

Supporting New Social Situations

Social Scripts: What Are They?

Social scripts are visual aids that can be used as a learning tool to share information about expected behaviour in a social interaction or situation. Scripts typically involve a series of visual cues that can improve understanding and teach appropriate responses in various social situations. Visual scripts can be used to assist in understanding social situations, solving problems, and preparing conversations.

Example situations include:

- ◆ greeting new people
- ◆ dealing with change in routines
- ◆ participating and taking turns in play
- ◆ asking for help

Why Use Social Scripts?

- ◆ To promote understanding of social norms.
- ◆ To improve social behaviour by making exceptions clear. To provide information about rules and boundaries in social situations.
- ◆ To improve learning of perspective taking skills.



If I want to play, I can
WALK UP to them



Say: CAN I PLAY?



If they say no, I can
WALK AWAY and ask
someone else



If they say yes, I can
have fun and PLAY



How to Use These Tools?

1. Use photos, drawings, symbols or even video to support social scripts.
2. Explain what to expect in social situations (e.g., “People will say hello to me when I arrive at Grandma’s”).
3. Provide examples of how to respond, or what to do in these situations (e.g., “I can say hello back”).
4. Keep language positive (e.g., Include “I will use nice words” instead of “I won’t swear”).
5. To allow for flexibility, use words that aren’t too specific such as sometimes, usually, and often.
6. Try to include how to respond to likely hiccups (e.g., “Mom might be busy so I need to wait”).
7. Read the scripts with the person often to promote understanding.

Considerations

1. Although this strategy can be helpful to some, it may not be useful for all.
2. Involve the learner in choosing words, pictures, and creating the script.
3. Regularly check for understanding and progressed learning, then adjust scripts as needed.
4. Be sure to make several copies for multiple environments and situations.

