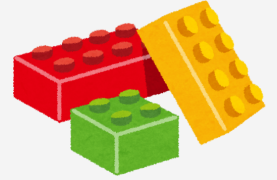


What Is Special Playtime?

Special Playtime is a daily one-on-one play session between you and your child. During Special Playtime, your child leads the play while you follow along using specific skills that strengthen your relationship and encourage good behavior.

Special Playtime helps your child feel loved, confident, and secure. It also helps reduce behavior problems over time.

The Basics:



When: Every day, at the same time if possible

How long: 5 minutes (set a timer — consistency matters more than length)

Where: A quiet space with few distractions (turn off screens and phones)

What toys to use: Choose simple, creative toys such as building blocks, crayons and paper, Play-Doh, or toy animals/figures. Avoid toys with rules (board games), electronic toys, or toys that encourage rough play.

The PRIDE Skills — What TO Do

P — Praise your child's good behavior.

Use specific, labeled praise so your child knows exactly what they did well.

Instead of: "Good job!"

Try: "Great job sharing the blocks!" or "I love how carefully you're coloring!"

R — Reflect what your child says.

Repeat or rephrase your child's words. This shows you are listening and encourages language.

Child says: "I'm making a tower."

You say: "You're making a tall tower!"

I — Imitate your child's play.

Copy what your child is doing. If they stack blocks, you stack blocks too. This shows your child that their ideas matter.

D — Describe what your child is doing.

Act like a sportscaster and narrate your child's actions. This gives your child positive attention and builds vocabulary.

"You're putting the red block on top of the blue one."

"You're drawing a big circle."

E — Enjoy the time together.

Smile, laugh, and show enthusiasm. Let your child see that you enjoy being with them.



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FL 33073

Special Playtime



What to AVOID During Special Playtime

During these 5 minutes, try to avoid:

- Questions — Even well-meaning questions ("What are you making?") can feel like a test. Instead, describe what you see.
- Commands — Do not tell your child what to do ("Put the block here"). Let them lead.
- Criticism or corrections — Avoid saying "No," "Don't," "Stop," or "That's not right." If your child does something mildly annoying but not dangerous, simply ignore it and redirect your attention to a positive behavior.

A helpful way to remember: Avoid the three C's — Commands, Criticism, and too many Questions (C-C-Q).

What If My Child Misbehaves?

- For minor misbehavior (whining, making silly noises): Ignore it. Turn your body slightly away, stay quiet, and wait. As soon as your child returns to appropriate behavior, immediately give attention and praise.
- For dangerous behavior (hitting, throwing toys at someone): Calmly end Special Playtime. Say, "Special Playtime is over because you threw the toy. We can try again tomorrow."

Tips for Success

1. Be consistent. Try to do Special Playtime every day, even when things are busy. Five minutes is all it takes.
2. Let your child lead. This is their time. Resist the urge to teach, direct, or fix things.
3. Be patient with yourself. These skills feel awkward at first. That is completely normal. It gets easier with practice.
4. Praise yourself too. Learning new parenting skills takes effort — you are doing something wonderful for your child.
5. Involve other caregivers. Anyone who spends time with your child (partners, grandparents) can learn and practice Special Playtime.



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