

ABSTRACT

Since Carol Gray introduced the use of Social Stories to handle problematic social behaviors for children with autism in 1991, there have been a few studies investigating its effectiveness. Previous studies, which strictly followed Gray's guidelines, have provided some empirical support to the use of Social Stories in natural environment. Although Gray argued that "perspective-taking" component was the most essential component based on reason and experience, exactly what makes a Social Story work remains unknown. Therefore, besides investigating the effectiveness of Social Story, a more important goal of the present study was to answer the question: whether teaching the autistic children "how to react" in the social story format is *sufficient* to initiate behavioral changes. The third goal was to investigate if treatment effects could be maintained after the stories being faded.

A multiple-baseline design across three high functioning autistic children was employed with the Social Stories being implemented in two phases with the "perspective" component being added in at the second phase. Results indicated that Social Story was effective in decreasing the inappropriate social behaviors of all three participants, for at least two months after fading, while the greatest change occurred in the first phase of treatment. This suggested that "perspective" component might not be a necessary component for Social Stories to be effective. Implications to the use of Social Stories, directions for future studies and limitation of this research were also discussed.