

Family Time Tip Sheet



**Resilient
Parenting**

FOR BEREAVED FAMILIES

What is Family Time?

- » Once a week, every week
- » About 1-2 hours
- » Planned in advance, at a regular time
- » An activity that everyone enjoys
- » Chosen by your children (you have veto rights)
- » It's active – no TV or movies
- » Not expensive
- » No electronics
- » No complaining or fighting
- » Just for family members who live with you

Benefits of Family Time

- » Shows children that their family is a place where positive things happen
- » Increases children's sense of security and stability
- » Strengthens the bonds between family members
- » Is a positive routine your children can count on

DON'T:

- » Bring friends or relatives who do not live with you
- » Schedule expensive activities

DO:

- » Set a regular time aside each week
- » Let children choose the activity
- » Brainstorm possible activities, then draw one out of a jar each week
- » Give children a menu of activities if they are having a hard time choosing



How to Make Family Time Work in Your Family

Set a Regular Time

When you set a regular time for Family Time, it shows children that it is an important activity. It's a good idea to have a backup time because occasionally your regular time won't work.

Let Children Choose

Letting children choose what to do for Family Time is hard for some parents. However, making decisions as a family is an important skill. Also, letting children decide on the activity is a way to show them that their choices matter. If they choose the activity, they will be more likely to enjoy it. When children choose something you don't like, try to make the best of it, as long as it is within the rules. You have veto power if their choice is too expensive or takes too much time.

How to Choose an Activity

Some parents have their children brainstorm lots of activities. Then they put them in a jar and pick one out each week. To make this work, everyone has to agree to do the activities before they go in the jar.

At first it might be hard for children to come up with ideas or they might suggest ideas that cost too much or are not active. If this happens, you can give your children a "menu" to choose from for the first couple of times.

Activities for Families with Both Younger and Older Children

When you have both younger and older children, it is more challenging to come up with an activity that works for everyone. Families can try doing activities that have different tasks for children of different ages. For example, if you are making pizza together, an older child can cut up the toppings and a younger child can spread them. Another idea is to do games in teams and have both younger and older members on each team.

Ideas for Family Time

- » Do an art or craft project
- » Play board games
- » Go swimming
- » Go to the park
- » Take a walk
- » Watch ducks at a pond
- » Go out for ice cream
- » Make paper airplanes
- » Bake cookies
- » Work on a puzzle
- » Have a picnic
- » Make pizza
- » Make a home video
- » Go on a hike
- » Go bowling
- » Play Frisbee
- » Have a BBQ
- » Go to a museum
- » Go roller or ice skating
- » Do hair and make-up
- » Camp in the backyard
- » Go on a bike ride
- » Have a sing-along
- » Plant some flowers
- » Play charades