

FACT SHEET

COMIC STRIP CONVERSATIONS



A Comic Strip Conversation represents 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.

1 When can Comic Strip Conversations be Used?

Individuals with Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD) have trouble interpreting social situations and understanding speech as quickly as most social interactions require. The effectiveness of implementation can be increased by incorporating a child's favorite cartoon character (ex. SpongeBob, Superman, etc.) into the illustration.

Comic Strip Conversations can be used:

- To convey important information (what is said, how others in the conversation may feel, etc.)
- For problem-solving and conflict resolution
- To plan for future social situations
- To learn new social skills
- To follow simple classroom rules
- To communicate perspectives, feelings, and ideas

2 What are the elements of Comic Strip Conversation?

Comic Strip Conversations consist of:

- 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

3 Other helpful hints...

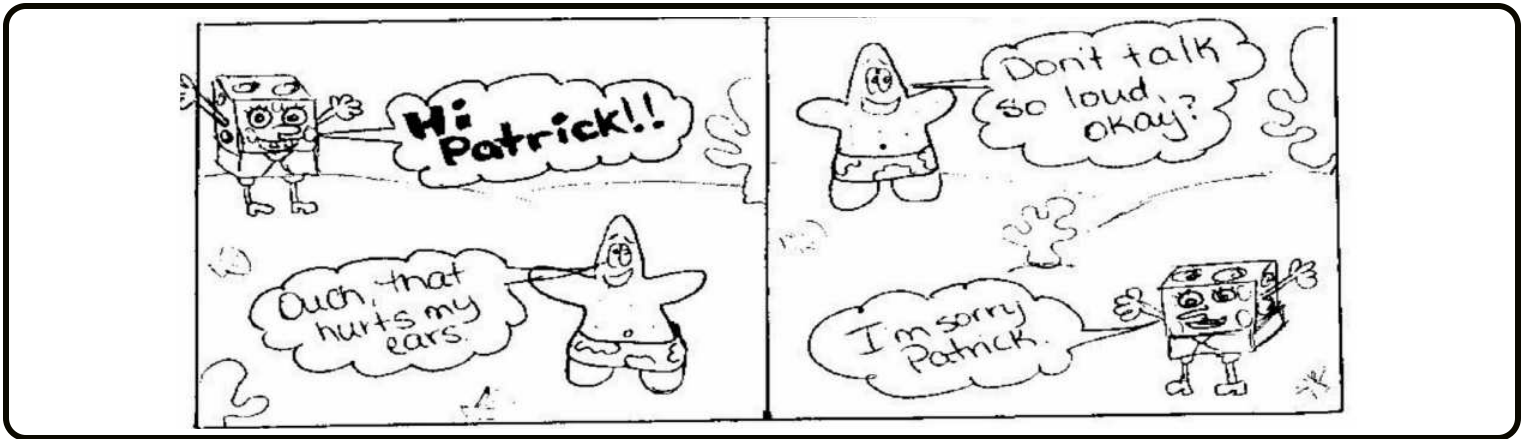
The more involved the child is in creating their own comic strip conversation, the more helpful it will be in future situations. Make a book of comic strip frames, and after leading the child through several examples, have them create the conversations and solutions on their own. Keep the conversations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

Consider these two questions prior to using comic strip conversation strategy with your learner:

1. Can the learner read and write?
2. Are they able to understand the different picture symbols and what they represent?

4 Example of a Comic Strip Conversation

Jimmy reacts inappropriately when people in his environment use a loud voice. His favorite show on TV is *SpongeBob SquarePants*. 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.



Feelings Color Guide:

Green- good ideas, happy, friendly
Red- bad ideas, anger
Blue- sad, uncomfortable
Yellow- scared, frightened
Black- facts, truth
Orange- questions
Brown- comfortable, cozy
Purple- proud
Rainbow- confusion

5 Steps for implementation:

Step 1: Teach your learner what the different symbols and colors mean in a Comic Strip Conversation.

Step 2: Engage in "small talk" conversation with your learner to practice drawing symbols to represent their thoughts and ideas.

Step 3: Guide your learner through the process by asking the following questions about the challenging situation:

- Where are you?
- Who else is here?
- What are you doing?
- What happened?
- What did others do?
- What did you say?
- What did others say?
- What did you think when you said that?
- What did others think when you said that?

Step 4: Summarize the challenging situation.

Step 5: Create a plan for how to respond appropriately in similar future situations.

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 adolescents with Asperger Syndrome. *Intervention in School and Clinic*, 36(5), 310-313.

Website:

<https://sparkingspeech.com/2020/06/27/understanding-the-unwritten-rules-comic-strip-conversations/>