

## BABYSITTING SAFETY TIPS: WHAT PARENTS AND SITTERS NEED TO KNOW

Whether you are returning to work or need a few hours to yourself, leaving your child under the care of someone new can be a daunting task for many parents.

**Following are some guidelines that can help parents when hiring a babysitter:**

- Invite the sitter to a formal interview and get acquainted with her.
- Prepare a list of questions regarding their skills, hobbies and experience. You may also wish to know what they enjoy about babysitting and how they have handled conflict or emergencies in the past. The interview also allows the sitter to express any concerns or questions they may have, for example, if your child is an infant, it may make a sitter uncomfortable if they have never cared for one before.
- After the interview, allow your child and the potential sitter some time to get to know one another. We encourage you to stay in the house but observe the quality of the interaction from afar. It is important that both you and your child feel comfortable and safe with the sitter.
- Thoroughly check the sitter's references.
- If your child is old enough, make sure he understands that he has the right to feel safe and protected at all times. If someone touches him or asks him to do something that leaves him feeling uncomfortable or scared, he has the right to say NO!



As children grow into adolescence, they become more mature and seek to be more independent. Babysitting is a great way to earn money, but it comes with a lot of rules and responsibilities.

**Following are some helpful tips that will help prepare your teen for the important duties of a babysitter:**

- Encourage your teen to follow an accredited Babysitting Training Course, supplemented with First Aid and CPR training.
- It is not recommended to place babysitting ads on the internet, instead opt for word-of-mouth between family and friends. If you choose to post an ad on either a bulletin board or on the Internet, make sure the contact information listed is your telephone number at home. This enables parents to screen calls.
- It's smart to begin babysitting by caring first for younger siblings, cousins, and children of family friends.
- Talk to your child about setting personal boundaries and remind them to always trust their internal alarm system. If your child does not feel comfortable with a prospective babysitting job or the family, they have the right to refuse.



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- Before accepting any babysitting jobs, make sure your child understands the importance of providing you with all pertinent information: Names of the parents, address, telephone numbers, date and time of departure and return.

### **Questions Your Child Should Ask During the Interview with The Prospective Employer**

#### **Babysitting Role:**

- What do you expect of me? Will I be cooking meals? Helping with homework? Performing chores? Bathing the children? Putting them to bed?
- Can I take the children outdoors?
- Will I be babysitting during the day, evening or overnight?
- Do you have an updated list of all emergency contacts? Where is the list posted?
- If you are not available, whom should I call in case of an emergency?
- What are the children's routines: snacks, activities, toileting and bedtimes?
- Where is the first aid kit located? The fire extinguisher?

#### **About the Child:**

- How many children will I care for and what are their ages?
- Do your children take any medication?
- Do your children have any medical conditions that I need to be aware of? Asthma? Allergies?
- Do your children have any favourite toys, books, songs and activities?
- Is there anything that scares your children?
- Can your children have friends over when you are not home?
- Do you allow your children to access the Internet when you are not home?



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- Can your children watch TV? Which shows are permitted and which are restricted?
- Do your children need help in specific areas? Sharing, playing with others?
- How do you comfort your child when he cries, throws a tantrum or refuses to go to bed?
- Are there any religious or cultural matters I should be aware of?
- What are your household rules?
- Is there anything else that I should be aware of?

### **When Your Child Leaves to Babysit:**

- Ask your child where she will be babysitting and what time she will be home.
- How is your child getting to-and-from her destination? It is highly recommended that parents drive and pick up their children.
- Check-in on your child from time to time to know how things are going.

