

Time-out:

Age: 2+ (children younger than this do not understand the concept of time nor do they understand the idea of a “timeout” being separate from normal playtime)

Setting: When your child has repeated minor misbehaviors or a major misbehavior.

Purpose: To show your child that their misbehaviors will not earn them attention and to discourage/discontinue further misbehavior.

Checklist:

<i>For Minor Behavior(s)</i>
Provide child with warning Use neutral tone of voice Maintain neutral/calm facial expression
Send to timeout following 2 nd minor offense
<i>After 2nd Minor or 1st Major Behavior</i>
Advise child of reason they are being sent to timeout Use simple, to the point statement (Ex: “You are going to timeout for X.”) Do not argue with child Use neutral tone of voice and maintain calm facial expression
If needed, escort child to timeout Minimize physical interaction to avoid providing unintentional reinforcement of behavior(s) Minimize verbal interaction
Inform child of duration of timeout Note the time Maintain neutral tone throughout
<i>Releasing From Timeout</i>
Inform child they may come out of timeout Continue to keep minimal verbal and physical interaction until child has resumed/started engaging in appropriate activities Some children may not want to come out of timeout right away and may choose to stay in longer than needed, you can simply tell them that they can join you when they are ready
Involve child in appropriate activity Once child is involved in the activity you may engage in full verbal and physical interaction Engaging in full interaction too soon may result in child believing that going to timeout will eventually get them the attention they desire and lead to them acting out more. It is important to wait until they have fully completed timeout and have started a new activity to begin interacting with them in full