



# Special Time

## CHEAT SHEET

### What is Daily Special Time ?

A daily scheduled and specified amount of uninterrupted one-on-one time with your child.

### Why is it so Important ?

To feel loved and important, our kids need our undivided attention on a daily basis. Prioritizing and being consistent about special time tells our kids we see them, they are worthy, and they matter.

## BENEFITS OF SPECIAL TIME

- ✓ Strengthens bond with your child
- ✓ Increases empathy towards your child
- ✓ Decreases behavioral problems
- ✓ Increases cooperation
- ✓ Increases affection
- ✓ Decreases stress
- ✓ Promotes self-regulation

### How do I Create Special Time ?

#### PLAN AHEAD

Schedule Special Time just like you'd schedule "dentist appointment" or "soccer practice." Aim for 15 minutes each day.

## EXPLAIN SPECIAL TIME TO YOUR CHILD

“Tomorrow after school, we’re going to have Special Time! You get to choose whatever activity you want to do and Mommy is going to play with you.” Build it up, making sure to explain how excited you are to spend one-on-one time together. Emphasize that your child is in charge and prompt him to start thinking about how he wants to spend the time. The more involved he feels, the more excited and invested he will be.

## SET A TIMER

This is important! By setting a timer at the beginning of Special Time, you relinquish control over the time. When Special Time is over, it’s because the timer went off, not because you determined it was time to stop playing. At first, giving up control will feel insanely hard, but eventually it becomes a relief. Just sit back and let your child drive the imagination train.

## LET THE FUN BEGIN

Turn off all electronics, put your to-do lists aside, and immerse yourself in your child’s world.

## FOLLOW YOUR CHILD’S LEAD

This is the key to Special Time -*your child is in control!*

## CHANNEL YOUR INNER CHILD

Drop your judgments, reframe your negative thoughts, and let yourself delight in your child’s passions.

## SHOW GENUINE INTEREST

Adopt a curious mindset and challenge yourself to stay present with your child. This is one of the most powerful ways to convey your love.