

# How-To Templates

## Social Narratives

Sometimes individuals on the autism spectrum can be particularly challenged in everyday situations. Social narratives are an easy way to help the individual work through these challenges. Social narratives are inspired by social stories by Carol Gray and have been used by a variety of professionals. They can be used for a variety of situations, including preparing individuals for new experiences, explaining complex social situations, or coaching individuals through difficult skills.

Social narratives often begin with factual statements of what the individual may encounter or experience in given situations. The narrative then often progresses with information about why the situation might occur, how it might be difficult and choices for how the individual might respond to the situation when it does occur.

Social narratives can be suited to a variety of reading and interest levels by varying the amount and complexity of information presented on each page. They generally include simple text and are written in first-person (from the individual's point of view). When appropriate, pictures can be used to supplement the text. They are most useful with individuals who can sit and attend to a narrative. Social narratives are not appropriate for everyone.

### To Make:

1. Choose the situation of focus and the reading level of the individual.
2. Make a title page with a simple title (e.g., I Can Stand in a Line).
3. Using first-person text, describe the context of the situation in a few sentences (e.g., Sometimes people have to wait in lines. People wait in lines at stores, in restaurants, and even at school).
4. Describe the emotions/common responses of the individual during the situation in 2-3 sentences (e.g., Waiting in lines can be hard. Sometimes I want to skip to the front of the line or I want to yell and cry about having to stand in a line.)
5. Describe the appropriate response to the situation and various options the individual has (e.g., I will try my best to wait my turn and stand in the line. I will try to remember not to yell and cry about the line. If it is really hard for me to wait in line, I can tell my parents or my teachers and they will try to help me.)
6. Give 1-2 finishing sentences (e.g., Waiting in lines is something I will have to do sometimes. It can be hard to wait in line, but I will try my best to wait).
7. Re-read it to ensure it make sense.



Christian Sarkine Autism Treatment Center  
IU™ School of Medicine

[www.HANDSinAutism.org](http://www.HANDSinAutism.org)  
[hands@iupui.edu](mailto:hands@iupui.edu)  
Tel: (317)274-2675  
Fesler Hall (IUPUI)  
1120 South Dr., Ste. 302  
Indianapolis, IN 46202

Also, check out...

How-To Video: Choice Board

How-To Template: Choice Board  
How-To Template: Topic Boards  
How-To Template: Activity Schedules

Kid's Corner Series:  
Life with ASD Series  
Academia Series  
Strategies in Practice Series

View/download these and other templates at [www.HANDSinAutism.org/tools/HowToTemplates.html](http://www.HANDSinAutism.org/tools/HowToTemplates.html)

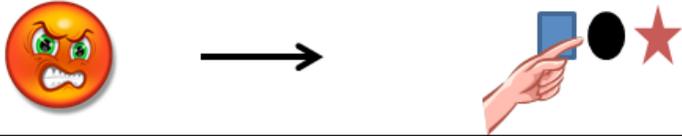


**Materials provided are samples only!**  
**They may need to be individualized to meet the particular needs of a person with an ASD!**

To use a Social Narrative:

1. Create a quiet time to sit with the individual.
2. Explain that you are going to read a narrative together.
3. Read the narrative (or have the individual read the narrative).
4. Answer any questions, if the individual has any.
5. Try to make time to review the narrative multiple times prior to encountering the challenging situation.
6. Have the narrative available for reference during the challenging situation.

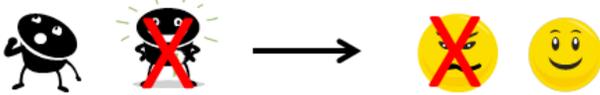
Sample Social Narrative Pages:

<h2>Sometimes I Get Angry</h2> 
<p>Sometimes I get angry.</p> 
<p>When I get angry, I have different choices I can make.</p> 
<p>One of my choices is to tell mom I am angry.</p> 
<p>Another choice is to go to my safe place</p> 
<p>Telling mom when I am angry or going to my safe place are good choices!</p> 
<p>Everyone is proud of me when I make good choices!</p> 

**Taking a Plane**

Soon we will go on a trip on a plane.  
 First we will go to the airport.  
 We will give some of our bags to the people at the airport - they put them on the plane for us.  
 We cannot see those bags when we are on the plane because they are kept in a special spot.  
 Next, we will wait in a line to get to the place where our plane is.  
 We take off our shoes and put any other bags we have on a special counter.  
 The bags and shoes will go through a machine and we will get them back in a few minutes.  
 We will all walk through a special door.  
 On the other side of the door we put our shoes on and get our bags again.  
 Next we walk to a room with lots of chair.  
 I will wait until my mom and dad tell me it is time to get on the plane.  
 I will walk with my family down a long hallway onto the plane.  
 My mom and dad will show me where to sit.  
 I will buckle my seat belt so I am safe.  
 When it is time, the plane backs up and drives to a special airplane road.  
 Then, it drives very fast and goes up into the air - we are flying!

Sample Social Narrative Pages:

<p><b>It's okay if others win!</b></p> 
<p>Sometimes when I play games, I win. Sometimes I do not win.</p> 
<p>It is okay. No one wins all the time.</p> 
<p>If I see that someone else has won, I will try to stay calm.</p> 
<p>I will try to take a deep breath. This will help me stay calm.</p> 
<p>I can also use words to tell my parents or teachers that I am upset.</p> 
<p>I can say, "That makes me mad!" or "I'm upset!"</p> 
<p>It is okay to use words about how I feel.</p> 
<p>It is okay to be sad that I did not win. Winning is not the most important thing.</p> 
<p>What is important is being nice and having fun! My parents and teachers will be very happy to see me being nice when others win.</p> 