

Comic Strip Conversations

What are Comic Strip Conversations?

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have trouble interpreting social situations and understanding speech as quickly as most social interactions require. A Comic Strip Conversation is a conversation between two or more people using simple illustrations in a comic strip format. They show children how to behave in a socially acceptable manner and conform to social standards. The effectiveness can be enhanced by incorporating a child's favorite cartoon character (ex. SpongeBob, Superman, etc.) into the illustration.

How can Comic Strip Conversations be Used?

- to convey important information
- for problem-solving and conflict resolution
- to learn social skills
- to follow simple classroom rules
- to communicate perspectives, feelings and ideas

Elements of Comic Strip Conversations -

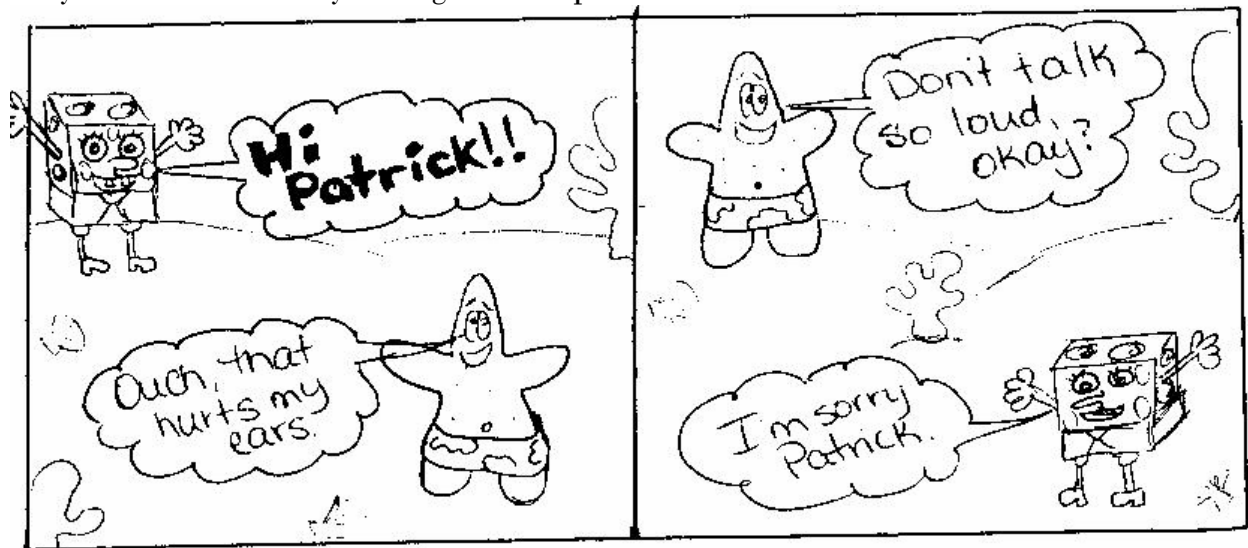
- a description of the event that caused the problem
- feelings and thoughts of everyone involved
- a solution to the problem and ideas on how to avoid it in the future
- reinforcement
- appropriate symbols (stick figures, smiley faces, thought bubbles)
- colors used to express feelings (green-happy, blue-sad, black-angry)

Other Helpful Hints -

The more involved the child is in creating his or her own comic strip conversation; the more helpful it will be in future situations. Make a book of comic strip frames, and after leading the child through several examples, have them create the conversations and solutions on their own. Keep the conversations and use them as a guide and reinforcement if the same, or similar, social situation occurs again.

Example -

Jimmy reacts inappropriately when people in his environment use a loud voice. His favorite show on TV is *Sponge Bob Square Pants*. This comic strip conversation was created to provide him with the appropriate response of "Ouch, that hurts my ears. Don't talk so loud, okay?" instead of Jimmy hitting the loud person in his environment.



Additional Resources -

- Gray, C. (1994) *Comic Strip Conversations*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons.
- Glaeser, B.C., Pierson, M.R., & Fritschmann, N. (2003). Comic strip conversations: A positive behavioral support strategy. *Teaching Exceptional Children*, 36(2), 14-19.
- Rogers, M.F. & Myles, B.S. (2001). Using social stories and comic strip conversations to interpret social situations for an adolescent with Asperger Syndrome. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 36(5), 310-313.



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