



Parenting Tips from a Play Therapist

Taken from Child Parent Relationship Training by Sue Bratton and Garry Landreth



PARENTING TIP SPECIAL TOPIC

DEEPEN YOUR CONNECTION WITH ONE-TO-ONE TIME

nothing at this moment is as important as my relationship with this child.

Spending dedicated, intentional time with your child with no distractions deepens connection, reduces power struggles, and encourages repair. It's fun! Your child is great!!

homework

select a day and time
begin gathering toys or project supplies

main topics



special playtime

Once a week for 30 minutes. For younger children, set out specific types of toys. (See handout.)



one-to-one time

Older children might be interested in projects or doing something. No electronics and no high \$.



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Garry Landreth

One-to-One Time

Goals:

- 😊 To allow to the child to communicate thoughts, needs, and feelings to his parent, and for the parent to communicate that understanding back to the child.
- 😊 To help the child experience more positive feelings of self-respect, self-worth, confidence, and competence through feeling accepted, understood, and valued and ultimately develop self-control, responsibility for actions, and learn to get their needs met in appropriate ways.
- 😊 To strengthen the parent-child relationship and foster a sense of trust, security, and closeness for both parent and child.
- 😊 To increase the level of playfulness and enjoyment between parent and child.

**30 minutes
once a week**



Let the
Child Lead

No Questions
or Suggestions

Use Reflective
Responding

Set Limits Only
When Needed

Ensure Safety
for the Child
and Adult

Stick to the
Time
Constraint

1:1
YOUNG
CHILDREN

ONE-TO-ONE TIME

Children ages 3-8

- ✓ Make an Appointment
- ✓ Let the Child Lead
- ✓ Be Present



PREPARATION

Gather toys from each category listed on the back.

Place the toys in a box set aside for use only during one-to-one time.

Determine a place with no interruptions and mark the boundary with a blanket or beach towel.

Give your child a written invitation including the day and time letting them know you are looking forward to spending time with them.



DURING THE SESSION

Set out the toys in the suggested pattern.

Limit distractions placing devices on silent.

Invite the child to join you.

Say, "During our time together, you can play with all the toys in most of the ways you want."

Pause. Let them lead the play.

Focus on reflective responding. (PTP1)

CLEAN-UP

During the play, stay present by not putting toys away.

Give a 5-minute warning before the timer.

When the timer sounds, express delight saying you had fun playing with them.

Remind them that you will put the toys in the box.

Transition to a snack or other activity.



Set out pre-selected toys in a U-shape on a blanket or beach towel.



Real-Life Toys

- Baby Doll and Bottle
- Kitchen Dishes and Utensils
- Toy Phones and Car Keys
- Dollhouse People or Animal Family

- Doctor Kit with Bandages
- Police Dress-Up
- Superhero
- Cash Register
- Play Money



SPECIAL PLAYTIME TOYS

Choose at least one or two toys from each of the 3 categories focusing on your child's interests.

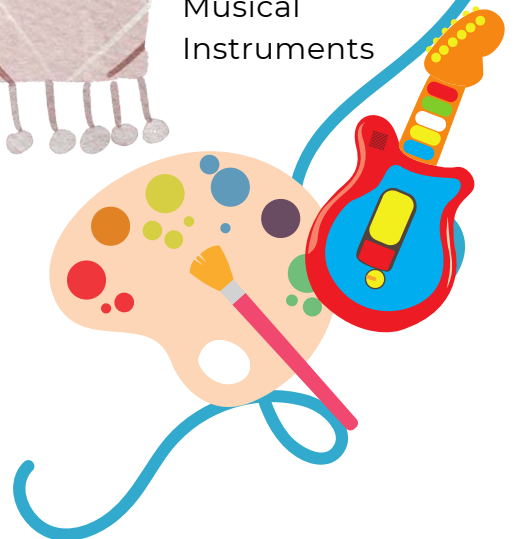
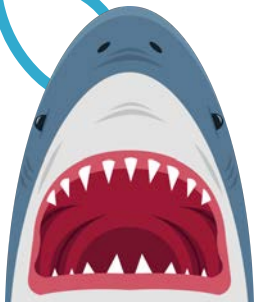
Creative Expression Toys

- Art Supplies
- Paper
- Play-Doh
- Ring Toss Game
- Foam Balls
- Small Musical Instruments



Aggressive Toys

- Dart guns with target
- Rubber Knife
- Foam swords
- Toy Handcuffs
- Aggressive Animals - sharks, dinosaurs, etc.



Entrance

**1:1
TEENS
TWEENS**

ONE-TO-ONE TIME

Older Children 9-17

Engage your older child or teen in projects or activities they are interested in.

- ✓ **Make an Appointment**
Set aside a consistent day and time when you are both at your best.
- ✓ **Give Choices**
Let your child choose the activity or project keeping costs minimal. No electronics.
- ✓ **Be Present**
Limit distractions by turning off all devices.



SUGGESTED ACTIVITIES

Play board games
Build Legos
Cook something new
Make a craft
Draw pictures
Listen to their favorite music
Put together a puzzle
Walk outside

REMEMBER

Let your child decide the activity. Then learn together or encourage your child to teach you.

Remember - you are not the expert.

CONNECT - LISTEN - REFLECT - BE PATIENT