

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:

- Print, cut, and staple the Social Story.
- 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.
- Make the book available for the child to access on their own, both before and after the event.
- Bonus tip! Take photos while you're at the Polar Express event, print them, and staple into the back of your printed Social Story.

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, you can...



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?

