

BABYSITTING TIPS

GETTING STARTED

- Take a babysitting course. For more info go to BostonRedCross.org or call 617-375-0700.
- Let friends, neighbors and people in your church know that you are interested.
- Make a flyer with your contact information and give it to people you know who have kids.
- Arrange to meet the parents and the child(ren) before babysitting.
- Agree on your pay beforehand. Rates may vary, depending on time of day and number of children. Settle on a rate that is comfortable for you and the parents.
- Arrange transportation to and from the employer's home and know exactly where you are going.
- Arrive early.

GET SPECIFIC INSTRUCTIONS

- Find out important information about the kids: ages, bed/nap times and routines, foods, medicines, allergies, personal habits
- Know the rules of the house: Are the kids allowed to have friends over? What can they watch on TV?
- Learn what is expected of you: Cooking dinner? Giving baths? Washing dishes?
- Find out where safety equipment is kept: fire extinguishers, first aid supplies, a flashlight
- Get contact info in case of an emergency: their cell phone numbers, where they will be, phone number of a friend or neighbor

PHONE

- Don't tell callers that you are baby-sitting home alone
- Keep a note pad to take messages near the phone
- Keep important information near the phone
 - Parents' cell phone numbers
 - Emergency contacts (relative or neighbor)
 - Poison Control: 617-232-2120
 - 9-1-1
 - The address of the house where you are babysitting

HOME SAFETY

- Don't allow anyone into the house unless specifically authorized.
- Don't go outside to investigate strange noises or suspicious activities.
- Be sure that all doors and windows are locked.
- Familiarize yourself with the house: learn the locations of the bedrooms, bathrooms, and exits and find out which rooms the children will be sleeping in.

COOKING SAFETY

- Avoid giving children hazardous foods (peanut butter, hard candy, or hotdogs)
- Closely supervise children in the kitchen
- Turn pot handles inward
- Smother a pan or toaster fire with a lid or pour flour on it. NEVER use water.
- Roll up appliance cords.
- Put a child in a playpen, high chair or walker while you're cooking.

FIRST AID

- Learn CPR & First Aid. Find a course at BostonRedCross.org or call 617-375-0700.
- If something other than food is swallowed by the child call Poison Control (617-232-2120) and have the container ready to be read over the phone
- Put cool water on a burn
 - If the skin is already blistered, dead white, brown, or charred, call 9-1-1
- For minor scrapes and cuts, disinfect and use a sterile bandage
- Be sure to let the parents know about any incidents (Call them if it's an emergency. If not, tell them when they get home.)

FIRE SAFETY

1. Know in advance possible escape routes
2. Shut doors to keep smoke from advancing
3. Show children how to "stop, drop, and roll"
4. Get everybody out of the house
5. Do not go back into the burning house
6. Sound the alarm and yell FIRE as loud as possible
7. Call 9-1-1 from a neighboring house

