

QuickCues User Guide

QuickCues is a social script app for the iPod Touch, iPhones and iPads that helps teens and young adults on the autism spectrum handle new situations and learn new skills. QuickCues was created to provide direct instruction without visual or audio distractions. Content and reading levels are geared to teen and young adults with high functioning autism and Asperger's Disorder.



Background

In working with young adults in social skills groups, Fraser identified a need for new supports for those on the spectrum who have challenges picking up social cues and understanding appropriate behavior. QuickCues contains social scripts in five categories that provide information and rules specific to those issues.



In the past, these young people were coached to write scripts and reminders on paper, but they were reluctant to do so as they were easily lost or they experienced anxiety over “looking different.” Using a mobile device makes managing their scripts more practical, and accessing content on an iPads, iPods or iPhones does not appear out of the ordinary.

Using QuickCues

QuickCues is most useful as a **prompting tool** that highlights relevant social cues, other people's perspectives, and common responses in targeted situations. Maximum success is best achieved through **pre-teaching** the concept or skill prior to introducing the QuickCues script. Having the script available after the teaching experience reduces user anxiety, and allows them to revisit the information, providing the reinforcement and repetition needed to internalize the concept and use it across different situations and environments.

Using the QuickCues script, “When My Worries Get Too Big,” consider the following implementation plans for teaching this concept and using QuickCues as a prompting tool.

Plan for Support Staff

Introduce a discussion or script (in a group or individual session) designed for concept instruction on the topic of worrying that includes the following considerations:

1. We all worry, but when does thinking so much about what has happened in the past, or what is likely going to happen in the future, get in the way of enjoying today?
2. There are many tools that help us keep our worries manageable. They help us control our worries so our worries do not control us. Discuss options: writing down our worries in a journal so we can leave them behind and revisit them when ready to work towards solutions; turning to physical activity to distract our minds; or discussing our worries with parents, teachers, or a therapist.

Plan for Users

1. Identify an on-going worry that impacts your quality of life. Create a plan to address this worry that fits with your personal interests, time restraints, and preferences. In your plan, include the following:
 - a. The worry
 - b. How the worry makes you feel? How does it interfere with other things you want to think about?
 - c. Identify how and where you could write your worry down when it is getting in the way. On paper? In a planner? On a list you have saved on your computer or hand held device? Is it stored where you will be able to find it?
 - d. Exercise is a critical need we all have in staying healthy. Many people will take a walk, go to the gym, or get out on their bikes to calm down and focus. Does this work for you? If so, what are some things you can do if your worry gets too big? Are there some small things you can do if you only have a little time like a short walk with some deep breathing or a trip up and down the stairs? List your options on your worry list.
 - e. Does getting more sleep, or eating something good for you help you feel more in charge of your worries? Put that on your list too.
2. Share your strategies to control your worries with a trusted family member, teacher, or therapist. They will be better prepared to help you with controlling your worries if they've seen your plan and know how to help.
3. Review the QuickCues script, "When My Worries Get Too Big." Consider your personal plan for controlling your worries. QuickCues will remind you of your plan, no matter where you are. It will be there if you need a reminder or you want some support in following your plan.
4. Feel great knowing you have a plan that can always stay with you. You are another step closer to being in charge of your life!



For more information on using social scripts effectively, visit the Gray Center at www.thegraycenter.org.