

# Social Stories

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Social Stories may be used to address an infinite number of topics. Social Stories are often written in response to a troubling situation, in an effort to provide a person with ASD with social information he may be lacking. For example, parents may notice their child has difficulty riding in the car, playing with other children, or expressing emotions. Sometimes, a person with ASD asks a question or makes a comment that indicates he is "misreading" a given situation, and a Social Story is developed.

Social Stories have another purpose that is equally important: acknowledging achievement. In fact, a child's first Social Story should describe a skill or situation that is *typically successful and problem-free*. Written praise may be far more meaningful for children with ASD than its verbal counterpart. At least half of the Social Stories developed for a child with ASD should bring attention to positive achievements. This creates a permanent record of what a child does well: information that is important in building a positive self-esteem.

The following are some examples of Social Stories:

## Topic of Story: *Affirmation!*

(In considering writing Social Stories, Do keep in mind that at least 50 percent of all the stories developed for any person should congratulate or applaud current skills/abilities/personality traits/ or concepts that the person does well.)

### **Awesome Respectful and Friendly Moves by Kurt!**

This article is like an Award for Kurt. Adults at Maplewood have noticed times when Kurt makes the very best, most massively excellent choices about what to say and do!

What makes them MOST impressive is that Kurt listened and cooperated with others who had a problem to solve, even when he might have felt a little disappointed. That is very grown up!

One time, Kurt wanted a YoYo™. It would have been nice to get the YoYo right away, but, there was a problem. They ran out of YoYos. They told Kurt about the problem. He may have felt a little sad or disappointed. He was also in control. He listened and cooperated, and soon he had his YoYo. The adults were so impressed with Kurt's maturity.

Another time, Kurt needed to put one of the books back at the Book Fair. This also may have been disappointing for Kurt. It would make many children feel sad. Once again, Kurt was in control. He listened and put the book back, with lots of respect for others. What a grown up and helpful response!

Respect at Maplewood is important. When Kurt shows respect to others, and stays in control, he's a Respect at Maplewood Team Player!

Topic of Story: *Understanding POSSESSION*

**Understanding possession**

My name is \_\_\_\_\_. I am an awesome person. Part of being an awesome person is learning about possession, and respecting the possessions of others.

Possession is a word people use to describe things that belong to someone, OR things that a person is currently using.

**One kind of possession is those things that BELONG to me.** Sometimes I have a birthday, and people give me presents. At Christmas, I also receive presents. Sometimes, I may save my own money to buy something. These things BELONG to me because I own them. They were given to me, or I bought them. Many times, people write their names on things that belong to them.

These items that belong to me are things that are in my POSSESSION. I don't have to be holding them at the time. Items that I own are sometimes in my room. It's important for people to ask to use things that belong to me. That shows respect for the things that are mine. Then, it is my choice whether they use them or not.

Sometimes, there may be an item that I would like to use or play with that BELONGS to someone else. I may ask if I may borrow the item. Borrowing means using an item for a short time and returning it. The person who owns the item may say, "No." This is their choice. This is okay. The person who owns the item might say, "Yes."

**Some items are for everyone to share.** This means that someone may use an item, leave it, and then another person may use it. Or, two people may use the same item together. They have possession of the item only for the time they are using it. After that, another person may have a chance to use it. Sometimes, having possession of an item means that it is to use or to share, but it belongs to everyone in the family, or everyone in the classroom.

Topic of Story: *Expressing/Controlling Anger*

**Being Angry is Okay: It's Important What I Do and Say**

It's okay to feel angry. All people feel angry now and then. As children become older, they learn safe ways to handle anger. This is very, very, very, very, very important. Handling anger responsibly helps to keep everyone safe.

It's important to keep thinking when angry. Some people may forget to think about the right thing to do when they are angry. They may make mistakes with their anger. It is a good thing that as people get older they learn to make good choices EVEN WHILE THEY ARE ANGRY. This, of course, is a very mature and grown-up thing to do.

Even when children are very, very, very, very, very angry they can learn to keep thinking so that they make good choices. Knowing what to think is important. Here are three things that mature, intelligent children like me learn to think when they are angry:

1. **I will not be angry for long.** I spend more time happy than I do angry. I will feel happy once again.

2. **There is a solution to this problem.** Talking to others is really the only good way to find these solutions.

3. **It's possible to have a bad time during a good day.** Sometimes children feel angry or sad for a short time, but they know the good day will return. This is especially true when children make good choices while angry.

When I am angry, I can choose from this list what to say or do:

1. **Take deep breaths or a break.** Experts on anger say that taking deep breaths or a walk increases oxygen to the brain, making it easier to think and make good choices.

2. **Use words to let others know I am angry.** I may tell others I am angry by talking or writing things down.

3. **Keep other people and things safe at all times.** This means keeping my hands, feet, and fingers safely under my control.

Sometimes, children make serious mistakes with anger. They may decide to kick or hit other people. They may decide to throw things. Sometimes very, very young children do this. These very young children think hitting and kicking will let everyone know how angry they are. When a child gets older, and they still kick or hit, people wonder why that child is deciding to do what usually only very young children do. By the time children are in third grade, they make very calm, intelligent, safe decisions when they are angry. They stay in control ALL of the time. I am learning to do this, too. More and more, I stay calm and keep thinking and working with others when I am angry. This is a very intelligent and mature thing to do!

Topic of Story: *Pretend Examples in School Work*

### **Pretend Examples in School Work**

My name is Dillon. I go to Franklin School.

Sometimes, I may have an assignment in math. I may have story problems. To do a story problem, children have to pretend. *Pretend* means it may not be true in terms of what I usually say or do. *Pretending* means using our intelligence to *imagine* what we would do to solve the problem.

This may mean we *pretend* to like foods that we really don't in real life, or that we *pretend* to like things or activities that we really don't. *The good news* about pretending is that I won't ever in my life have to *really like to eat* those foods, or *really like those things or activities*. I will try to pretend enough so that I can complete my work.

I can try to tell myself that to complete my work, I only have to pretend for a short amount of time.