Going to The Nutcracker
A Social Story

Sponsored by:
THE THEATER
Today, I am going to the UIS Performing Arts Center to see a show.

THE NUTCRACKER SUITE
I am going to see Clara and her Nutcracker Prince arrive at the Land of the Sweets where they are welcomed by the Sugar Plum Fairy and Dew Drop.
DRIVING TO THE THEATER

To get to the show, we are going to drive to the theater.
PARKING LOT

Once we get to the theater, we are going to park in the parking lot. A parking attendant will give you a parking pass and direct you where to park.
ENTERING THE THEATER

When I enter the building, the first thing I will do is go to the lobby. I should hold my family's hands, so I don't get lost.
COAT CHECK

Before we go to our seats, we will check our coats at the coat check. I may have to wait in line.
TICKETS

I will get a ticket that lets me into the show. Every person seeing the show needs to have a ticket.
A helper, called an usher, will show us into the theater. I can sit in whatever seat I like, but I need to sit with my family. I may be sitting next to someone I don't know. It will also be a little darker in the theater, but the lights will still be on.
THE SHOW STARTS

The show will start at 6 PM. When the show starts, it's okay for me to make noise, jump and flap my hands. I can use my tablet or phone too. The show will be on the stage. There will be dancers, bright colors, and music during the show. It is okay for me to cover my ears if the show is too loud.
BATHROOMS

If I need to use the bathroom, I need to tell someone, and they will bring me there. Bathrooms are outside of the theater in the lobby.
QUIET ZONE

If I need a break, I can go to the Quiet Zone. I need to tell someone if I want to go there. I can follow the signs to the Quiet Zone or ask an usher to take us there. I will have to take the stairs or the elevator to get there. I have to hold onto the handrail if I take the stairs. In the Quiet Zone, there will be coloring pages and chairs to sit on.
The show is over when the dancers take their final bow. I can show that I liked it by clapping my hands. Other people will clap too and it may be noisy. If the clapping is too loud, it's okay to cover my ears.
LEAVING THE THEATER

When leaving the theater, I will have to walk up some stairs. Other people will be leaving too, so there will be a lot of people on the stairs. I will walk slowly and wait for my family and friends.
THE NUTCRACKER SYNOPSIS

The Nutcracker Ballet is based on a story written by E.T.A. Hoffman, “The Nutcracker and the Mouse King.”

It is Christmas Eve at the Stahlbaum house - a large and grand house with a beautiful Christmas tree. The Stahlbaums are hosting their annual Christmas party, welcoming the arrival of family and friends. The party grows festive with music and dance as Herr Drosselmeyer arrives. He is a toymaker and always full of surprises. The children begin to open gifts when Drosselmeyer presents his gift to Clara, a beautiful Nutcracker. Fritz becomes jealous and grabs the Nutcracker from Clara and breaks it. Clara is heartbroken, looking on as Drosselmeyer magically repairs the Nutcracker.

As the evening grows late, the guests depart and the Stahlbaum family retires for the evening. Clara, worried about her beloved Nutcracker, sneaks back to the tree to check on him, falling asleep with him in her arms. As the clock strikes midnight, strange things begin to happen. The beautiful Christmas tree grows high and the room fills with an army of mice, led by the fierce Mouse King. The Nutcracker leads his army of toy soldiers into battle, and Clara makes a daring charge, pulling the Mouse King’s tail in order to save the Nutcracker from certain death.

The Nutcracker magically transforms into a Prince and takes Clara on a journey through the Kingdom of the Snow, an enchanted winter wonderland where they are welcomed by the Snow Queen and her dancing snowflakes.

The Prince escorts Clara to the Kingdom of the Sugar Plum Fairy. The Prince and Clara tell the Sugar Plum Fairy of their daring battle with the Mouse King and she commands a celebration of dancing in their honor.

As the celebration comes to an end, Clara and her beloved Prince are joined by Drosselmeyer, who sends them on to other magical adventures so the dream will never end.