



On The Phone

Here are some tips to help your child learn to respect phone time.

Plan Ahead

Call Back Later: avoid making calls at times when your child is likely to need your attention (for example, before or after school, at meals or bed time). Tell callers: "I'll have to call you back later."

Keep Calls Short: save longer calls for when your child is sleeping, at school, or when another adult is around to help out.

Things To Try

Find An Activity: take the time to get your child involved in an activity before you use the phone. You may want to keep a few toys or some paper and crayons near the phone. Children sometimes just want to be nearby and this can keep them occupied while you are on the phone.

State Expectations Clearly: "I'm going to make a call now. Please play quietly until I'm finished."

Use a Timer: when you set the timer, explain that you will be available to talk when the timer rings. You can even have the child set the timer - that way he can keep checking back with the timer instead of interrupting you.

Interruptions: when your child interrupts, say calmly, "I'm talking on the phone now. I'll talk with you when I'm finished." Then follow through on your promise.

Praise: remember to praise your child for following the rules, "I really appreciated how you played quietly while I was on the phone."

If All Else Fails

Consequences: if your child continues to interrupt or is behaving inappropriately, end the conversation and deal with your child's behavior. Use a consequence for misbehavior that fits the situation, for example, playing too roughly - spend quiet time in room; fighting over the TV - turn TV off, etc.

For more information Call the Family Help Line: 800.932.4673