
Review with the parent that time out is a method of mild discipline that involves a brief interruption of pleasant activities for the child. Time out may not be suitable for older teenagers, instead, positive reinforcement such as praise and rewards may be sufficient.

Review the parent's views of time out and previous experiences. Some parents are actively opposed to time out or have had a negative prior experience of it. Decide together if time out is something the parent wants to try or whether they prefer to focus on the praise, effective instructions etc. Only do this module if the parent thinks it will be of value.

Describe time out. The child is quickly removed from the situation in which his or her misbehaviour occurs and placed in a quiet, boring place. Children do not like being in time out because they lose attention, temporary freedom, and more importantly, the power to upset and manipulate their parents. Thus, putting a child in time out when a particularly undesirable behaviour occurs will decrease the chance that the same behaviour will occur again in the future.

Inform parent of the short- and long-term benefits that can result from employing time out:

- The problem behaviour will occur less often

- The parent will have a chance to "cool off"

- It is milder and safer than other types of discipline sometimes used by families (e.g., screaming, spanking)

- Children will learn to consider the consequences of their actions because the consequences are predictable

Refer to page 1 of the _____ handout. Explain that time out should be used for stopping moderate misbehaviour (i.e., rude, aggressive, destructive, or nasty acts; behaviour that might be dangerous to self or others even if it wasn't intended to be).

Advise the parent that *time out is not the preferred technique for dealing with passive or mild misbehaviour* (e.g., sulking, whining). Examples of behaviours appropriate for time out appear on the handout.

Move to page 2 of the _____ handout. Instruct the parent to select 1 to 3 target behaviours for time out. Explain that other behaviours can be added once the family has had the chance to practise time out for a while. When starting out, try to pick behaviours that occur at least once a day, that are easily defined, and that can be observed at home. The parent should write these on the handout.

Point out that time out will work best in the context of frequent use of attention, praise, and rewards. Time out only teaches a child what not to do; it does not teach a child what to do. Thus, the parent must also use incentives like attention, praise, and rewards to teach the child positive behaviours to do instead. These behaviours should be the opposite of the time out behaviours (e.g., being kind instead of being mean to a sibling). The parent should write examples on the handout.

Work together to select a place for time out, and write it on the handout. The location should be:

Dull (i.e., no other people available, away from toys, games, TV, books, pets, windows).

Not be scary or humiliating (e.g., a dark room or facing the corner).

Centrally located (the child should be able to get to the time out place within 10 seconds).

Out of the way so that other family members are not tempted to talk to or interact with the child in time out.

Move to page 3 of the _____ handout. Review the specific steps, using one of the behaviours you picked on page 2 of the handout. Don't forget to point out that if the child has not followed through on an instruction, it must be repeated after the time out is over.

Point out to the parent that some behaviours will be serious enough that they do not require a warning (e.g., aggressive or dangerous behaviour). These can also include violations of house rules (e.g., use of foul language, if there is a known rule in the

Review with the parent the common problems associated with implementing time out, including:

Arguing: Arguing can be ignored. If it escalates to shouting and yelling, the parent can reset the timer.

Refusing to go to or leaving time out: When the child refuses to go to time out or leaves, the parent can guide him or her gently to the time out area. Another option is for the child to lose a privilege or toy until the time out is

If the child is not available today to speak with you, discuss with the parent how he or she will explain time out to the child. The parent should choose a time when everyone is relaxed and not upset. Both parents should be present for this discussion with the child if possible; this will help the child understand that both parents have the same expectations for the child's behaviour. The parents should tell the child that they love him or her, and that they want to help the child remember good ways to behave

Ask if they would like you to summarise the session, if they want to summarise or if you should do it together.

End the session on a positive note with the parent by perhaps talking about things that are unrelated to his or her child, or discussing an area of interest you have in common with the parent. Also, the parent might be feeling overwhelmed by the challenging tasks he or she is undertaking; it can sometimes be helpful to leave a few minutes at the end of the session for the parent to share concerns or the challenges he or she has faced with the child since the previous session. The end of each session should be used to praise the parent's efforts and to convey support and encouragement.

At the end of the session, if the child is available, it can be helpful to brief him or her on the materials covered.

