



Managing Difficult Behavior in Public

When children have behavior problems, it can be hard to take them out in public. Children do things that embarrass us in front of others, like yelling, talking back, or even having a full-blown temper tantrum.

And sometimes-telling children to stop just make things worse. Strangers may stare or even make comments, and you may feel like you just want to get finished and leave as quickly as possible. So, children get away with doing things in public that they would not be allowed to do at home

Here are some other things to do to help your child behave in public:

- *Make a Plan*
- *During the Outing use Praise, Rules, & Fun!*
- *Public Time Out- Stick to the Script*



Make a Plan Before You Leave the House

Tell your child where you are going, and how you want your child to act, such as staying by you and keeping his hands to himself.

- Plan activities to keep them occupied during outings, such as crossing items off the grocery list, playing games like, “I spy something red,” or letting them help you by putting items in the grocery cart.
- Explain to your child that if needed, you are going to give them a time out.

During the Outing use Rules, Praise, and Make it Fun!

- Praise your child during the outing for behaviors that you like, such as using his indoor voice, or walking beside you.
- It is important to remind your child the reason for the rules you set for the outing, such as being quiet in the movie so others can hear.
- If you see that your child is getting tired, hungry, or bored, it is a good idea to go home or at least take a break. Try not to take your child out past his bedtime or during times that he is usually taking a nap.
- Plan some part of your trip that will be fun for your child. For example, if you are at the mall, you could walk through a store your child enjoys, like a pet store or toy store.
- At the end of the outing, give lots of praise for those good behaviors (staying nearby you in the store), and give no attention to any problem behaviors that happened

Public Time Out- Stick to the Script

- Stick to the Time Out script you use at home.
- Keep a small blanket or placemat with you to use as the “time out chair”, so that time out can be done anywhere.
- When you need to choose a time out spot, choose an out of the way place where there is nothing fun to do.
- Some parents have put their child on benches in the mall, the front steps during church, or the corner of a grocery store. When their car is close, some parents find they can put the child in the back seat while they lean against the car, keeping in mind safety precautions such as having the window cracked.
- Always watch your child during time out.