

# Patient Information

---

## Top Tips for Special Time

You may feel you already spend a lot of time with your children, doing all sorts of activities and caring for them in a variety of ways however Special Time is different. It is an opportunity to spend time with your child giving them your undivided attention, showing them you care just by being with them. It is a time participating in an activity with them, offering praise and encouragement even if the end result isn't perfect. By having this quality time together your relationship can grow and most importantly it will boost their confidence and help your child to feel great about themselves.

It is important that your child has input into what you do together. To make sure it is something you are also happy to do too, discuss ideas together or show them a list of possible activities allowing them to make the final choice.

If you have more than one child they all need to have some Special Time with you individually so you can give them each your full attention. It needn't be for a long period of time though, say 15 minutes 2 or 3 times a week or it might work better for your family to have a longer period of time once a week with each child. Decide what will work best for you as a family. Aim to give the same amount of Special Time to each child. Make sure that other family members know when you are spending Special Time with each child and that it's not a time to interrupt – let them know that their Special Time will happen too.

Special Time shouldn't be taken away as a punishment. It's earned simply because they are your child and are loved. It acknowledges the specialness of that child to you.

## Special Time ideas

### Ideas for shorter periods of time:

- Complete a puzzle or play a board game.
- Read a book together – read different parts each and discuss what is happening in the story.
- Colour pictures together.
- Listen to music and talk about favourite music / bands
- Have a game of football in the garden
- Take turns on the trampoline

### Ideas for longer periods of time:

- A trip to somewhere you've never been before (a museum, a theme park, a different town).
- A shopping trip.
- Time at the driving range or a pitch and putt course.
- A trip to see a film at the cinema taking time to talk about it afterwards – that's when you get to know what your child thinks.
- Sign up for an activity to do together e.g. physical activity, arts and crafts activity, cooking activity.
- Do some gardening together, create a vegetable patch or flower bed.
- Go for a walk in the forest.
- Spend an afternoon at the beach.
- Build something together – lego, model aeroplane, birdhouse!

During your Special Time activity try and let the child take the lead, but help them out and give them praise and encouragement for what they are doing. As long as they safe try not to take over, even if what you are making together looks like a wreck or they keep dropping the ball! It is about the process of giving your child your attention and making them feel valued, not how perfect the outcome is.