

Social Stories for Preparing Tiny Humans

When children are in-the-know on plans and expectations, the alarm center of their brain is able to relax, and the child can feel autonomous over their own lives. We can offer information about what a child can expect through visuals.

This is a printable social story to help children understand the routine and expectations at the Polar Express event, so they can be fully present in the moment. Here's how to use this printable social story.

How to use this story:

- Download as a PDF and open on your phone.
- Read together with the child prior to heading to the Polar Express event. You might read it the night before going, and again the next morning.
- If your child requests to read again, follow their lead! Let them scroll through the pictures, make up their own story, or read to you.
- Bonus tip! Take photos while you're at the Polar Express event, and add them to the end of this PDF or print them.

The Polar Express



Photo by Leif Tillotson Photography

You're going to the Polar Express event! You get to ride a real train, and go to the North Pole. This pretend North Pole is actually in the Union Station building.



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

When you get there, you'll get a name tag and a golden ticket! Then you wait in line. Waiting can be hard.

While your family is waiting, what can you do?



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

A conductor with a lantern
will lead you to the train.
You'll climb aboard!



Photos by Leif Tillotson Photography

You'll sit at a table in the train. While you're there, chefs in white hats will bring you hot chocolate and cookies! You can say "no thank you" if you don't want to have them.



Photos by Stephen Mease Photography

There will be caroling on the train.

Caroling is when people sing together! You can sing or you can listen.

The Sensory Friendly train car will not have caroling.



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

When you get to the North Pole,
you'll see Elves in red shirts
outside.

They will cheer and say your
name! If you rode the Sensory
Friendly train car, the Elves will
quietly smile and wave to you.



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

When you go inside, you'll hear the madrigal choir sing and listen to a reading of the book, *The Polar Express*!



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

It's hard to see the pages of the book in a big space like this, so pictures will be on a screen, too. You'll hear sounds to go along with the story.



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

Then, Santa will appear! He'll go upstairs, and you can go up to visit him. You can take pictures with Santa or stand back and wave to him! If you don't want to see Santa, you can skip this part.



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

Santa will give every
child a silver bell, even if
you don't stop for a visit!



Photo by Stephen Mease Photography

After this, your time here is done!
You'll walk through a magic
door that brings you outside,
and then it's time to leave!

On your way home, talk about:

What parts were fun?

What was something unexpected?

What parts didn't you like?