

For Ages  
4-7

# Waiting Is Not Forever

Elizabeth Verdick

Illustrated by Marieka Heinlen



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free spirit  
PUBLISHING®



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**Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data**

Names: Verdick, Elizabeth, author. | Heinlen, Marieka, illustrator.

Title: Waiting is not forever / Elizabeth Verdick, Marieka Heinlen.

Description: Minneapolis : Free Spirit Publishing Inc., 2020. | Series: Best behavior series | Audience: Ages 4–7.

Identifiers: LCCN 2019031727 (print) | LCCN 2019031728 (ebook) | ISBN 9781631984693 (paperback) | ISBN 9781631984709 (pdf) | ISBN 9781631984686 (epub)

Subjects: LCSH: Child rearing—Juvenile literature. | Patience—Juvenile literature. | Self-control—Juvenile literature.

Classification: LCC HQ769 .V447 2020 (print) | LCC HQ769 (ebook) | DDC 155.4/138--dc23

LC record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019031727>

LC ebook record available at <https://lccn.loc.gov/2019031728>

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Cover and interior design by Shannon Pourciau

**Free Spirit Publishing**

An imprint of Teacher Created Materials

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To Andrew, Lucas, Justin, and Nate,  
who inspired this book one summer.  
—E.V.

For Pam and Walt, who worked so hard  
to realize a dream and who raised a few  
of the most patient people I know.  
—M.H.

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You do lots of waiting.



Sometimes you wait  
for small things . . .

A snack . . .  
the line to end . . .



your turn on the swings.



## Tips and Activities for Caregivers and Parents

When you think about it, children are almost always waiting for something . . . to be picked up or dropped off, to get to do their favorite activities, to grow, to gain new skills. They wait for their birthday, holidays, a new sibling; they wait for permission, for recognition, for greater independence. All this waiting—this anticipating—brings mixed feelings: excitement, anxiety, frustration, boredom, hope. As adults, we can recognize what children are experiencing in these moments and find ways to help.

### Teach Waiting Words

Yes, waiting is frustrating! But it's also a fact of life. How we talk about waiting can help put a positive spin on it. Encourage children to avoid complaining while waiting. Instead, they can find something fun to do while they wait, and stay calm by using *waiting words*:

"Waiting is not forever."

"I'm calm. I'm patient."

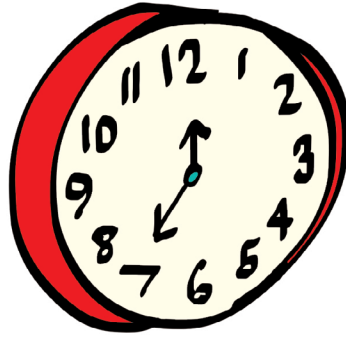
"I can chill a little longer."

"This will be worth the wait!"

"I can wait a while with a smile."

### Use Visuals

When you make waiting more concrete for children, they know what to expect and feel a greater sense of control. Use visual timers, countdown calendars, and interactive classroom calendars that highlight daily activities and special events. These tools help children develop routines, a sense of time, and the skill of patience.



### Teach Wanting/Waiting Signals

At home or in the classroom, it helps to have unspoken signals that enhance communication. Think about how a child tries to get your attention when you're speaking with others, for example. Children may interrupt with questions or requests. Teach children a nonverbal signal they can use to let you know they want you, such as gently touching your arm or shoulder. You can signal back with a hand squeeze or a nod with one finger held up to indicate "Wait." At first, respond as soon as you can and thank the child for waiting. Over time, you can delay a bit longer, giving a gentle squeeze or special hand signal every few minutes to show that you haven't forgotten the request.

### Help Their Bodies and Minds Stay Busy

Waiting isn't as boring when you're actively engaged in some type of activity. Encourage children to think head to toe, finding a variety of ways to keep themselves entertained.

