

# Dental Visit Stories

## *My Experience*

*A Resource for Patients*



## Definition and Purpose

Dental Visit Stories are short, simple narratives, often with pictures, that describe what will happen during a dental appointment.

- Social Stories: Originating from Carol Gray's evidence-based Social Stories™ framework, these narratives are adapted here for dental settings.
- They help patients, especially those with intellectual and developmental disabilities (IDD), understand and feel prepared for dental visits.
- The goal is to reduce anxiety, improve communication, and promote positive dental experiences.

This tool can help:

- **Reduce appointment anxiety** by previewing the visit step-by-step.
- **Support communication** between patients, caregivers, and dental staff.
- **Equip office managers** with ready-to-share resources for patients.
- **Provide care partners** with a concrete way to rehearse dental routines.



## *Tip!*

### Searching Online

Use search terms such as “dental visit story,” “social story dentist,” “dental social narrative,” or “visual dental guide” to find additional or updated resources.

# How to Use This Tool

- **Office Managers:** Share the most relevant *Dental Visit Story* links with families before the appointment or keep printed copies in the office or create your own!
- **Care Partners/ Support Person:** Review dental visit stories with your loved one or the person you're supporting ahead of time and bring a printed copy (or show it on a device) to the visit.
- **Patients:** Read through the stories to see what your dental visit will be like and use it as a comfort tool on appointment day.

## Pediatric Social Stories

### Pathfinders for Autism – Social Stories for Going to the Dentist

- Collection of children-focused social stories (e.g., "My Visit to the Dentist," "Taking Your Son/Daughter with ASD to the Dentist") from various providers like HANDS in Autism, Ability Path, pediatric clinics.
- <https://pathfindersforautism.org/articles/healthcare/social-stories-for-going-to-the-dentist/>

### Ocean Pediatric Dental Associates – "My Dental Social Story" (PDF)

- A doctor-approved, child-friendly narrative with clear visuals explaining what to expect during a dental visit.
- <https://oceanpediatricdental.com/wp-content/uploads/2022/05/social-story.pdf>

### PAAutism.org – Dentist Social Stories

- Visual stories covering going to the dentist, cleanings, X-rays, fillings, developed with dental professionals, shown in slide format.
- <https://paautism.org/resource/dentist-social-stories/>

### And Next Comes L – Free Dental Social Stories for Kids

- A blog-style roundup of printable and video stories, covers checkups, X-rays, fillings, cavities, and more.
- <https://www.andnextcomesl.com/2022/12/free-social-stories-about-going-to-the-dentist.html>

# Adult & Mixed-Age Social Stories

## Advocate Health (ADSC Resources) – "Going to the Dentist" for Down Syndrome & Adults

- A bank of PDF social stories covering dentist visits, cleanings, X-rays, cavity care tailored for adults with Down syndrome or developmental disabilities.
- <https://adscreources.advocatehealth.com/resources/>
- <https://adscreources.advocatehealth.com/resources/?category=Oral%20Health>

## Advocate Health – Affordable Sensory Equipment

- Not a story itself, but the resource guide listing inexpensive tools to support sensory comfort for patients (children & adults) (though focus is broader).
- Social Stories: <https://adscreources.advocatehealth.com/resources/going-to-the-dentist-social-stories/>
- Affordable Sensory Equipment: [Affordable Sensory Equipment | Adult Down Syndrome Center](#)

## How- To Create Your Own Social Story or Appointment Story

- **Social Stories 10.4 Criteria:** <https://lifeskillsadvocate.com/blog/how-to-write-a-social-story/>
- **Social Stories & Concepts: A Quick At-Home Course:**  
<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/resources/social-stories-concepts-a-quick-at-home-course/>
- **The Positive Power of a Social Story:**  
<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/resources/the-positive-power-of-a-social-story-2/>
- **There is ALWAYS a Schedule:** <https://carolgraysocialstories.com/resources/there-is-always-a-schedule-by-carol-gray/>
- **Is This a Social Story? A Self-Quiz:**  
<https://carolgraysocialstories.com/resources/is-this-a-social-story-a-self-quiz/>
- **And Next Comes L:** <https://www.andnextcomesl.com/2017/03/how-to-write-social-stories.html>
- **Life Skills Advocate:** <https://lifeskillsadvocate.com/blog/how-to-write-a-social-story/>