

Time Out

Time-out is a strategy for your child to use to calm down,
or when your child does something wrong on purpose.

Why use time-outs?

- Children respond well to praise, but sometimes need discipline.
- Children need limits. Time-outs are safe and they work.
- Time-outs teach children that misbehaving is not a good way to get attention.

When do I use a time-out?

- Every time your child breaks an **important** rule: hitting, kicking, spitting, etc.

How do I use a time-out?

- **Tell** your child about what a time out is during a time when he or she is NOT misbehaving.
- When your child has a bad behavior, **warn** him or her, “If you do that, you will have a time- out like we talked about before.”
- If your child ignores you, have your child go to a quiet place, like the corner or a chair, and start a **timer**. Use a kitchen timer or a clock the child can see.
- After your child has calmed down, **explain** the reason for the time out: For example, “You hit your sister. That’s not allowed. Now you have a time-out for hitting.”

How long should a time-out last?

- 1 minute for each year of age (2 year old = 2 minutes, 3 year old = 3 minutes, etc.)
- If your child leaves the time-out, give a **choice**. “You can either walk to the time-out chair or I’ll carry you there.” Restart the timer and say, “Stay there until the time-out is over.”
- If your child screams and fusses say, “The timer will begin when you stop.”

Be consistent. Children need fair and appropriate limits and for you to follow through with them consistently. Make sure other people use the same rules with your child.

Time-outs work, but not immediately. Stick to this approach for several weeks and your child will learn. ***If you’d like to talk to someone, please talk to your child’s doctor or nurse.***