



GUIDE FOR BABYSITTERS



When a person becomes a baby-sitter, you are entrusted with a child's life. Your primary responsibility is to care for the children's needs and most of all keep them safe. Being confident and prepared will increase the trust the parents have in your abilities. A well-prepared babysitter will not only be respected but also greatly appreciated by parents.

-  Prepare and have handy, an Emergency Information form including the following information: Family name, children's names, house address, instructions on how to contact the parents, phone number(s) of close relatives and neighbors, doctor's name and phone number along with a medical release (if provided). Include the phone number of the closest hospital or poison control center.
-  Be sure to find out if any of the children are taking medication. Also find out the exact types of medicine being taken. This will be one of the questions asked by the E911 dispatcher. Get written instructions about any medicines to be given to the children -- how much and what time.
-  Make a list of medical problems including food allergies for all of the children.
-  In the event of an emergency: **Call 911: FIRST** before calling any one else on your list. For emergencies, time is critical.
-  Be sure to identify yourself by name, tell them you are babysitting and state the problem. State the address of the house where you are located. Give the phone number you are calling from and follow their instructions.
-  Having visitors while babysitting is a bad policy. Always get approval if you would like to have a visitor.
-  Find out who you should call in case of an emergency AND get their phone number.
-  Be sure to meet the family dog.
-  Either with the parents or as soon as you arrive, take a walk through the house and check the layout of the house. Look for anything that would hinder the execution of the emergency evacuation plan. This includes special locks, windows that cannot be climbed out.
-  Also during the walk through, clean up and correct any conditions which may be hazardous for the children, such as matches, lighter fluid, electric cords, plastic bags, medication, or other dangerous items.
-  Look to see if there is a pool and take appropriate safety actions.
-  Review the Family's Emergency Evacuation plan on more ways than one to get yourself and the children out of the house in case of fire or other dangers.
-  Make sure all the doors and windows are locked from the inside, and lock the front door after the parents leave. Check for doggie doors and any unlocked doors or windows leading to that area.

-  Be sure to find out the rules for allowing the children to eat or drink before bed.

WHAT TO DO AFTER THE PARENTS LEAVE:

-  If it is evening, turn on the porch/outside light and lock the outside doors.
-  If the children are asleep, check on them about every 15 minutes.
-  If the children are up, know their location at all times and never leave them unsupervised for too long.
-  If for any reason you must leave the house, take the CHILDREN With You!
-  DO NOT open the door for anyone unless you personally know the person. Also do not let anyone, even friends, in the house if instructed not to do so by the parents.
-  If someone insists on coming in or if you suspect a prowler, CALL 911.

IN CASE OF FIRE:

-  Sound the alarm -- yell **FIRE** as loud as possible.
-  If possible, close the door to the area where the fire is.
-  **Ensuring that everyone is SAFE is your first priority**, not attempting to extinguish the fire.
-  Get everyone out of the house, and do not go back in for any reason.
-  Keep all the children together near the street or go to the approved neighbor's home.
-  Call the dispatcher at 911 and leave the children with the neighbors, then go back outside to direct the firefighters to the fire if you need to do so.