

using time out effectively: Time Out Spots

Time out provides children with a consistent form of behavior modification. It gives them a chance to reflect upon unwanted behavior, and also allows them a place to calm down.

Created by teacher turned mom, Heather Sievers, Time Out Spots™ are the solution to unsuccessful time outs. Heather was inspired by her three year old son. She started his time outs on a little wooden stool, which immediately became a problem. The stool would get flipped over and scooted around. It even started to damage the wood floors. The last straw was when he picked it up, held it to his bottom, and walked around saying, "I'm still in time out, my bootie is on the stool." Time Out had turned into a game. So, it hit her. The family needed a new time out spot! Deciding that a rug would be great for this, Heather designed the Time Out Spot™ and went on a mission to have it manufactured.



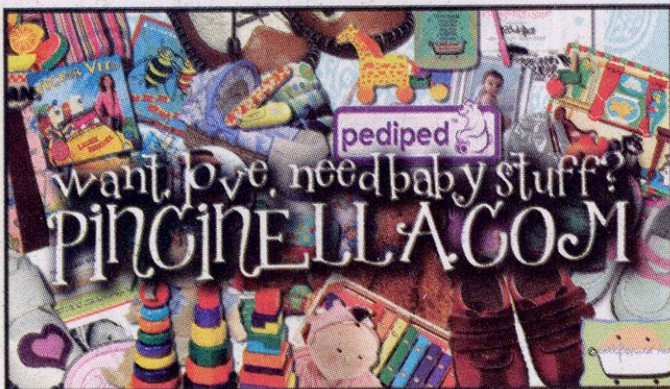
You want it away from areas of play and distractions such as the television and toys. Depending on the child, time out is recommended for ages 2 years and up.

Having a Time Out Spot™ on the floor helps to provide a constant reminder to make good choices. Each child should have their own Time Out Spot™, as they are often in trouble at the same time.

It is generally more effective to limit the amount of time spent in time out to shorter periods of time out. One minute per each year of age tends to be a sufficient amount. For example, a 2-year-old child will receive two minutes of time out. Set a kitchen timer with a beeper and place it where it is visible, but not reachable, so that the child can see the minutes counting down as well as hear the beeper when the time out is over.

Time out has many advantages. It eliminates a lot of yelling and screaming on the part of the parents. It increases the probability that parents are going to be consistent about what is going to be punished, when and how. The child learns to accept his/her own responsibility for undesirable behavior. The parents are not punishing the child; rather the child is punishing himself. The child should be repeatedly told that the parents did not put him or her in time out but that the child put himself in time out. The child more readily learns to discriminate which behaviors are acceptable and which are unacceptable. By keeping a written record of time outs, parents can see if the procedure is reducing the targeted behavior.

The Time Out Spot™ should be easily accessible, and in such a location that the child can be easily monitored while in time out.



Time Out Spots™ are available online at www.timeoutspots.com and locally through www.littleblessings.ca and www.kamakazikids.com

References: Child Development Institute of America & Canadian Pediatric Society Psychosocial Pediatrics Committee