Description	Website/Contact Info	Ages/Population	Session Dates/Times	Registration Deadline
Yes I Can Learning Camp Corvallis, OR	Day camp (also provides year-round tutoring services)	http://yesicanlearningstrategies.com/ Contact Shirley Irwin at yesican@shirleyirwin.com	Grades 3 – 5 Students of all kinds with learning struggles	TBD (contact Shirley Irwin or check website in the future)	TBD
Camp Odakoda Falls City, OR	Overnight	http://www.asdoregon.org/	Ages 10 – 18 High-functioning ASD or similar disorder	August 15-19	ONGOING, but fills up quickly Financial assistance
Camp Attitude Foster, OR	Overnight	http://www.campattitude.com/	All ages/entire family. A “unique Christian camping experience.”	Various week-long sessions, June 25 - August 11	ONGOING Scholarships available
B’Nai B’Rith Camp - Kehila Special Needs Program Lincoln City, OR	Overnight/Day	http://bbcamp.org/kehila/	Ages 4-16 All disabilities Based in Jewish values, but all welcome	TBD (check website, which will be updated for 2017)	TBD
Autism Rocks Friends & Family Camp Florence, OR	Overnight, (provides other events year-round)	http://www.kindtree.org/retreat	All ages/entire family People with autism, parents, caregivers	August 24-27	August 7 Financial assistance
Easter Seals Upward Bound Lyons, OR	Overnight	http://www.easterseals.com/oregon/our-programs/camping-recreation/	Ages 7 and up All types of disabilities	July 9 - 13 (ages 7-24) July 16 -20 (25 & up)	May 1 (for cheaper rate) Financial assistance
Camp Yakety-Yak Lake Oswego, OR	Day camp	http://www.campyaketyyak.org/	Ages 5 – 15 High-functioning ASD or similar Siblings and peers welcome	5 week-long themed sessions 10:00 AM – 3:00 PM (Extended care available)	ONGOING Discounts and partial scholarships
Mt. Hood Kiwanis Mt. Hood, OR	Overnight	http://www.mhkc.org/index.php	Ages 11 and up All types of disabilities	Various sessions See schedule on website	FIRST COME, FIRST SERVE Financial assistance
Blue Compass Camps Seattle, WA	Overnight	http://www.bluecompasscamps.com/	Ages 10 – adult Asperger's and high-functioning autism	Various sessions in Washington See schedule on website	ONGOING

I Can't Believe You Said That! My Story About Using My Social Filter...or Not!

By Julia Cook

RJ says what he thinks . . . no matter how it sounds or makes others feel. His mouth is getting him into a lot of trouble. A rude comment at school earned him a detention. An insensitive remark at home earned him a scolding and made his sister cry. RJ doesn't realize his words are wrong. He thinks he's just offering feedback. It's time RJ starts using a social filter when he speaks. With help from his parents, he learns he doesn't have to verbalize every thought that pops into his head. In fact, sometimes the less said the better! The newest addition to the Best Me I Can Be! Series offers help for children who say inappropriate things.



Social Rules for Kids: The Top 100 Social Rules Kids Need to Succeed

by Susan Diamond



Social Rules for Kids: The Top 100 Social Rules Kids Need to Succeed is an invaluable resource for any child, age 7-14, needing a detailed yet easy-to-read map to help navigate the social world. The rules address unspoken social expectations, explicitly laying out what do in specific social situations at home, at school and in the community. Each rule is laid out in a list format on one page, starting with a short introduction, followed by concise steps with scripts when applicable, and ending with a take-away message ("Remember:...") Current topics, such as the internet and video games, are used as examples to help with social interactions that are relevant to today's students. Examples of rules include: Use a Friendly Greeting, Don't Be a Turn Hog, Be a Good Sport, No Means No, Be Funny But Not Too Silly, and many more.

Linn Benton Lincoln Educational Service District and the Cascade Regional Autism Staff are partnering with the Newport High School ECEL program to present our Second Annual Autism Resource and Transition Event



“Knowledge Builds Hope” and Lincoln County Transition Fair

April 14, 2017
4:00-7:00PM

Newport High School-West Gym
322 NE Eads St.
Newport, OR 97365

This event will offer you an opportunity to see what community resources are available to support all individuals with disabilities.

We will have a variety of organizations that offer social skills, physical therapy options, support groups, Developmental Disabilities, Vocational Rehabilitation, etc.
This is just a brief sample of who you will be available to meet and visit with.

If you have any questions please contact: Michelle Neilson 541-812-2678 or Babe Brown 541-574-2244.



Linn Benton Lincoln ESD
Cascade Regional Autism Program

905 4th Ave SE
Albany, Or. 97321

Tel: 541- 812-2600
Fax: 541 926-6047
E-mail: webmaster@lblead.k12.or.us

Autism Consultants:

Skye McCloud- skye.mccloud@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2663

Sue Taylor- sue.taylor@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2676

Melissa Bermel- melissa.bermel@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2773

Amanda Stenberg- amanda.stenberg@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2676

Scott Bradley- scott.bradley@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2677

Michelle Neilson- michelle.neilson@lblead.k12.or.us
541-812-2678

VISUALS

