

### Special Time

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Special Time is a kind of “time in” that builds connection with a child.

It is an activity during which you as an adult put a child in full charge of your mutual relationship, as far as the child can think\*.

- For a specific period of time (it could be anywhere from one minute to a full hour) you tell the child it is his/her special time, and let him know that you are willing to do anything the child wants to do.
- You focus your entire attention on the child and follow his or her lead, whether the child tells or simply shows you what she or he wants to do.
- During Special Time, you don't try to “improve,” to teach, or to otherwise modify what the child signals, but enthusiastically attempt to follow his/her lead for the specified time. When the period of time is up, let the child know that this Special Time is over.
- What a child chooses will help you see what s/he loves and what s/he wants. This is very important communication for you to receive. When the child can show you what s/he loves, and you pay warm attention, s/he feels closer and more securely connected to you.

\*If the child wants to do something hurtful, harmful, or unethical, the child is not thinking well, and you must use your judgment to keep the situation safe. That is why the stipulation is that the “child is in full charge...as far as the child can think.” As the adult, you must never give up your independent perspective on what is safe.