



Social Stories in the context of COVID-19

Social Stories™ by Carol Gray are short descriptions of a situation, event or activity, which include specific information about what to expect in that situation and why.

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) often find uncertainty challenging. We use Social Stories to support individuals to develop more certainty about a situation. This often results in increased emotional security and containment and decreased anxiety.

At this time, creating personalised Social Stories for pupils will be a helpful way to prepare them for their return to school.

This information sheet is designed to help adults to do this. It is important to amend the structure in line with the individual's strengths and needs being mindful of; interests, understanding, age/developmental stage, emotional wellbeing, and other personally relevant factors.

Social Stories feature a title, main body and conclusion, outlining the who, what, where, when, how and why. Sentences must be short and factual and not include opinions. Social Stories must feature descriptive sentences and can feature those that are coaching. These coaching sentences fit nicely with the overall safe and non-judgemental tone of Social Stories. More information can be found here:

- [COVID-19 specific resources including Social Stories \(STARS\)](https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/)
- <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/social-stories/>
- <https://www.autism.org.uk/about/strategies/social-stories-comic-strips.aspx>

A POSSIBLE STRUCTURE

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Many children have been at home and not in school. This is because the government made some changes. They did this because of the coronavirus. Some more people are going back to school soon. This is because the government made some more changes.

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Lots of things in school will look the same (insert actual photos/video). Some things will look different (insert actual photos and video). The different things are there to help us stay as safe as possible (explain what e.g. the tape on the floor shows where people will sit. This means we will be further apart than usual- show dinner hall, playground, classrooms etc).

Not all of my class will be in school. The new rules mean we can't have lots of children in school at the same time (insert photo of their desk and other desks to show how many could attend).

I might see people waving and putting their thumbs up. They might do this instead of holding hands or high fiving.

I will see people washing their hands more often. I will see people cleaning things more often. This is very important. Some of the adults might wear masks (insert a photo of known adult wearing a mask).

Some people feel excited about going back to school. Some people feel worried. Some people feel both things. All feelings are ok. The adults might ask me about these. They care about my feelings.

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I will try to remember to follow the rules. The adults will help me do this (**coaching sentence**). We don't know how long things will be different for. We hope to know more soon. My family and teachers will tell me when they know.