

# Making Haircuts More Peaceful

by

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Shear Sunshine, LLC

# Agenda

- Autism and the Sensory System
- Routines
- Prepare, prepare, prepare!
- Social stories and other tools
- Resources
- Contact Information

# Autism and the Sensory System

- Part of being autistic includes being under or over sensitive to the world around you.
- You can have a sensitive sensory system without having autism.
- Only a problem when it makes day to day living difficult.

# Autism and the Sensory System

- Noises
- Smells
- Strangers
- Strangers touching
- Lighting
- Accessories

# Routines

- Insistence on sameness
- Difficulty with transitions
- Inflexible adherence to routines

# Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

- Build on need for routine and ritualistic behavior
- Utilize areas of interest
- Start now
- Visit often

# Social Stories



This is Colleen. She is a hairstylist.



Being a hairstylist means that Colleen gives haircuts to people.



Some of the things that Colleen will bring with her to do the haircuts will be a cape



Hairclips, clippers,



A squirt bottle, scissors, and a comb.



Some things may be really loud, like the clippers



Some things may tickle, like when Colleen has to touch your neck or ears.

To be safe, you will need to try to stay very still. But we will work together to make the haircut as fast and fun as we can!

Colleen will ask you to sit in a chair, and then put the cape around your shoulders.

Thank you!!

# Prepare, Prepare, Prepare

Educate and prepare the service providers  
and their staff about your child

# Sample Letter

Might include:

- Your name and contact information
- Your child's name
- A quick overview of how your child's autism presents
- What they can expect when your family visits
- How they can help the visit go smoothly

# Our Letter

Dear Shear Sunshine Staff;

Hello! My name is Colleen Spano, and I would like to start bringing my family to your salon. Before we come in I want to take a moment to share some information with you about my daughter, Izzy. Izzy is a beautiful 10 year old who loves animals, is an amazing artist, has sparkling blue eyes, and also has autism. Izzy's autism makes new places and new people extra scary, so coming to your salon will take some getting used to for her. In the meantime, to help make the visits less stressful for everyone, we would like to try a few ideas if you are willing...First, we would like to make some visits to the shop before Izzy's appointment, to help make the environment more familiar. During the visits we would likely want to walk around and see the whole layout, and hopefully talk to some of the stylists. Second, we would like to make an appointment to just spend time with the stylist. That will help Izzy learn to trust this new person as well as learn what will be happening during the service and what tools will be used. When it is time for the actual haircut we would like to be able to come in when you are typically the least busy. Loud noises and strong smells can make people with autism very stressed, so the fewer customers the better for Izzy!

I would love to collaborate with you further on this, so please let me know when would be a good time to come in and talk to you and your staff (coffee and doughnuts on me!). You can reach me at [colleen@sunshinebehavior.com](mailto:colleen@sunshinebehavior.com), or at 574-389-3906. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Colleen Spano

# Resources

- [www.sunshinebehavior.com](http://www.sunshinebehavior.com)
- [www.carolgraysocialstories.com](http://www.carolgraysocialstories.com)
- <http://carolgraysocialstories.com/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/2.-Safety-Wherever-I-Go-Girl.pdf>
- [www.autismspeaks.org](http://www.autismspeaks.org)

## Contact Information

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