

TIME-OUT

The time-out behavior management technique is designed for use with children ages 2 – 7. It is best used when children are engaging in such misbehaviors as not minding or rule breaking.

Tips for Successful Time-Outs

- Select a brief, developmentally appropriate time period.
 - 3 minutes is recommended for most children
 - Younger or very hyperactive children may have to start with even less time.
- When placing a child in time-out, find a place that reduces external attention and stimulation.
- Only use time-out for specific child misbehaviors and **BE CONSISTENT!!**
 - Every time the child (hits her brother), she goes to time out.
- During time-out, the parent must not respond to child's attempts to get attention.
 - Children try all types of ways to get attention: Begging, pleading apologizing, cussing, yelling, threatening. The parent must be able to ignore all of these.
- Spend time in therapy planning the time-out procedure with the parent:
 - What? The time-out chair is best if it is a sturdy, adult sized chair with arms.
 - Where? The time-out chair should be placed in an area with minimal stimulation (e.g., out of view of TV) and where minimal damage can be done (e.g., not next to a china cabinet!).
 - Plan for what the parent will do if the child attempts to escape the time-out chair. The parent should be prepared to return the child to the chair.
- In session with the parent and child together, explain the time-out procedure, what child behaviors will lead to time-out, and walk through a pretend time-out procedure together.

Parent-Child Interaction Therapy (PCIT) is a treatment specifically designed to teach parents of young children to use positive parenting skills and time-out effectively. Families with children who exhibit highly oppositional behaviors may benefit from a referral to PCIT.