

## How To Use a Time-Out

### What is a time out?

When your child is doing something that is unacceptable, time-out helps stop it and change the situation. Time-out sends him/her away from the trouble spot, and into an isolated area such as a room, chair, quiet corner, hallway, crib, or playpen. It's best used with children aged 2 years to 12 years.

### How should you do time out?

- Do not give endless warnings and empty threats.
- Do not shout.
- Time-out should occur in a noninteresting yet safe place. Your child should not be allowed to watch television or to interact with other people when in time-out, including you.
- Send your child to the time-out chair or room. If he/she doesn't go there immediately, lead him/her by the hand or carry him/her.
- When you're putting your child in time-out, briefly explain what he/she has done so he/she can connect the behavior with the time-out. A simple phrase such as "No hitting" is enough. Do not lecture and do not spank. Time-out is not the time for teaching or preaching.
- Do not negotiate with a child in time-out. Completely ignore him/her, even if he shouts, bangs or apologizes.
- When time-out is over, it is over. Create a fresh start by offering a new activity. Don't discuss the unwanted behavior, just move on.

### How long should time-out last?

Time-out should last 1 minute for each year of your child's age. It should not last for more than 5 minutes.

You can use a kitchen timer. Make sure you put it where your child can see and hear it. If he/she leaves time-out, put him/her back quickly and reset the timer. This teaches her that you mean what you say. Be consistent!

### What about other children?

If your other children touch the timer, or tease their brother or sister in time-out, they should be also placed in time-out.

### How does time-out end?

Make it clear that you are in control of when time-out ends. Go to your child's corner and say, "Time-out is over. You can get up now." Clear the air. When time-out is over, it's over. Reminders or lectures after time-out may lead to the same misbehavior. It's better to comfort your child.

If your child repeats the behavior that led to the time-out in the first place, repeat the whole process. If used properly, time-out will eventually work.

Remember, your child should know that time-out is directed toward the misbehavior not him. It's important not to hurt your child's self-esteem by instilling shame, guilt, loss of trust, or feelings of abandonment.

### Source:

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