

Special Time

Special Time is a chance for you to focus on your child's good behaviors and build a strong relationship.

Benefits of Special Time

- Strengthens the bond with your child
- Helps kids want to make their parents and caregivers proud
- Encourages and reinforces good behavior

Helpful Tips During Special Time

- Make time for this 1-on-1 time with your child each day, even on days when behavior is a problem
- Make Special Time a part of your daily routine
- Do Special Time for at least 10 minutes each day
- Give Special Time a fun name and try using a timer so your child knows when Special Time starts and ends
- Turn off the screens and put away your phone
- Activities that are interactive work best, such as legos, play-doh, dolls, and blocks

During Special Time, DO...

- Be enthusiastic!
- Let your child take the lead and follow along.
- Describe what you see your child doing → Imagine that you are a sports commentator, giving a play-by-play of what your child is doing.
- Imitate your child's good behavior → This shows that you approve of what your child is doing and also shows that you are interested in what they are doing.
- Let the little things go → Try to ignore any minor misbehaviors. If the misbehavior is more problematic or severe, set a limit with your child and say that the Special Time will have to end if the behavior continues.
- Praise good behavior.
- Have fun and be silly!

Check Out These Video Links!

- **Supercharging Playtime -**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gUdDvTW9564>
- **Communicating with Your Child -**
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mEqaNdwakfk&t=4s>

During Special Time, AVOID...

- Giving instructions or directions → Remember to follow your child's lead!
- Asking questions → Asking questions may make your child feel like they are on the spot and could take the fun out of Special Time!
- Correcting minor misbehaviors.
- Low energy.

Special Time with Older Kids

Although older kids and teens may be less interested in the concept of "Special Time", it is just as important to find time to connect each day! Get creative on how to find 10 minutes each day to connect. Call it something different or don't call it anything at all! Do things that they enjoy, such as shooting the basketball together, playing a game together, cooking together, riding bikes together, working on a project together, etc. Sometimes you don't even need to ask if your older child or teen if they want to hang out, just join them in something they enjoy. Use the same tips described in this handout with an older child or teen with some minor adjustments!

References:

CDC: Parenting Essentials for Toddlers and Preschoolers
Videos provided by:
Central Oregon Pediatric Associates
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)