

WHAT TO EXPECT: “MY CHRISTMAS SOCIAL STORY”

What Is a Social Story?

Social stories are tools that can be used to help individuals with autism learn what to expect and help prepare for certain social situations. This season leads to a lot of changes in routine and environment, so this holiday-themed social story is intended to help children prepare for some of the holiday “hoopla” leading up to the end of the year.

How to Prepare the Social Story:

We encourage you to personalize this piece, so we intentionally left blank spaces for you to make it your own. Write in your own family’s traditions from your child’s perspective and use your child’s photo whenever possible. You can also remove pages that are not applicable. While this is geared toward Christmas, you can also use it as a template to swap out the holiday name and themes for the holiday your family celebrates. If editing digitally, add your photos and text with help from a PDF editor (there are a number of apps that can help with this!).

How to Use Hopebridge’s Holiday Social Story:

This social story is easily downloadable and can be printed as a hard copy or digitally viewed on a tablet. Choose an appropriate time to introduce the story, ideally when your child seems open to learning. When you begin, read through the story several times and practice over multiple days. Discuss how it relates to your child’s real-life experiences. When it comes time to put these learnings into action, reinforce their expected behaviors with positive feedback.

Now let’s get to it ... head to the next page to begin the holiday social story:



MY CHRISTMAS



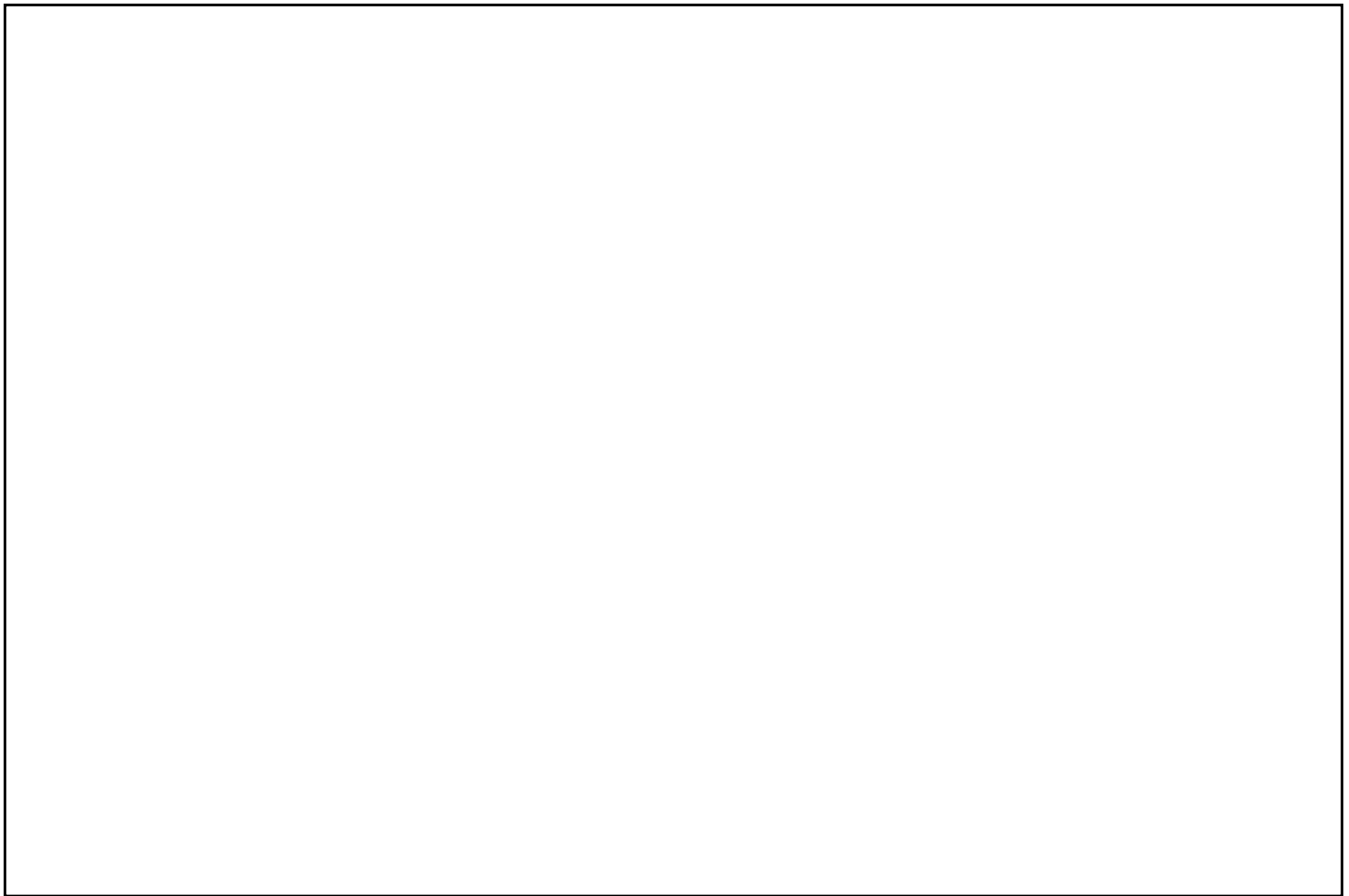
SOCIAL STORY



**It is almost Christmas.
Christmas time can be exciting.
It can also make me feel overwhelmed.**



**We see our family and friends
during Christmas.
When we see other people during Christmas,
it is nice to say, "Merry Christmas!"**



(Add a photo of your family's home at Christmas time or of your holiday decorations)

**Some of the Christmas decorations
we will have at our house this year are**

and



**People put wrapped presents
under the Christmas trees in their homes
to give to other people.
It can be exciting to see presents under the tree
that are for me or other people.**



**We will wait to open presents
until my _____ says it is time.
It can be hard to wait, but waiting
makes Christmas more fun.
If I start to feel frustrated I can ask to take
a break in my room or a safe place.**



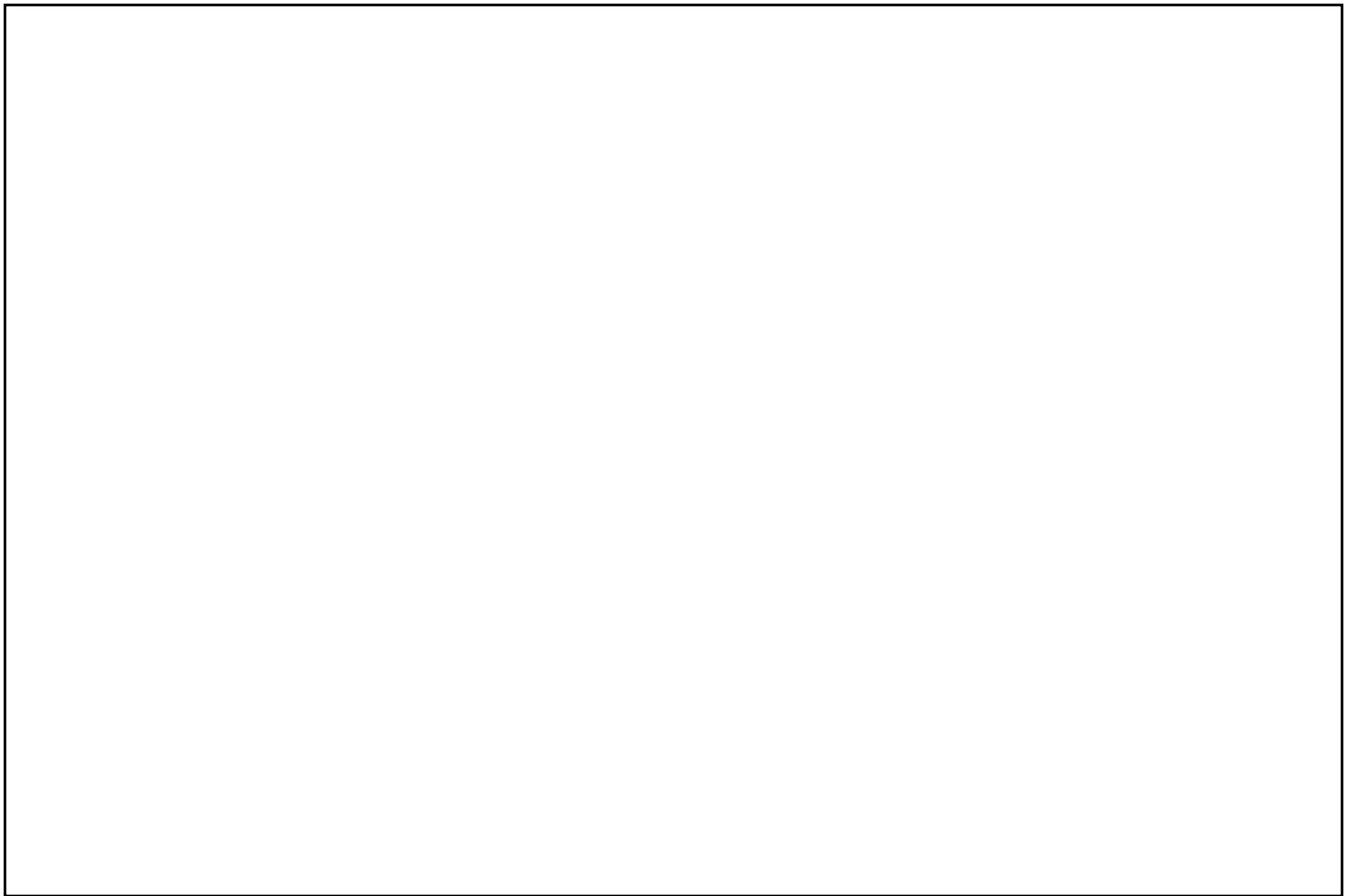
**After people go to sleep on Christmas Eve,
Santa visits their houses to bring presents to kids.**



**Santa will visit our house, too.
We will not see him while he is here, but he will
leave presents for me to open Christmas morning.
I can leave him milk and cookies before
I go to bed as a thank-you for bringing presents.**

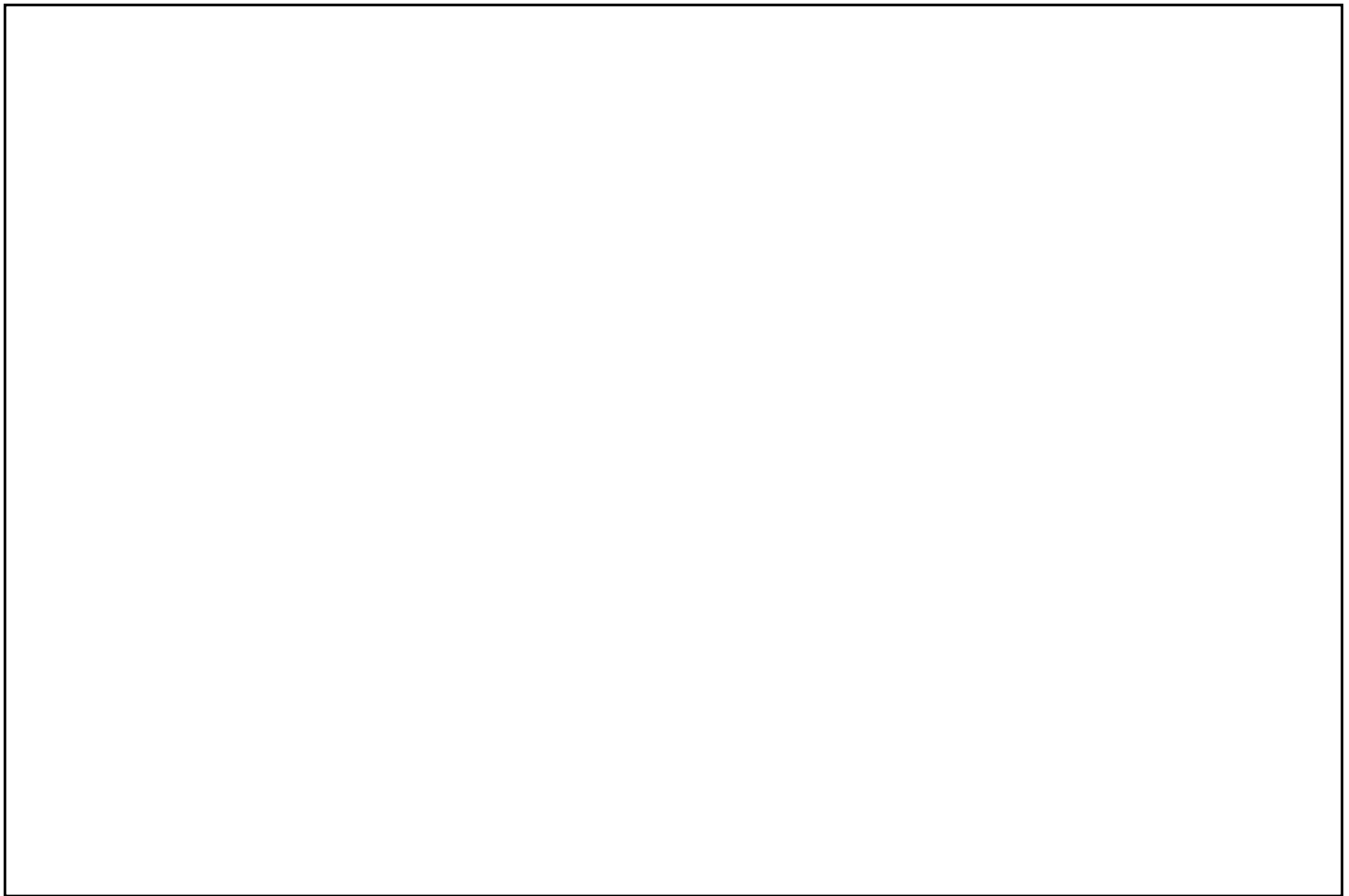


**After waking up on Christmas morning,
many people open their presents
from Santa and family.**



(Add a photo of how your family celebrates Christmas morning)

On Christmas morning, my family will



(Add a photo of your child)

**People who receive presents usually say “thank you”
to the people who give them. To tell people I like my gifts,
I can _____
_____.**

Christmas is going to be fun this year.



WHERE TO TURN FOR MORE PEDIATRIC AUTISM SUPPORT

If you are looking for more support around Christmas and in the new year, our Hopebridge Heroes are here for you.

For those currently receiving therapy at Hopebridge, ask your BCBA or speech therapist for help with more behavior strategies, [communication tools](#), or social stories around specific Christmas experiences, such as meeting Santa, visiting family or opening presents. Reach out to your [local center](#) to see what sensory-friendly events and activities are happening in your area.

If your child does not yet attend Hopebridge for therapy, we still want to help! Fill out the quick and easy form at hopebridge.com/contact for a diagnostic assessment or [ABA therapy](#) evaluation to give your child the best gift possible this year: more independence and opportunities. Once you reach out, visit hopebridge.com/blog for even more holiday tips and autism resources from our team of experts.

Until then ... Happy Holidays from Hopebridge!