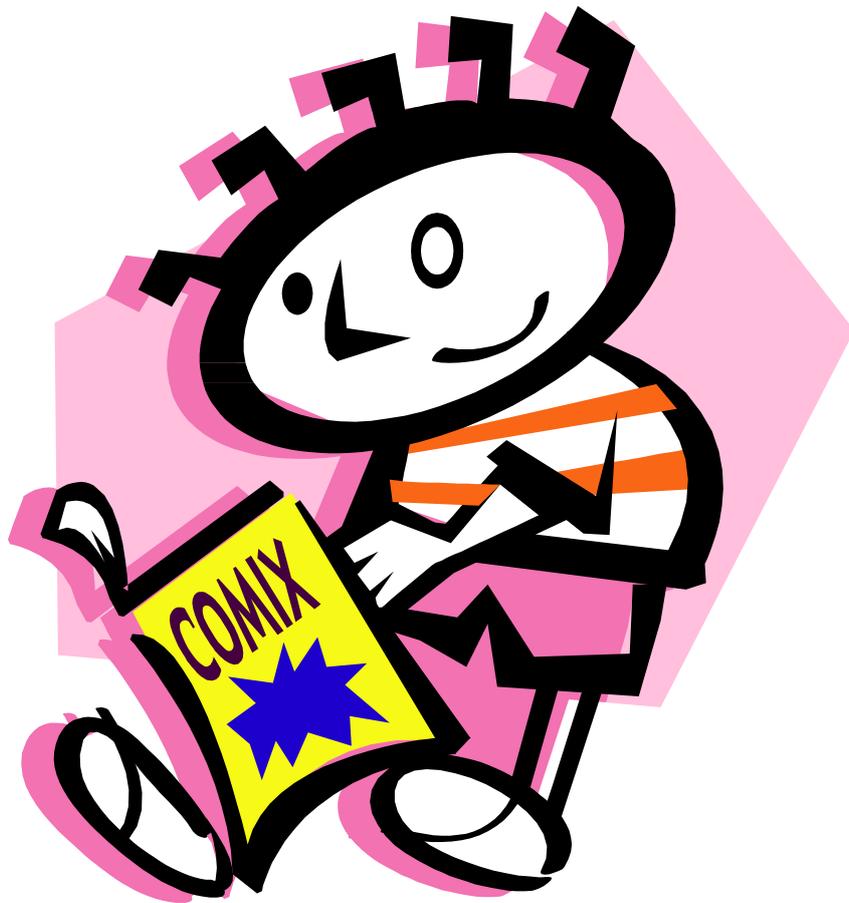


Comic Strip Conversations



Children & Families
The Autism Team

Inspired by Carol Gray's Comic Strip Conversations* method, Comic Strip Solutions are a very visual way to enable a pupil to:

- Review a social situation that was unsuccessful
- Reflect on what went wrong
- Think about the emotions felt by him, herself and others involved
- Understand why things went wrong
- Realise that his / her own actions may have been unhelpful
- Work out a different course of action for next time
- Successfully negotiate a similar situation in future

Working through an illustrated, stepped approach, they are particularly effective for pupils who are visual learners.

Using Comic Strip Solutions

After a social situation has gone wrong, wait until your child / pupil has calmed down. Provide a quiet space and individual support to enable him or her to reflect on the incident.

Explaining the incident in pictures...

Encourage the pupil to think about how the incident happened. He / She can draw a picture (or a few pictures if necessary) showing who was present, where they were and what was said or done to trigger the upset. If your child / pupil is not a confident artist, the adult can draw the pictures. Don't panic, stick figures will do!

Then produce another picture(s) to show how the situation developed and ended. In all pictures, add speech and thought bubbles to show what the participants were thinking, if known, and saying at the time of the incident. Colours can also be added to show emotional states e.g. red bubble to show an angry thought etc.

Discussing a 'happy ending'...

Draw your child / pupil's attention to the first picture again. Encourage him / her to think about what he / she could have done differently in order to change the outcome. What could he / she have said or done to produce a happy ending? Draw pictures in the same way. The 'happy ending' pictures could then be stuck like a flap over the original pictures so that your child / pupil can see the 'sad' comic strip and 'happy' comic strip.

Prompt your child / pupil to think about using the 'happy ending' strategy next time he / she encounters a similar situation in order to manage it successfully.

You can also role play the strategy as necessary to enable your child / pupil to feel confident about using it next time. You may wish to offer an incentive for trying it out and / or succeeding!

*For more information about Comic Strip Conversations see Carol Gray's book of the same name; ISBN no. 1-885477-22-8 or visit the Gray Center website at www.thegraycenter.org