

Time-Out



Guidelines for time-out

Time-out is a type of discipline. It is used to stop a child from doing a bad behavior, by isolating the child for a period of time. Time-out removes a child from the situation and gives them time to calm down. It also helps establish that the parent is in charge. And it gives the child time to think about what they have done. Time-outs are useful for aggressive and harmful behaviors in toddlers and preschool-aged children.

Where should a time-out happen?

The place for time-out to happen should be chosen ahead of time, not at the time of the behavior. Here are some examples of places for time-out:

- Crib
- Chair or corner of the room
- A designated room

How long should a time-out last?

- A general guideline is 1 minute for each year of the child's age. For example, 3-year-olds get 3 minutes of time-out.
- A maximum length of time for time-out should be no more than 5 minutes.

Placing your child in time-out

- The reason the child is being sent to time-out should be explained to them in very clear statements.
- If the child does not go to time-out on their own, safely lead them there.
- Don't spank or yell on the way to time-out.

Stopping time-out

- As a parent, you decide when time-out is over, not the child. If the child "escapes" during time-out, restart the clock.
- Tell your child time-out is over and let them go back to normal activities.
- Treat the child normally after time-out. Don't lecture again on the behavior.

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