

## **INSTRUCTIONS FOR CREATING A PERSONALIZED SOCIAL STORY**

A social story is a fun and powerful tool in helping to address specific social challenges that your child may encounter. Creating a perfect “textbook” social story is not the primary goal; rather it is to create a story that will help your child develop appropriate social behaviors to navigate through specific social situations in a positive and enriching way.

Below are 5 Easy to Follow Guidelines to Creating your very own personalized social story:

- 1) **Star of the Show** – Create your social story together with your child making him/her the “STAR” of the show. Personalize the story by using photos of your child. Literally seeing themselves in the story makes the stories themselves much more meaningful and the lesson more concrete. Also, if your child loves to draw leave space on each page for that to be included. Your child will take greater ownership in the story when he/she has a hand in helping to create it.
- 2) **Reality Works** - It is always best to use real-life pictures to make the social story as realistic as possible. So, snap some photos and/or find pictures of people, places and activities he/she will be experiencing.
- 3) **One and Done** - Identify one specific social situation, behavior, or skill to focus-on in each story.
- 4) **Me, Myself, and I** – Write the story from your child’s perspective. These stories are typically written in the first-person. Include personal information about your child; focus on facts about his/her situation; and describe what he/she should do (expected behavior) in the situation. Children can more easily identify with the lesson of the story when it is written from his/her point of view.
- 5) **Fun is #1** – Most of all, make the process from creating the social story to reviewing it a wonderfully fun and rewarding experience for you and your child.

### **Recommendations/Considerations to be used before, during and after Creating a Social Story:**

- ✓ Be sure to tailor the story to your child’s abilities and attention span.
- ✓ Identify one specific social situation, behavior, or skill to focus on in each story.
- ✓ The story should be written from the child’s perspective.
- ✓ Personalize the story by using photos of your child and include his/her original artwork.
- ✓ Use real-life pictures to make the story as realistic as possible.
- ✓ Be sure to read the story together when your child is calm and relaxed.
- ✓ Read and re-read the story multiple times with your child before the social interaction.
- ✓ Review the story after the social situation. Be sure to give your child super positive praise throughout the review.

