

Learning Module

Social Stories

Social Story Learning Module

This learning module has been developed for Ministry of Education, Special Education staff and RTLB by the Special Education National ASD Team.

The purpose of this learning module is to:

- ▶ introduce Social Stories™
- ▶ examine current research about Social Stories
- ▶ explore the use of Social Stories in your work
- ▶ provide information about where to find out more about Social Stories.

The learning module can be used individually or in a group.

The learning module assumes participants are familiar with:

- The characteristics of ASD
- Reflecting on their practice

In the module the following icons are used



individual task



group task



group leader task



group notes from discussion



an activity



a reading



organise

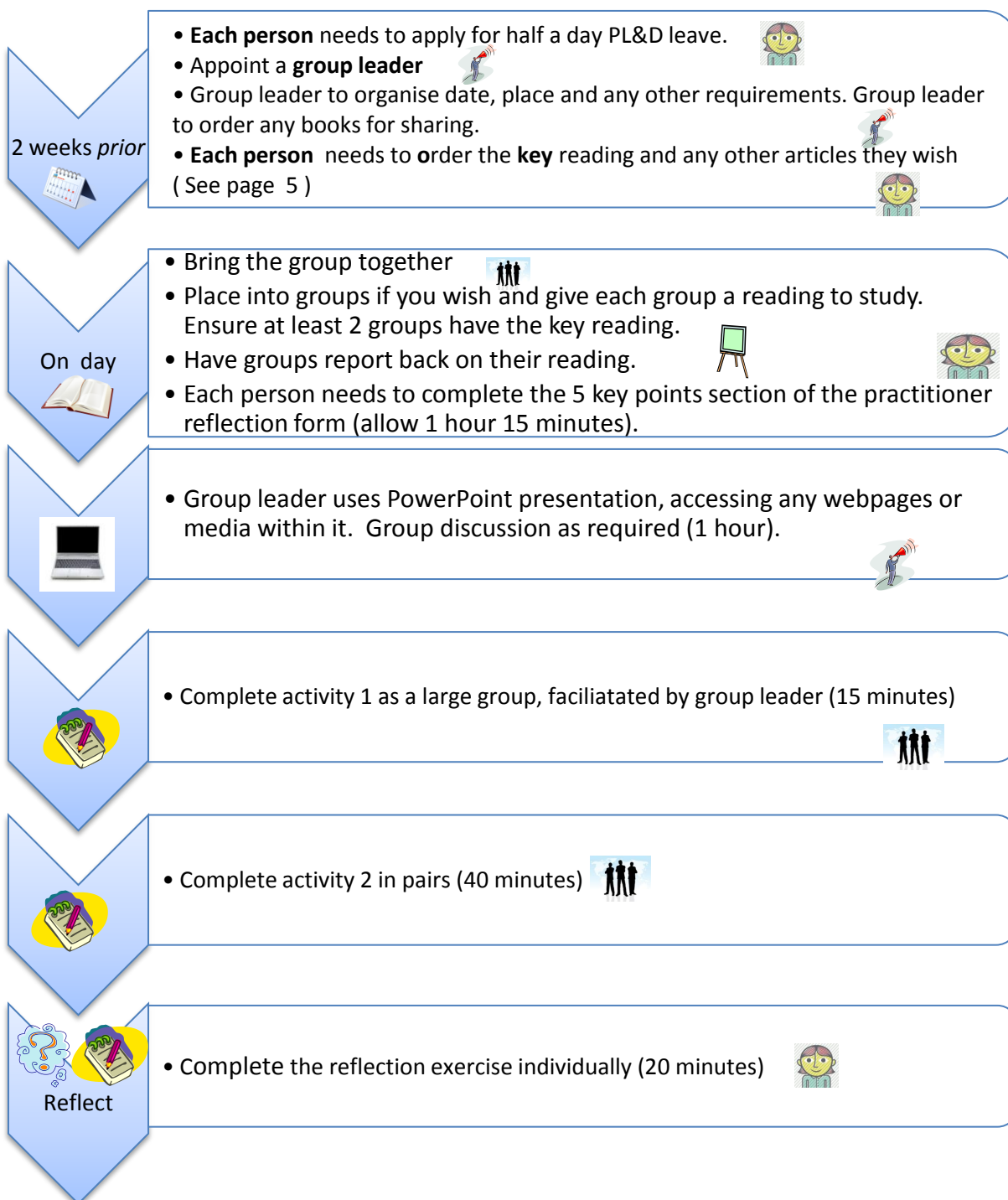


computer

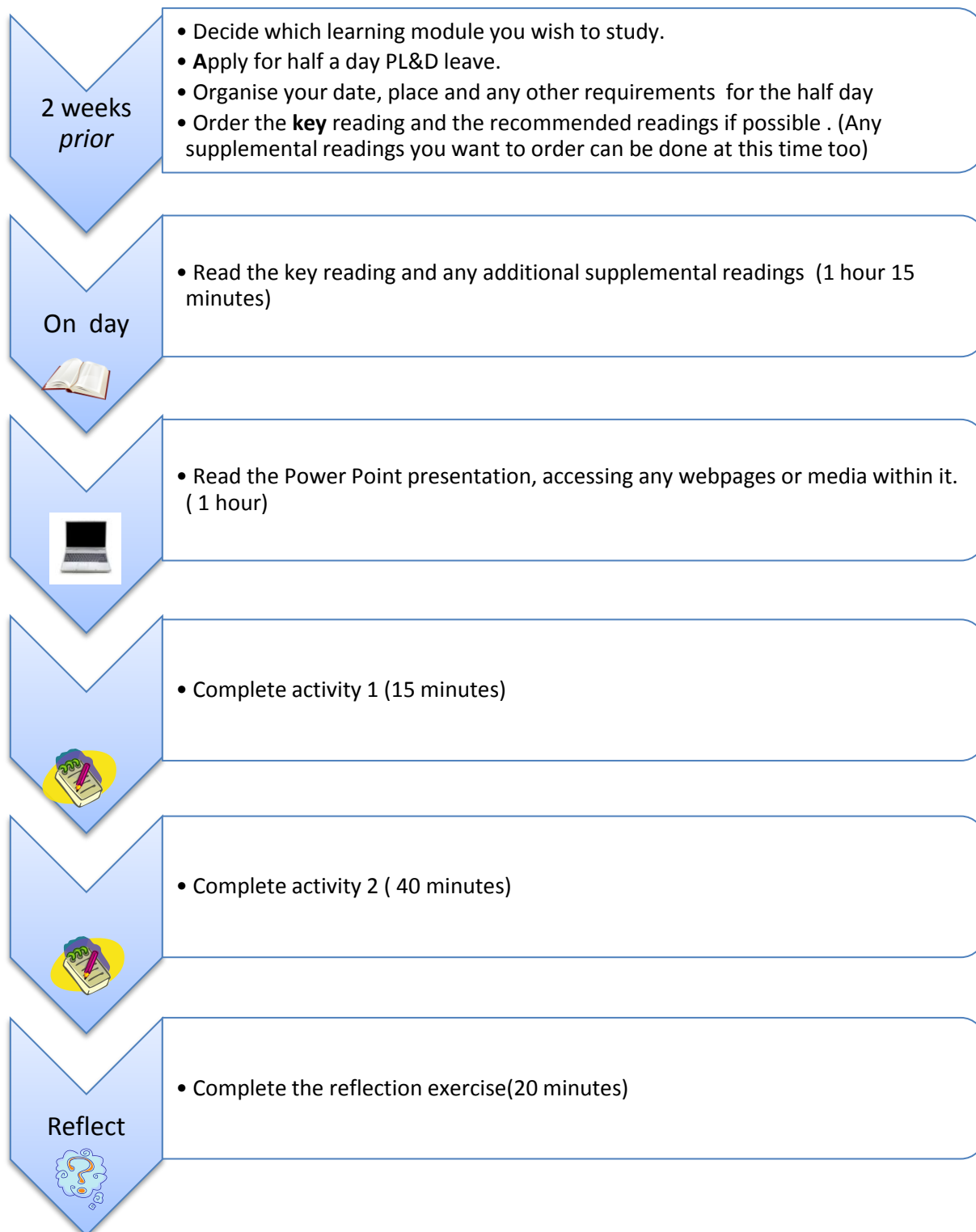


reflect

Social Stories Learning Module: Process for a group



Social Stories Learning Module: Process for an individual



Readings for module

You can access all the readings from the Ministry of Education library

KEY READING:

Test, D.W. et al (2011). A comprehensive review and meta-analysis of the Social Stories literature, *Focus on Autism and Other Developmental Disabilities*, 26 (1): 49-62:2011

RECOMMENDED READING

Gray, C. (2010) *The new social story book*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons

SUPPLEMENTARY READINGS

Mohammad,K., Clark, B., Ospina,M., Seida,J., Smith, V. & Hartling, L. (2010). Social Stories to improve social skills in children with autism spectrum disorder. *Autism: the International Journal of Research and Practice*, 14 (6): 641-662

Crozier, S & Tincani, M. (2007). Effects of social stories on prosocial behavior of preschool children with autism spectrum disorders. *Journal of Autism and Developmental Disorders*, 37 (9): 1803-1814.

Chan,J. & O'Reilly,M. (2008). A Social Stories intervention package for students with autism in inclusive classroom settings. *Journal of Applied Behavior Analysis*, 41 (3): 405-409: 2008.

Quilty, K. (2007). Teaching paraprofessionals how to write and implement social stories for students with autism spectrum disorders. *Remedial and Special Education*, 28 (3): 182-189:

Introducing specialist practitioners to Social Stories™

Developed by Cheryl Palmer using materials by Carol Gray

What are Social Stories™?

Carol Gray's explanation of Social Stories :

- ▶ Social Stories are a technique for teaching social skills or rules and, more importantly, social understanding.
- ▶ They evolved from Carol Gray's work with children with ASD and have developed over 20 years.
- ▶ Social Stories are not written strictly to change a person's behaviour but this may occur from greater understanding.
- ▶ Social Stories are a social-pragmatic approach.
- ▶ Half of all stories written should be written about what is going well.

(adapted from Gray, 2010)

An example Social Story™

"One time, Kurt wanted a YoYo™. It would have been nice to get the YoYo right away, but, there was a problem. They ran out of YoYos. They told Kurt about the problem. He may have felt a little sad or disappointed. He was also in control. He listened and cooperated, and soon he had his YoYo. The adults were so impressed with Kurt's maturity."

Source: The Gray Centre website

Social Stories™ and visual strategies

- ▶ Social Stories are a specific strategy which supports an individual's social understanding.
- ▶ Social Stories are often confused with other visual strategies which have a different purpose.



Consider why the two (useful) strategies listed below should not be termed "Social Stories":

1. A book which provides information about a new classroom setting for a child.
2. A story which tells about a special activity the child was involved in.



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Learning about Social Stories™

- ▶ Social Stories are the intellectual property of Carol Gray. As a result, there are restrictions on providing information and training about Social Stories.
- ▶ The ways to learn more about Social Stories and how to use them in your practice are:
 - **Social Stories website:** www.thegraycenter.org/social-stories
 - **Social Stories DVD and booklet:** Gray, C. (2000). Writing Social Stories with Carol Gray. Future Horizons; Arlington, TX.
 - **Guidelines and criteria for writing Social Stories:** Gray, C. (2003). Social Stories 10.0. Jenison Autism Journal, 15(4), 2-21.
 - **Guide to writing and using Social Stories™:** Howley, M., & Arnold, E. (2005). Revealing the Hidden Social Code. London: Jessica Kingsley.

These resources can be requested from the Ministry of Education library.



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What does the research say about Social Stories™?

You have read the key reading for this learning module entitled "A comprehensive review and meta-analysis of the Social Stories literature" (Test et al 2011).



Document five key points about the current research onto the 'Practitioner Reflection' form in your materials.



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Social Stories™ are made of different types of sentences

- ▶ **Descriptive sentences:** Factual sentences that talk about actions and situations and provide the rationale for these.
- ▶ **Perspective sentences:** Describe the reactions of others
- ▶ **Directive sentences:** Talk about preferred action of the targeted students
- ▶ **Affirmative sentences:** Talk about societal values and beliefs
- ▶ **Control sentences:** Originate from the student
- ▶ **Cooperative sentences:** Provide information about how others will help.

(Gray, 2010)



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Suggestions for writing a Social Story™

Describe the event and place the target student in the event.

"One time, Kurt wanted a YoYo™. It would have been nice to get the YoYo right away, but, there was a problem. They ran out of YoYos. They told Kurt about the problem."

This example uses the sample social story referenced earlier in presentation.



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Writing a Social Story™ cont.

Describe the effects the situation has on target student or others (perspective sentences)

"He may have felt a little sad or disappointed. He was also in control."

NOTE: Do not say how the target person felt as an exact statement (you may get it wrong). However, you can make this accurate by using words like 'may'.



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Writing a Social Story™ cont.

Describe how the situation should be best Handled, or in this case was handled (descriptive sentences)

"He listened and cooperated, and soon he had his YoYo."



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Writing a Social Story™ cont.

Complete your story

"The adults were so impressed with Kurt's maturity" (perspective sentence)

OR

"This was a mature thing to do" (affirmative)

"I did well at that, said Kurt" (control)

"The adults will help Kurt to stay in control next time by saying 'control'" (cooperative)

"Kurt will try to stay in control next time" (directive)



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The Social Story™ Sentence Ratio

2 – 5 descriptive or perspective sentences

0-1 directive, affirmative, control or cooperative sentence

This 'formula' is a guide to ensure that the social story stays true to the underlying goal of promoting social understanding. It stops writers from using too many directions in their story.

(Gray, 2010)



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Some tips on content

- ✓ Consider carefully the aspect of social understanding you want to target with your story. Take some time to define the skills and knowledge the individual needs to be successful in this situation.
- ✓ Often, a Social Story includes a solution or strategy that has been implemented. These should be accurately described in your story. Examples include: Adult prompting, use of visual strategies, memory aids, prompts for peers.



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Some tips on writing

- ✓ You can write Social Stories for a group or an individual.
- ✓ You may consider using pictures (and maybe audio, video) to accompany your stories
- ✓ You can write from a first person perspective (I went) or a third person perspective (Jared went) depending on the individual.
- ✓ Write accurately and if something does not ALWAYS occur use the words 'should, could, usually, mostly, can"
- ✓ In a directive sentence the word 'try' allows your story to be reused if the student does not follow the course of action described.



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Implementing your Social Story

- ▶ It is usual that implementation start with one partner (if a reader of the story is required) and expand to include many people knowing the story.
- ▶ The story is initially read (individually or with the child) through the story as it is written. Add any control statements that occur.
- ▶ Read at least once or twice a day (to keep familiarity with the content)
- ▶ Make sure related prompts and roles of others are known, presented in a way that people can remember and use them.
- ▶ Target the specific times and environments in which the child is likely to use the skill. Use at specific times to prepare the child and to review a situation.

(Gray,2010)



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Further information

Websites

<http://www.thegraycenter.org/>
<http://www.polyxo.com/socialstories/>

Watch Carol Gray Speak

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zzkTTFZMnnE&feature=related>

See some more social stories

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VOHqcz9gZgk>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zRb3GguSRvY>
<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CPp1v7hNXSM&feature=related>

More resources

http://thegraycenter.org/index.php?page=shop.browse&category_id=16&vmcchk=1&option=com_virtuemart&Itemid=54



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References

Gray, C. (2010) *The new social story book*. Arlington, TX: Future Horizons

Gray Center Website on <http://thegraycenter.org/>

Test, D.W., Richter, S., Knight, V & Spooner, F (2011)
A Comprehensive Review and Meta-Analysis of the Social
Stories Literature. In *Focus Autism Other Dev Disabl* 2011
26: 49



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Activity 1 (15 minutes)

Identify the sentence type

Sentence types (some sentences could be more than one type)

Descriptive

Perspective

Affirmative

Directive

Control

Cooperative

I may try saying 'Hi mum'.	
There are many people in the room.	
The teacher will like it if I am listening to her.	
I will try to stay in my seat on the bus.	
Most people sit on chairs.	
This is okay.	
Usually my bus comes at about 3 'O clock.	
Sometimes vacuum cleaners make a noise.	
Often my teacher talks to all the children at the same time.	
My teacher will say 'home time' to remind me.	
This is an intelligent thing to do.	
My mum likes it when I wee in the toilet.	
I can use my visual schedule to tell me what is next.	



Activity 2 (40 minutes)

Choose one of the following activities

2a. Have a go at writing your own social story

OR 2b. Review two of the following stories using the analysis sheet provided

2a. Writing your own social story

Have a go at writing your own story. Use your own situation or one of the following:

- Hamish is a 10 year old student who attends McDonald's school. He does not seem to understand that the school pet, Tiki the cat, cannot come into the classroom.
- Billy is 6 years old. He approaches children in the sand pit when they have the red spade and forcibly takes it from them.
- John is 16 years old. He likes to stroke hair, especially of blonde people. The other students know John well but are becoming uncomfortable with this behaviour.

Remember to review your story in terms of:

Sentence types

The formula

Keeping it literally correct

The story being clear

Illustrations and visual support

2b. Analysis of a 'Social Story'

Use this form below to analyse the following social stories.

Name of social story	Story 1, Catherine
Origin/ Author of story	The Gray Center
What are the types of sentences used?	
What is the ratio of different sentence types?	
What social rule and understanding the story is targeting?	
What is the desired outcome of the story?	
Comment on the language and writing style of the story	
What do you like about the story?	
What would you change if you had to rewrite it?	

Story 1 for Analysis

My name is Catherine. I go to Sunshine Academy. Sometimes at my school we have art.

Sometimes, when children do art projects they discover that their project doesn't look EXACTLY like it does in their mind. My mind may be able to create things, but my fingers are still learning how to create those same things. So, until my fingers catch up with what my mind can do, it's important to be patient.

Patience is important in art. If a child can stay calm, they will be able to make a project that is closer to the one in their mind.

The neat thing about art is that it doesn't have to be "right" or "exact." If a child makes it, and tries their best, and follows the general directions, the way art works, what that child makes is okay!

Many great artists practice many years to learn how to match what they create with their fingers with the ideas and pictures in their mind. If I can learn to stay calm and continue to practice, I, too, will be able to make projects with my fingers that are closer to the ideas in my mind, too! It just takes time. This is okay.

Source: The Gray Centre website

2b. Analysis of a 'Social Story'

Use this form below to analyse the following social stories.

Name of Social Story	Story 2, Recess
Origin/ Author of story	Polyxo
What are the types of sentences used?	
What is the ratio of different sentence types?	
What social rule and understanding the story is targeting?	
What is the desired outcome of the story?	
Comment on the language and writing style of the story.	
What do you like about the story?	
What would you change if you had to rewrite it?	

Story 2 for analysis

After lunch we go to recess.

Sometimes recess is on the playground.

A lot of the children play on the playground equipment.

It is fun to play on the playground equipment.

Everyone should play safely.

When the whistle blows that means it is time to line up and go inside.

I will try to line up as soon as the whistle blows.

This will make my teachers happy.

After I line up I will try to stay in line.

Everyone will be proud of me!

Source: Polyxo website



Practitioner reflection form: Social Stories learning module

Name _____

Date _____

Resources and research sourced and read in this module

Key points about research of Social Stories

Five key points about Social Stories I wish to remember

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

Turn over to second page

Write your reflection of your learning below.

Consider the following questions:

- Will I implement this strategy within my work? What is my reasoning for my decision?
- Are there specific places or situations in your work that would influence your decision on use of this strategy (positive or negative)?
- Are there support or training needs for yourself or for the people with whom you work when implementing this strategy?

Copy this form for your PD portfolio. Your SM may wish to have a copy as proof of the PD time spent.