Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics 4 Fun and 4 Profit
Member’s Manual

Name: ___________________________
Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics 4 Fun and 4 Profit

4-H Member’s Manual

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Chapter 1

Are You Ready to Be a Kentucky 4-H Babysitter?

Babysitting is a very important job. Parents place their children, whom they value more than anything else in life, in the care of another person, the babysitter. When parents entrust the welfare of their children to a babysitter, they want to know that the care their children receive is the best. Parents and children want and deserve a competent babysitter.

Kentucky 4-H Babysitters have the qualities that make them the right person for the job. You will learn the qualities of a Kentucky 4-H Babysitter in this project. The project covers babysitting responsibilities, child development, developmentally appropriate play, guidance and discipline, safety and health practices, and business management.

Qualities of Kentucky 4-H Babysitters:

- Have the ability to communicate with children.
- Know the characteristics of children at different ages.
- Have the ability to play appropriately with children of different age groups.
- Understand what kids need to succeed.
- Have the ability to negotiate the business details involved in babysitting.
- Have at least two references from teachers, youth group leaders, or parents for whom they have babysat in the past.
- Arrive a few minutes early.
- Discuss normal routines in the home when babysitting.
- Discuss special situations in the home when babysitting.
- Manage their babysitting skills with respect to their parents, their employer parents, and the children they supervise.
- Have completed a babysitting course such as Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics 4 Fun and 4 Profit.
- Have an interest in children.
- Are mature, friendly, neat, kind, responsible, organized, and use common sense and good judgment.
- Practice safe, healthy lifestyles.
- Have a sense of responsibility and honesty.
- Have the ability to supervise children safely.
- Have the ability to carry out instructions.
- Have the ability to think clearly in emergencies.
- Have the ability to recognize safety hazards.
- Have the skills to provide first aid.
- Have the skills to provide basic meals.
- Have the skills to provide basic care for children.
Responsibilities

This is a list of responsibilities that Kentucky 4-H Babysitters practice to provide safe, reliable, babysitting services. As you work toward becoming a Kentucky 4-H Babysitter, you will learn about all the items listed below. You may list other responsibilities as you practice your babysitting skills.

Children under the age of 18 are considered minors. Remember, parents are still responsible for your actions, too. Ask your parents to help you set up a bank account. Ask your parents’ permission for each babysitting job. Call home if you are going to be late or you need a ride.

Your Responsibilities to Your Own Parents and the Employer Parent

A. Provide information about the employer parents to your own parents. Include:
   - Employer parent’s name
   - Address
   - Telephone numbers (home, cell)
   - Time of service (starting and ending time)
   - Number of children
   - Transportation to and from the job

B. Discuss the details of the job with the employer parent when you are asked to babysit.
   - Time of the service (starting and ending)
   - Telephone numbers (home, cell)
   - Fee/rates for service

C. Arrive on time or a few minutes early.

D. Tour the home to find the locations of things that may be used in case of an emergency.
   - Exits and room layout
   - Telephones
   - Flashlights
   - Fire extinguishers
   - First aid supplies
   - Change of clothes

E. Learn the normal rules set by the parents for the children.
   - Play activities and toys
   - Food habits, snacks and/or meals
   - Bathing

F. Learn the expectations of your employer for your conduct.
   - Television and/or other electronics use
   - Naps and/or bedtime
   - Playmates, guests
   - Pets and their care

G. Discuss special instructions with the employer parent.
   - Name, address, and phone number where they can be reached
   - Emergency information on the Safety Checklist form
   - Time of check-up phone call
   - Time when parent will return home
   - Special situations concerning the children, such as a diapering system if there is an infant in the home
   - Fears, health problems, allergies
   - Need for medications
   - Discipline and behaviors

H. Report any problems or unusual events to the parents upon their return.

I. Leave the house in a clean, organized condition.
Your Responsibilities to the Children

A. Supervise and participate with the children at all times.
   ♦ Talk to the children and give them attention.
   ♦ Reward a child for appropriate or creative behavior.
   ♦ Play games; improvise games and toys.
   ♦ Tell stories, learn the child’s interests.
B. Always stay awake and alert.
C. Observe safety practices with the children at all times.
   ♦ Keep doors locked and open only for persons approved by
     the parents ahead of time.
   ♦ Let the voice mail take calls. There is no need to answer
     the telephone.
   ♦ Listen to messages if you expect a call from the child’s
     parents.
   ♦ Hold a child’s hand when crossing a street.
   ♦ Wash hands often and teach the children cleanliness
     habits.
   ♦ Protect yourself and the children by avoiding strangers.
D. Be alert to safety hazards in the home. Plan activities that are
   appropriate for the age and development of the child. Change
   activities or the environment to avoid the need for discipline
   measures.
E. Follow proper procedure for emergencies:
   ♦ Apply first aid measures in case of injuries.
   ♦ Call 911.

Your Responsibilities to the Job

A. Keep a list of names and addresses of families.
B. Ask for letters of recommendation to present to new customers.
C. Keep a list of dates, times, expenses and money earned.
D. Arrange transportation to and from the job.
E. Be prompt or a few minutes early to the job.
F. Discuss babysitting fees/rates with the employer parent.
   ♦ Fees should be agreed upon before you accept the job.
   ♦ Fees can be charged by the hour or by the job.
   ♦ Fees should be kept comparable to your area.
   ♦ Rate can be higher for more than one child.
   ♦ Rate can be higher for extra housekeeping chores.
   ♦ Expect additional compensation if the parent is late
     returning.

Your Responsibilities to Yourself

♦ Expect to be treated kindly and respectfully.
♦ Expect employer parents to return on time.
♦ Be prepared (use the contents of the babysitting bag on p. 62).
♦ Plan to be a few minutes early.
♦ Dress neatly. Choose comfortable, washable clothes.
♦ Wear little jewelry. Sharp edges can injure. Small objects can go
  into little mouths.
♦ Be sure you are healthy (no colds, flu symptoms, or infections).
♦ Review first aid skills.
♦ Never ride home with someone you think has been drinking too much.
  Call your parents to pick you up.
♦ Consider opening a bank account.
♦ Plan to use your money wisely. Create a budget.
What Should a Babysitter Expect of the Employer Parent?

As in any relationship, establishing an understanding of what both people expect from each other will help maintain good relationships. Just as parents have certain things that they expect from the babysitter, there are certain things that a babysitter should expect from the parents.

A babysitter should expect the employer parent to:

- Be kind, courteous, and respectful to the sitter and everyone in general.
- Conduct telephone interviews to screen sitters.
- Select a sitter that best fits the family’s needs.
- Call in advance when possible.
- Inform the babysitter about the children’s personalities, hobbies, etc.
- Give the sitter a tour of the house.
- Introduce the sitter to the child or children.
- Discuss the children’s routine for meals, watching television, bathing, bedtime, and chores.
- Discuss what to do in case of an emergency.
- Discuss and agree upon a fee/rate for the service.
- Pay promptly and in full.
- Discuss expectations of the sitter regarding snacks, visitors, drugs, smoking, drinking, and talking on the telephone.
- Instruct children to be considerate of the babysitter and to follow the sitter’s instructions.
- Discuss special situations—for example, if medication is needed for a sick child.
- Discuss preferences for disciplinary actions.
- Discuss where they can be reached in case of an emergency.
- Return home as specified or call home if they are going to be later than expected.
- Make arrangements for the sitter to get home safely.
Safety Checklist and Family Information Sheet

Complete this form before the parents leave. Be sure all information is provided. In times of emergency, anxiety can interfere with your memory. This safety checklist will help you initiate your plan of action if an emergency occurs. The best way to handle an emergency is to be prepared. Remember! The welfare of others depends on you and your babysitting skills. This information will allow the local emergency agencies to help you.

Family Name: ____________________________________________
Street Address: __________________________________________

In case of an ACCIDENT requiring immediate help: Call 911.

In case of FIRE: get out of house and Call 911.

IF POISONING is suspected: Call Poison Control Center: 1-800-222-1222

Information to request from child’s parent or guardian

Name of parent or guardian 1: _______________________________________
Telephone where parent can be reached: ________________________________
Address where parent will be: _________________________________________
Name of parent or guardian 2: _______________________________________
Telephone where parent can be reached: ________________________________
Address where parent will be: _________________________________________

Parent will call home at: ________ (time)   Parent will be home at: ________ (time)
Alternate person to call if parents can’t be reached: _______________________
Telephone: _________________________________________________________
Family doctor: _______________________________________________  Telephone: __________________
Questions to Ask Employer Parent

Children’s names & ages:

What are the rules in the household?

What play activities are off limits or restricted?

How would you like me to handle misbehavior?

Do the children have allergies to food, insects, or other things?

What can the children eat and drink? When?

What are the routines for naps and bedtime?

What are the children’s favorite play activities?
Characteristics of a Good Babysitter

Below is a list of words describing a good babysitter. Find these words hidden in the box of letters. Draw a circle around the hidden words. The words may be hidden horizontally, vertically, diagonally or backwards.

FUN
K I E N H F T C L S Y R E D E
KIND
M N U L L O A A O H E B N E F
NEAT
G F O S B R N F E S V A T Z A
SAFE
N Z Z W I A O E P N Y F E I S
CARING
C F H N L T T O S L L U R N C
FRIENDLY
Y M G Z U E N P D T M H T A L
HONEST
D N I K T S D N A N M G A G M
ADAPTABLE
Q O P O I E E G Q D O G I R A
MATURE
M R S B F I O C E U A B N O T
SKILLED
V V L F R K H G S A W O I V U
DEPENDABLE
C E R F K N L N M W B I N M R
ENTERTAINING
E L B A D N E P E D C L G Y E
KNOWLEDGEABLE
S K I L L E D L F S X M E R C
Created at puzzlermaker.discoveryeducation.com Mary S. Averbeck, Kenton County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development.
The Basic Care of Infants and Children

Caring for infants and children is a big responsibility. In this section the basic care of children and the safety issues involved in the normal, everyday activities of daily living are discussed. As a Kentucky 4-H Babysitter you will be able to approach these tasks correctly and confidently. Practicing some of these tasks on a doll will help build your skills and confidence.

Since infants are so small, most young people do not feel comfortable with them at first. However, after holding an infant for a little while, you will become more at ease.

Holding an Infant

Infants like to be held close, to be talked to, and to listen to lullabies and other simple songs. As babies grow and gain more muscle control, they become easier to handle.

1. Remember to always support the neck, back, and head.
2. With the infant on his back, slide your hand under the legs and lift slightly.
3. Slide the other hand up under the back and support the neck and head with your hand.
4. Gently raise the infant up into your arms and close to your body.
5. When holding the infant, let his head and back rest upon your arm.
6. When moving the infant, replace your hand under the back, neck, and head for support.
Comforting a Crying Infant

Babies communicate by crying. Since they cannot talk, crying is how babies tell us what they feel and need. It is normal for a baby to cry for attention. These are short crying spells. The baby will quit crying when his needs are met. If the baby continues to cry and you are unable to find the cause, the baby may need medical attention.

Why do Babies Cry?

- May be hungry or thirsty
- May be lonely or bored
- May be tense or over-stimulated
- May not be feeling well
- May have a wet or soiled diaper
- May be tired or sleepy
- May be too warm or too cold

Ways to comfort a crying infant...

Some infants are helped by rocking, walking, patting on the back, or by a pacifier in the mouth. For others, singing softly or playing music can be very soothing if played at a moderate volume. Certain stimulation, however, may be irritating to any baby – for example, ringing telephones, barking dogs, and roaring vacuum cleaners.

Feeding an Infant

Feeding an infant should be an enjoyable time for both you and the baby. Bottles and bibs, spitting up and burping and messy faces are all a part of feeding the baby. Parents should have the bottles of breast milk or formula already prepared. Keep the bottles cold in the refrigerator until you are ready to feed the baby. You will be expected to warm the bottle and feed the baby according to the parents’ instructions. Before the parents leave, write down specific instructions and feeding schedules. If possible, you may want to arrange a time to observe the mother feeding the baby.

1. Wash your hands before beginning.
2. Warm the bottle by placing it in a pan of warm water. Never warm the bottle in the microwave oven because breast milk or formula can become very hot and cause serious burns to the child’s mouth or throat. Microwave ovens can heat unevenly so there may be hot spots even if the liquid feels okay when you test it.
3. Test the temperature of the liquid by shaking a few drops on your wrist. When it feels warm (not too hot or too cold), it is ready.
4. Place the bottle and a clean towel by the chair in which you will be sitting.
5. Relax. Babies are sensitive to the mood of the person caring for them. The baby will relax with you and the feeding will be easier and enjoyable.
6. Always hold the baby with his head cradled on your arm. The infant enjoys the closeness, and it is safer for him to eat in this position. Never prop the bottle and leave the baby.
7. Tuck a clean towel under the baby’s chin to catch breast milk or formula that may leak out.
8. Hold the bottle upright so the nipple is always full of liquid to prevent the baby from sucking in air.
9. Relax, rock the baby, and sing a lullaby. This is a special time with the baby.
10. Burp the baby to remove the excess air and gas from the stomach. This should be done when the baby has taken approximately one half of the breast milk or formula.

How to Burp a Baby

There are three methods. Use the method that works best for the baby that you are babysitting. The parents may be able to tell you which works for them.

1. Over the shoulder:
   • Place the baby facing your shoulder, supporting the head and back area with your hands.
   • Pat or gently rub upward on the baby’s back until he burps.
2. Upright position:
   • Place the baby in an upright position and lean him forward against your arm, supporting the chin with your hand.
   • Pat or gently rub upward on the baby’s back until he burps.
3. Over the lap position:
   • Place the baby face down across your lap. Be careful not to block the baby’s air way.
   • Pat or gently rub upward until the baby burps.

Diapering an infant

Check diaper wearers frequently. Some babies may fuss or cry when they need a diaper change. Others may not. It is important to remove the soiled diaper as soon as possible to prevent diaper rash and keep the baby comfortable. Notice the bowel movement to make sure it is normal. Babies usually wear diapers until they are around two to two-and-a-half years old. Ask the parents if there are any special instructions.
1. Collect all necessary supplies before you begin (disposable diaper or clean cloth diaper and a diaper cover, as well as other supplies that parents recommend). Have everything within reach.

2. Wash your hands before beginning.

3. Keep the baby under constant supervision. Never leave an infant or toddler alone on a changing table. It only takes seconds for a child to roll off a changing table.

4. With the child lying on his back, remove the soiled diaper, fold up and set aside.

5. Slightly lift the baby by the ankles and thoroughly clean the infant’s bottom. Wipe from front to back and clean all skin folds and creases.

6. Only apply powder or ointment if instructed by parents.

7. Place a clean diaper under the baby’s bottom and pull the diaper up between the legs.

8. Fasten the front and back of the diaper as parents have instructed.

9. Dispose of the soiled contents in the toilet. Discard the diaper in the diaper pail or garbage according to parents’ instructions.

Always wash your hands when finished.

**Dressing and Undressing an Infant or Toddler**

Be gentle and do not hurry. Talk to the child so he will know what to expect next. Some children want to dress and undress themselves. This is a good time to teach them how to manage their clothes. Pullover shirts and tops can frighten children. Involve the child by allowing him to help as much as possible.

1. Stretch the neck of pullover clothing and gently guide it over the head. Avoid roughly dragging or forcing clothing over the head and face areas. This may hurt the eyes, ears, nose, or frighten the child.

2. Draw the child’s arm or leg through the sleeve or leg of the clothing. Never force arms or legs into clothing.

3. Allow older children to assist in dressing and undressing themselves. It may take longer, but it will help them build skills, self-esteem, and confidence.

4. Teach the child to place dirty clothes in the hamper and to hang up clothing that can be worn again.

**Putting an Infant to Bed: Why Back is Best**

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that healthy infants be placed on their backs for sleep, as this is the safest position for breathing. Putting babies to sleep on their backs decreases their chances of Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID).

Sudden Unexpected Infant Death (SUID) includes Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) and other reasons for unexplained infant death. It is responsible for more infant deaths during the first year of life in the United States than any other cause.
Recent evidence has shown that side sleeping should be avoided for safety reasons. This recommendation of putting babies down on their backs applies to infants throughout the first year of life. However, it is particularly important during the first six months, when the incidence of SUID is the highest.

Also, avoid placing infants to sleep on waterbeds, sofas, or soft mattresses. Their noses can be blocked by the soft surfaces. Without air to breathe, they will suffocate and die. Always put infants to sleep on a firm surface. Do not place toys, pillows, or any other object in the bed with the infant. Be sure to ask the parents about the amount of clothing to put on the infant for sleeping. Overheating can cause SUID in young infants.

While sleeping on the back is important, infants should spend some time on their stomachs when they are awake and being observed. This will help to develop their shoulder muscles and their head control and will avoid the development of flat spots on the back of their heads.

Bathing Toddlers/Small Children

According to the American Red Cross, a babysitter should only agree to supervise baths for toddlers and young children, and not for infants. Baths should be provided only if requested by the parents. If you are requested to bathe the children, ask the parents for specific instructions about the needed supplies, clothes and bathing routine. Harmful accidents can occur during bath time. A child can drown in only a few inches of water. He could turn the hot water on and get burned. She could fall and injure herself if not strictly supervised.

- Never leave the child alone in the water, not even for a second.
- If the phone or doorbell rings, ignore it.
- Remove electrical appliances from the bathing area (curling irons, hair dryers, radios).
- Always test the water temperature before allowing the child to get into the tub.
- Place a towel in the bottom of the tub to prevent slipping.
- Never allow children to stand up or play roughly in the tub.
- Assist the child while undressing, getting into and out of the tub, and dressing.
- Wipe up any water on the floor.

Putting Children to Bed

Bedtime is an enjoyable time with children, but it can also be a very challenging time. The time for bed may differ on weekdays and weekends. Discuss the routine with the parents and write it down so you won’t forget.
• Plan quiet activities for the 30 minutes before bedtime. Activities such as reading, working puzzles, coloring, or watching appropriate television programs may calm the child.

• Let the child know about 15 minutes ahead when bedtime will be. This will allow him to finish his activity.

• Be firm but friendly when enforcing bedtime.

• If the child seems frightened of the dark, try leaving on a light, keeping the bedroom door open, or staying with him for a little while.

• Check on the child every hour to make sure he is okay.

• If you are listening to music or watching television, turn the volume down low so you can hear the child if he cries or calls for you.

• Avoid using ear buds or earphones. They will keep you from hearing important sounds.

• Stay awake!

Feeding Toddlers and Children

Babysitters may be asked to prepare simple meals or warm up meals that have already been prepared. Discuss meal time with the parents. Ask for specific instructions on how to feed infants and toddlers. Meals and snacks should be easy to prepare. Trying to prepare difficult meals could require too much attention away from the children. Kitchen appliances can be tricky to use the first time. Ask the parents for specific instructions for any appliances that you may be using. A kitchen can be a dangerous place for children. Always keep them under constant supervision during food preparation and meal time.

Always wash your hands and have the children wash their hands before preparing food or eating meals.

• Seat children around the table for meals and snacks. Don’t allow them to walk around, stand, run, or play while eating.

• Always secure the straps on high chairs.

• Never leave a child unattended, whether in a high chair or seated at the table.

• Allow the children plenty of time to eat and be patient with them. Encourage them to eat slowly and chew food well.

• Never force a child to eat.

• Cut the food into small pieces and serve small portions.

• Do not get upset over spills. Clean up the spill and do not fuss at the child. Everyone has accidents.

• Remember, children mimic adults and learn by example, so set a good example with your eating habits.

• Report to the parents what and how much food the children ate.
Characteristics of Children

It is true that all people are alike in some aspects and all people are different in other aspects. The ways that children and all people are alike have to do with the fact that they are members of the human race. As members of the human race, people are very special beings. Children all have the same basic needs of food, water, clothing, shelter, and caring relationships.

Many things contribute to the ways that children are different. The places where they grow up can create differences in the way they talk and habits of everyday life. Other differences may be due to a person’s gender or age. The size of a person’s family, family income, family habits, and family attitudes can all make differences in people.

Whatever the differences, all children and people need to be accepted and loved. We get the opportunity every day to show kindness and caring for others.

Babysitting

Babysitting is an excellent opportunity to learn about others and to develop your skills of care and caring. This babysitting project provides an opportunity for you to strengthen your ability to accept others as the unique individuals that they are.
Kentucky 4-H Babysitter’s Pledge of Appreciation of All People

I pledge to:

- Respect all races, cultures, traditions, and family lifestyles.
- Enjoy learning about other people and their customs.
- Teach children to enjoy learning about other people and their customs.
- Take time to learn if there are family customs or traditions that will influence the way I will babysit with the children.
- Keep books and games in my babysitting bag reflecting the various races, cultures, and traditions of the children for whom I babysit.
- Answer children’s questions openly and honestly about the differences that they notice in other people.
- Ask the employer parents’ permission before sharing a different cultural background with the children.
## Developmental Growth Stages

As Kentucky 4-H Babysitters care for children of different ages, they find that their activities will vary according to the stage of development of the child. The care an infant needs is very different from the care that a four- or five-year old child needs.

The following chart will help you learn about the different developmental growth stages of children and the kind of care and activities that are appropriate for children of different ages.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Developmental Growth Stage</th>
<th>What the 4-H Babysitter Can Do</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newborn to 2 months</td>
<td>Sleeps a lot. Notices things and sounds. Needs head supported when held. Will begin to turn and lift head. Moves arms and legs. Cries for attention and for satisfaction of basic needs such as hunger, wet or soiled diaper, or pain.</td>
<td>Talk to the baby. Cuddle or hold the baby, supporting the head. Allow the baby to look at bright patterned objects and faces. Rock to sleep. Change diapers. Feed the bottle as the baby’s parents have instructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 months</td>
<td>Holds onto bottle. Reaches for objects. Puts things in mouth. Sleeps and cries less often. Smiles and coos when spoken to. Begins to push up with arms. Rolls over.</td>
<td>Allow the baby to look into a mirror. Play peek-a-boo. Shake rattles with the baby. Make sure objects are clean. Keep small objects away from the baby because of the danger of choking. Change diapers when wet or soiled. Rock to sleep. Feed the bottle as baby’s parents have instructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 9 months</td>
<td>Eats soft solid foods in addition to formula or breast milk. Holds spoon. Will sit up with assistance at first, and then without help. May start to crawl or squirm across the floor. May try to pull up on furniture to stand. Will babble sounds and respond to talking and smiles.</td>
<td>Play with the baby with toys, balls, and objects that make music or other sounds. Talk in short phrases and allow the baby to mimic the sounds or words. Encourage the baby to crawl or squirm to reach you or the toys. Assist in standing on legs. Read storybooks with large simple pictures. Point and name things in the books. Change diapers. Rock to sleep. Feed foods as instructed.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9 to 12 months</td>
<td>Crawls, pulls up, or walks holding on to furniture or someone’s hand. May walk alone by one year. Feeds self with spoon but may be messy. Babbles on and on sometimes. Understands “no.” May take a long afternoon nap.</td>
<td>Play with the baby using stacking toys or blocks. Start teaching the child to put toys in the toy box. Talk (not baby talk!) using short phrases and naming objects. Play hide-and-seek. Play music with an instrument if you have one, and sing simple songs. Encourage and support walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
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<tr>
<td>2 years</td>
<td>Runs now. Jumps in place on two feet. Very active. Gets very messy and dirty. Very curious about drawers, cabinets, and closets. Doesn’t want to nap. Likes to eat. Talks a lot and starts to ask questions. Has difficulty sharing toys.</td>
<td>Keep under constant, alert supervision. Keep a safe environment. Play sorting and matching games. Play in the water and/or sand. Teach sharing and cleanliness. Make sure detergent, cleanser, bleaches, and medicines are locked up.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4 years</td>
<td>Dresses and feeds self. Skips and climbs. Does somersaults. Likes to play with other children. Has a vocabulary of 1500 words or more. Likes music and may know the words to a number of children's songs. Can recognize and name domestic and wild animals. Is interested in learning to swim and puts head underwater. May use bicycle with training wheels.</td>
<td>Play simple card games and board games. Teach easy short songs. Teach ABCs, and new words. Play with favorite toys. Teach safety. Provide new experiences such as ball games or swimming. Take trips to stores, parks, birthday parties, etc.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5 years</td>
<td>Can stand on one foot for several seconds. Cuts food with table knife. Catches a bounced ball. Small and large muscle control is improving. Says ABCs and may recognize simple words in storybooks. Rides bicycle with or without training wheels. Ready for school.</td>
<td>Jump rope. Sing songs with motions. Teach about school and safety. Play school. Play softball or baseball. Swim, with careful supervision. Join in taking bicycle rides. Provide books about animals, dinosaurs, and other kinds of nature. Take walks to see nature first-hand.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 8 years</td>
<td>Able to bathe, dress, and put clothes away without problems. Is fairly confident in playing ball and other kinds of games. Joins into family conversation. Is influenced by examples of adults. May ask many questions in order to understand the world. Needs support in controlling emotions. Needs discipline in doing chores. Has friends outside of the family.</td>
<td>Promote and provide time for self-care. Provide opportunities to read. Talk, sing, play ball, or watch television or videos together. Provide a safe environment and practice safety, especially when playing in the pool or riding bicycles. Encourage polite manners and proper table manners. Provide positive encouragement for actions.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Play Is a Child’s Work

Just like you are going to work when you accept a babysitting job, a child goes to work when she or he participates in play activities. Play is very important! It is important for you as the sitter to play with the child, not just to watch the child as she or he plays. Play is a special time because it allows children to explore their world and try new things through their five senses.

Most children go through the same steps when they learn to play. For example, first they learn to move a toy from one hand to the other; then they learn how to let go. But each child has his or her own way to play. Different children like different things, can do different things, and play in their own way.

Things that are very easy for a child are not much fun. Very difficult activities are not much fun either. Play activities should match the child’s abilities. The activity should be difficult enough that the child has to work at it a little. It should be interesting, but it should not be too hard for the child to do.

Five Rules of Play

Rule #1 Watch children without interrupting their fantasy world. Observe their interests and level of skills. Which playthings are a child’s favorite and why?

Rule #2 Join in and play at the child’s level. Let the child lead. If you try to teach complicated ideas too quickly, it might confuse the child and disappoint you.

Rule #3 Ask children to tell you about what they are doing. Do not pass judgment, ask what the project is, or force the children to draw conclusions about their work.

Rule #4 After playing for a while at the children’s pace, introduce a slightly more difficult stage of play. For example, if a child can handle a two-piece puzzle, get out one with three pieces. Or if a child likes building with blocks, show how to use cars with the blocks. Then…

Rule #5 Back away and watch again to see if and how the child explores this new activity. After children learn to do something new by themselves, you can get involved again and suggest another new activity.
How to Choose a Toy

A child has different moods during a day of play. Moods may vary between active, quiet, sharing, solitary, as well as many others.

Examples of toys for different moods of play:

- **Active play**: push and pull toys, wheel toys, sports items
- **Quiet play**: building blocks, construction toys, dolls
- **Sharing play**: board and noncompetitive games
- **Solitary play**: arts, crafts, finger paints, modeling clay, puzzles

The best toys are those that are fun for the child and will help the child develop in one or more of these ways:

- Increase skills
- Help the child to better understand the world around him
- Enhance learning abilities
- Provide opportunities to express ideas
- Encourage creative efforts
- Help the child to learn concentration

Carefully choose toys that are helpful to a child’s social, emotional, mental, and physical development.

Look on the container that the game or toy comes in and check the age recommendations. Observe and learn what fascinates the children. Choose hobby or sports items accordingly.

Certain precautions are important. Heed warnings such as “not intended for children under 3 years.” Be careful in your selection. For instance, tricycles, wagons, and gyms should be the right size for the child’s safety. Darts should be used only by responsible children over 8 years of age and only with supervision. Avoid play with guns.

Choking is one of the top causes of injury and death in children. As a rule of thumb, objects that are about 1 ¼” in diameter or smaller can be a danger for small children because they can be swallowed. Choose toys that are large enough and are free of small detachable parts that could be a danger to children.

If the toy is smaller than this circle, it will be dangerous for small children.
Care and Checking of Toys

Toys are for fun, but for safety’s sake, you should check all the toys the children will be playing with. Look for:

- Sharp points, jagged edges, and rough surfaces
- Small detachable parts that may be swallowed or could lodge in the windpipe, nostrils or ears
- Glass that could break and leave sharp cutting edges
- Sharp spikes or pins that may become exposed if someone has pulled the toy apart
- Long cords or strings on toys
- Squeakers or other noise makers that are not securely attached to the toy and could be removed and swallowed by small children
- Caps, guns, and other toys that produce a very loud noise that could impair hearing
- Nuts, bolts, and clamps that are not tightly secured
- Climbing equipment that is not on a level surface or anchored properly; avoid paved surfaces
- Poorly constructed dolls and animals stuffed with small pellets that will fall out when the seams are opened

Teach older children the proper way to connect or disconnect electric toys. Tell them to hold the rubberized plug, and not tug on the cord itself.

Toys should not be left outdoors overnight. Moisture may cause rusting and result in structural weakness.

Dangerous and damaged toys should be taken away from the children and shown to the parents/guardian.
Alphabet of Activities for Children

Check with the parent before you involve the children in an activity that can be messy.

A is for Apples
Better than cookies for snacks, apples are good for a four-year-old to practice cutting skills with a table (not paring) knife. Children can cut up apples for a snack. Talk about the “halves” and “quarters” they make as they cut. Children can cut the apples into tiny bits for apple sauce. The sitter can help them cut an apple across the core to find the secret star design inside the apple.

B is for Bags
Brown paper bags from the grocery store with faces drawn on them can be used as giant puppets. Perhaps some shredded newspapers may play pretend as a beard. School-age children can help cut out nose, mouth, and eye holes so that the bags can be worn as masks. Bags can be cut into big sheets of paper for small artists to color or paint on.

C is for Cartons
Young children will find endless uses for boxes—as cars, planes, or beds, or strung behind each other as trains, boats, or school buses. Boxes can be stacked on top of each other as play stores, offices or a counter over which important business can be transacted with young friends. A collection of cartons can be stuffed with newspapers and used as a set of sturdy building blocks.

d is for Design
Almost any kind of beautiful junk can become material for a creative design by a child. Pebbles, leaves, and twigs can be arranged on sand; crumpled candy papers or scraps of fabric or ribbon from a sewing project can be arranged on a piece of paper and held in place by paste or glue. Establish appropriate limits (such as “keep the materials on the table”), but leave children free to create their own design.

E is for Envelopes
Save old envelopes for a game of pretend post office. Young children love to scribble on pieces of paper and tuck them in envelopes as surprises for their family or friends. They may enjoy watching a mail carrier deliver real mail. They could then act out what they have seen with a paper or laundry bag for their own mail pouch.

f is for a “Feeling” Game
Put a collection of objects of various textures in a paper bag. Ask the child to put one hand into the bag without looking. Ask if the objects are long or short, hard or soft, round or square. Help the child learn words to describe the objects she or he touches.

g is for Garbage
Don’t throw away your old tea bags, coffee grounds, or egg shells. Sometime when you are feeling brave, clear the sink, put some old towels on the floor, a bathing suit or waterproof apron on the child and help the child make interesting concoctions in the sink. Show the child what happens when the tea bag is placed in water. Let the child smash up the egg shells so the child can understand how delicate they are. Tell the child you don’t want the eggs to be smashed when they are full, but sometimes, when they are empty, it’s okay to do so.

H is for Hair
Most people forget how fascinated a young child can be by other people’s hair—the color, texture and style. Your child may enjoy playing beauty shop—helping you brush and style your hair. For a child who is afraid of getting his/her hair shampooed, playing through the experience allows them to express the anxiety they may be unable to put into words.

I is for Ice
Making, tasting, and melting ice is an interesting, scientific experiment. Understanding the effects of temperature on water is part of understanding other phenomena children encounter in the world.
J is for Jiggly Gelatin

Many kinds of simple cooking can be done by young children and they will need surprisingly little help. If they are making flavored gelatin, the sitter can heat and pour the boiling water; however, children will enjoy opening the package, pouring the powder into a bowl, measuring water, stirring, etc. Children can also make sandwiches, simple puddings, soups, and simple casseroles. They can help bake cookies and cakes. Participating in such activities helps children see themselves as competent, helpful people and encourages them to undertake more and increasingly difficult tasks.

K is for King (or Queen)

A crown made from aluminum foil, construction paper or even newspaper designates one child as “king or queen for ten minutes” during which time other people obey his/her every (reasonable) command. When ten minutes are up, it’s someone else’s turn to wear the crown and become ruler of the household.

L is for Library

Community libraries are one of the richest resources for young children and adults. Increasingly, public libraries welcome very young children, and in addition to lending books, recordings and playthings, often have story hours, videos, concerts, and other special events particularly for young children.

M is for Macaroni

Macaroni can be found in many shapes and sizes and all are fun for children to use. Some shapes can be strung into necklaces, others used to create interesting designs on paper or in clay. As you make salads, soups or casseroles, save out a handful of whichever macaroni you are using, and “brainstorm” with the children by asking them, “I wonder what we can think of to do with this?”

N is for Newspapers

Very young children will enjoy tearing old newspapers or magazines. Explain to them that you have finished reading these papers, so it’s okay to tear them up. Children who are just learning to use scissors often find newspapers the easiest kind of material upon which to practice their cutting skill. If you don’t remember how to make newspaper hats, ask around until you find someone to show you—or look for the storybook, Curious George Rides a Bicycle, by H. A. Rey (Houghton, Mifflin Company) in the picture book section of the library. You will find instructions, complete with step-by-step diagrams, in the middle of a very entertaining story about a mischievous monkey.

O is for Old Clothes

The game of dress-up never seems to lose its appeal for preschoolers. Long skirts, high heels, fancy hats, and gloves will be enjoyed by boys and girls; and they will also enjoy items associated with occupations, such as helmets, painter’s caps, ties, etc.

P is for Pictures

Look at pictures in magazines and catalogs; cut them out for scrapbooks; make a picture collection of “all the things we like to eat,” or “all the pets it would be fun to have,” or “all the groceries we need to remember to buy when we go to the store.” This activity is absorbing and a particularly good occupation for a rainy day or a time when the child needs to rest or stay in bed. Large magazine pictures can be glued to cardboard and then cut into several large pieces as a puzzle.

Q is for Quiet

Anyone who cares for preschoolers knows that quiet is something that doesn’t happen very often. Sometimes it may be fun to suggest playing the quiet game in which you keep just as still as you can and listen for all the sounds you cannot often hear. Ask children, “What can you hear when we are very, very quiet?” Ask this question when you and the children are inside, then go outside and ask the same questions. “Did you hear any sounds you had never noticed before?”
R is for Raking
Little children enjoy raking, particularly with rakes that are the appropriate size or have been cut down for them. They will rake sand or grass, although, of course, the most fun of all is to rake a big pile of leaves to jump into.

S is for Sand
Before winter closes in, you may want to dig up a box of sand for the children's sandbox. During the long cold months, digging and playing in your own “inside” sandbox in the basement, on the porch, or even on a kitchen floor (well covered with newspaper) can be an absorbing time for a three or four-year-old. A small plastic wading pool can be used for an indoor sandbox.

T is for Table
Don't forget the simple trick of throwing a blanket over a table and creating a tent or cave into which children can crawl, perhaps taking with them special toys, pillows, a flashlight, and a snack.

U is for “Underneath” Hunts
This is hard for people who don't like dust, but children will enjoy a trip through the house or yard to look at the “underneath” of things. What does the “underneath” of a bed, dresser, refrigerator, or rock reveal? Sometimes a long-lost toy will be found along with some fascinating discoveries about rarely seen aspects of familiar objects.

V is for Vacuum Cleaning
Children can provide real help by vacuuming a rug or helping you find dust in rarely cleaned corners. Obviously, they will find it more fun to vacuum something that is really dirty than to do routine cleaning; but then, almost everyone enjoys seeing the results of his/her own efforts. It is also interesting for children to watch you reverse the current of air from a vacuum cleaner so that it blows out instead of in. Perhaps they can chase a balloon or a feather a short distance with the rush of air.

W is for Window Washing
Again, children can offer real help, have fun, and see themselves as contributing members of the household through window washing. Adults need to be careful not to entrust poisonous cleaning solutions to preschoolers, but clear water and lots of elbow grease can often produce very shiny glass panes.

X is for X Marks the Spot
Make a big X out of cardboard or construction paper, and use it to mark the location of a “hidden treasure”—a box of raisins under a pillow, perhaps a new library book under a chair, or maybe a new box of crayons under the sink. Children love the excitement of a treasure hunt. For older children, provide more difficult clues.

Y is for Yelling
Most sitters can tolerate a certain amount of sheer, exuberant, joyful noise—if it's in the right place. Help children find places where it is alright to yell, and encourage them to let loose. A park, playground, field, or country road makes a good yelling place. A great deal of inside yelling or extremely active behavior should be a clue that the children need to go somewhere to let off steam. Children can (and should) go outside in almost any kind of weather. A brief run outside on a cold day is well worth the effort of bundling up in winter clothing.

Z Is the “Zillion” Things…
...Preschoolers can and will do, given some raw materials, a little space, and the help of a friendly, enthusiastic sitter. Children learn through their play.
Creative Art Ideas

As a Kentucky 4-H Babysitter, you may want to assemble a box or bag of art-related items to take with you to your babysitting job. These items do not have to be expensive. In fact, you may be able to get some of them at no cost. You may need to add other items based on the child’s age and interests. The following list will give ideas of what you might include. It is not essential to have all these items. Children will choose their own materials when given the option of several choices.

**Materials for Mixing and Painting:**
- Watercolor paints
- Old newspapers
- Paint brushes of varying sizes
- Sponges
- Old toothbrushes

**Materials for Holding Things Together and Taking Them Apart:**
- Paper punch
- Glue/paste
- Masking tape/Scotch tape
- Yarn
- Blunt-point scissors

**Materials for Making Three-Dimensional Projects:**
- Play dough
- Cardboard tubes (from paper towels, toilet paper, etc.)
- Cloth, felt, fake fur, vinyl scraps
- Cotton balls
- Lunch bags
- Empty cans (be sure there are no sharp edges on which the child could get cut)
- Popsicle sticks
- Seeds
- Egg cartons, shoe boxes, ice cream tubs
- Wood pieces
- Bottle tops and/or jar lids
- Pine cones

**Materials for Making Two-Dimensional Projects:**
- Crayons
- Pencils, both standard and colored
- Markers (water-soluble)
- Old calendars
- Greeting cards/postcards
- Tracing forms
- Magazines and catalogs
- Chalk

**Paper of Different Sizes, Shapes, and Textures:**
- Construction paper in different colors
- Brown paper bags
- Tissue paper
- Aluminum foil
- Paper plates
- Cardboard
- Wallpaper scraps
- Poster board
To encourage children’s creativity:

- Be accepting of each child’s painting, drawing, or designed project.
- Reassure an insecure child by encouraging attempts to draw, paint, or create.
- Avoid competition among children.
- Avoid telling children what to draw, paint, or make.
- Let children do their own work—allow them to try different options.

Music and Movement

Musical activities can contribute to the growth of young children by providing opportunities for listening, creating, and experiencing music. For children, singing and dancing are closely related to talking and moving around.

To have successful musical activities:

- Use songs that are short and simple.
- Keep the rhythms simple.
- Choose songs of interest to the children.
- Provide a balance of singing, listening, and movement.
- When teaching a new song, repeat the song as many times as needed.
- Learn and sing the song before trying to teach it.
- Give praise for good work.
- Allow for some freedom of movement in rhythm to the music.
Children's Activities

Young children refuse to limit their investigation and study of nature. A lady bug that crawls, a rock that sparkles, an ant carrying bread on its back, and the opening of a flower are mysteries that excite the curiosity of young children. Some science ideas include:

Air
- Paper streamers moving in the air
- Flying a paper airplane
- Waving a paper fan
- Flying a kite
- Balloon blowing—pinching the tip to make it squeal

Water
- What sinks/what floats
- What absorbs water
- What dissolves in water
- Forms of water: ice, vapor, rain, snow, condensation, etc.
- What holds more—square, round, triangle containers, etc.

Magnets
- What objects are attracted to it
- Magnet vs. nail
- Two magnets—different at each end
- Everyday uses

Gravity
- Weighing objects
- Balance activities
- Which item falls faster, feather or rock

Plant Life
- Scavenger hunt
- Seed vs. bulb vs. cutting
- Compare fruits—how are they alike/different
- Compare trees—how are they alike/different
- Changing colors of leaves
- Buds on trees, leaves on trees, falling of leaves

Animal Life
- Understanding the care of animals as pets
- Feeding birds in winter
- Watching a bird build a nest
- Watching ants at work
- Watching the way animals move

Five Senses
- Sound identification
- Guessing box
- Tasting party
- Moving to music
- Soap bubbles
- Clapping hands, stomping feet, etc.

Simple Machines
- Friction activities—slows and wears away things
- Lever—lifting objects
- Ramps—sharing the work of lifting
- Wheels—used alone or together

Sound
- Vibration—feeling and seeing
- How does it travel?

Light
- Seeing without light
- Reflections
- Making shadows
Food Preparation Activities

Food preparation activities allow children to learn about food production, food preparation, and food safety. Good health habits are promoted through food preparation activities. Children also learn a variety of skills when preparing foods.

When planning a food preparation activity:

- Keep the activity simple.
- Be sure to ask the child’s parents for permission before doing any food preparation activity.
- Do not prepare foods to which the child is allergic.
- Discuss safety rules before beginning a project.
- Allow the child to help with the food preparation, cleanup, and enjoy the final product.
- Children can help make their own snack.

Language Arts Activities

Language arts include listening, thinking, speaking, writing, and reading. All areas are important.

- Encourage the children to talk about what they are doing.
- Writing activities will help children discover that words and thoughts can be written down, such as labeling objects, using signs, etc.
- Be sure and read to the children. Show children that words and pictures are symbols for thoughts expressed.
- Allow children to make up stories and tell them to you. This activity fosters creativity.
- Stories can also be acted out in the form of a play or with the use of costumes and props that the child identifies.

Play can be a fun time for both the child and the babysitter. Take time to enjoy playing and allow the child to direct the play at times. By learning to take turns leading various activities, children learn social skills. Play can be fun but many children take it seriously because it truly is their “work.”
## Emotional Development and Child Guidance

### Emotional Stages

As children develop, their emotional needs change as well as their physical needs. These emotional needs can be separated into four stages and are described in the chart below. Remember these stages are only guidelines. Since each child develops at his own pace, some variation will occur in children of the same age.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>Emotional Stage</th>
<th>Children’s Characteristics</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Newborn to 1 year</td>
<td><strong>Trust and Security</strong></td>
<td>Infants need warmth and comfort, love and security. They enjoy being with people. Talking to them gives them mental stimulation. Through acts of care, infants learn to trust others and the things around them. Trust is established and the baby feels secure when there is a loving, caring person around them.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13 months to 3 years</td>
<td><strong>Self-Control and Autonomy</strong></td>
<td>Toddlers need attention, love, and security. In learning to do things for themselves, toddlers learn independence and start to develop self-control and take on their own identity. In this stage they express their independence by saying “No” and by wanting to make their own decisions about what they want to do such as taking a walk, playing with toys, watching television, or choosing the clothes that they wear.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 to 5 years</td>
<td><strong>Initiative and Imagination</strong></td>
<td>Children at this age have a sense of autonomy and independence. They are learning about the world around them. They want to trust people and to have friends. They are beginning to learn about social activities. Caring and loving adults are much needed at this time to protect their environment and to set limits and expectations.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6 to 10 years</td>
<td><strong>Industry and Formal Learning</strong></td>
<td>Developing a routine is important at this time. Children develop self-confidence by doing routines of self-care and attending school. They are influenced by examples and expectations of adults. It is very important that they receive recognition for achievements and encouragement for polite manners and respectful behavior.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Emotional Needs of Children

Children are individuals. They learn very early in life that there are some things that they like and there are other things that they don’t like. This is all part of being an individual. However, sometimes situations can be very perplexing and challenging for the babysitter.

When Infants Cry:

Infants communicate their needs to adults by crying when they are uncomfortable. There are several reasons why infants cry. They may be lonely, too cold or too hot, hungry, or in need of a diaper change. When babies’ teeth come in, their gums are painful. Also, they may not feel well because they’re getting a cold or illness.

- Try to find out why the baby is crying.
- Take care of the problem as quickly as possible.
- Know that infants feel safe and learn to trust when their needs are met.

When Toddlers Cry:

Toddlers are talking and are able to verbally express most of their needs. They are learning that they can do things themselves. They are establishing independence, and they like having some control over their environment. They like making their own decisions. However, their decision may not be what is needed at the time. Toddlers cry to express their disagreement with situations. Because they are curious about their environment and they are learning to do so much, they don’t want to take naps. They still get tired and sleepy and cry because they want to stay awake. They may fight sleep by crying.

- Try to find out why the toddler is crying.
- Take care of the problem as quickly as possible.
- Be patient and try to console the child who is crying because he is frustrated or tired.

When Older Children Cry:

As children grow older, the reasons they cry become more complex. They cry because they have suffered a physical injury in an accident or something or someone has hurt their feelings. Maybe they have lost or broken something. They cry because they are afraid of something or they didn’t get what they wanted. As the reasons for crying become more complex, the solutions also become more difficult.

- Talk to the child and ask why he is crying.
- If possible, take care of the problem as quickly as possible.
- If the problem cannot be taken care of, listen to the child and help him feel that you understand that he is upset.
- Listen if he wants to talk. Do not insist that the child talk about the situation if he feels better dealing with the problem quietly or alone.
- Offer to help if possible.
Child Guidance

The goal of child guidance and discipline is to help children learn self-control. Getting to know the children is the best preparation for keeping the need to discipline at a minimum. Take time to get acquainted with them. Talk to the parents. Learn the personalities of the children. Ask the parents for instructions on how to discipline their children. Most children will be comfortable with these arrangements, but occasionally a child might try to see just how much a babysitter will let him get by with. When a child becomes angry, aggressive behavior may occur. The babysitter must make it clear that he/she is the responsible person and is the person in charge. Favoritism should never affect how the babysitter treats children. Effective guidance and discipline focus on the development of the child.

Babysitters should:

- Treat all children fairly.
- Set clear, realistic rules related to the child’s development.
- Stick to the parents’ rules.
- Be consistent in enforcing the rules.
- Be patient and understanding with all children.
- Speak in a positive manner.
- Give clear directions, one at a time.
- Set a good example.
- Never threaten, slap, hit, or spank a child.
- Never embarrass or humiliate a child.

The ABCs of Child Guidance

A. Pay ATTENTION to positive behavior.
   The more time care givers spend encouraging appropriate behavior, the less time and effort is needed to correct misbehavior. Catch the child doing something right and comment on it. For example, to a child who is playing appropriately with a puzzle, you may say, “I see you are enjoying the puzzle. You are putting the pieces where they go.” Commenting on positive behavior is reinforcing to children. You will get the behavior to which you pay the most attention.

B. BE kind, positive, affectionate, and thoughtful.
   Treat others as you would like to be treated.

C. Offer children CHOICES only when you are willing to abide by their decisions.
   For example, it can create difficulty when you ask a child if they would like to go to bed. If they say no, a power struggle may be created. Avoid this situation by saying “It is time to go to bed. Do you want to wear your red pajamas or your blue pajamas?” So only give choices when the child is able to make the decision. When giving choices, the younger the child, the fewer options
there should be. Two choices are best. If the child has no choice in what is to happen, do not put the order in the form of a request.

D. **Tell the child what to DO, instead of what not to do.**

It is much more effective to tell children to walk, instead of saying, “Don’t run.” Another example would be to ask the child to use an indoor voice as opposed to saying, “Stop yelling!”

E. **Change the ENVIRONMENT to improve the child’s behavior.**

There are two ways to change the environment. The first is to remove the child from the environment that is causing problems. For example, if a child is playing with the buttons on the television, you take the child into another room to play. That way you remove the child from the environment. The second way to change the environment is to take the item that is causing problems out of the environment. For instance, if a child is playing with a potted plant sitting on a coffee table, the potted plant can be moved out of the room or out of the child’s reach.

F. **FOCUS on the expected behavior before an activity.**

Children like to know what is about to happen. Before an event, tell the child what is going to happen and in detail explain what behavior is expected. For example, if you are going for a walk, tell the child that you expect her to hold your hand. Also, you would tell her that you will stop and look both ways before you cross the street together. It is easier for children to behave appropriately if they are told what behavior is expected ahead of time.

G. **GIVE a five-minute warning before an activity ends.**

Transitions can be difficult for children. It is helpful to let them know when an activity will change, so that they can finish what they are doing. For example, you would say, “You have five more minutes to play before we begin cleaning up for supper.”

H. **HELP children adhere to the three basic rules.**

- A child may not hurt himself.
- A child may not hurt others.
- A child may not damage property.

Any of these behaviors needs to be stopped to prevent injury to the child, others or property.

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**To learn more about child guidance, check out these resources:**

- **Why Young Children Behave and Misbehave:** [http://www2.ca.uky.edu/hes/fcs/keys/Why_Young_Children_Behave_and_Misbehave.pdf](http://www2.ca.uky.edu/hes/fcs/keys/Why_Young_Children_Behave_and_Misbehave.pdf)

- **Teach Self-control:** [http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/fcs7/fcs7184/fcs7184.pdf](http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/fcs7/fcs7184/fcs7184.pdf)
The ABCs of Child Guidance

A. Pay ATTENTION to positive behavior.
B. BE kind, positive, affectionate and thoughtful.
C. Offer children CHOICES only when you are willing to abide by the child’s decisions.
D. Tell the child what to DO, instead of the don’t do’s.
E. Change the ENVIRONMENT to support the child’s behavior.
F. FOCUS on the expected behavior before an activity.
G. GIVE a five-minute warning before an activity ends.
H. HELP children adhere to the three basic rules.
   • A child may not hurt himself.
   • A child may not hurt others.
   • A child may not damage property.
Chapter 5

Caring for a Sick or Injured Child

Medical care deals with keeping a child well. First aid is needed when a child suddenly becomes sick or after an accident has happened. An emergency demands immediate action and may require help from emergency personnel. Babysitters need to be prepared to provide care and first aid, and to handle an emergency situation calmly.

The number one way to prevent the spread of disease is handwashing. Always wash your hands after using the bathroom, diapering a child, assisting children with using the bathroom, dealing with body fluids (especially blood), and before preparing food and feeding a baby. Never take a babysitting job if you are ill. Always wash your hands after attending a sick child.

How to Wash Your Hands

1. Find a towel that you will use to dry your hands. If possible, use a clean or disposable towel.
2. Wet your hands with running water.
3. Turn off the water.
4. Put soap on your hands.
5. Rub your hands together for at least 20 seconds, longer if you can see dirt. Wash between fingers, under fingernails, and on the backs of your hands.
6. Twenty seconds is about the length of time it takes to sing the "Happy Birthday" song through twice.
7. Rinse your hands thoroughly under clean, running water.
8. Dry your hands with a clean towel.
9. Some people prefer to use the towel to turn off the faucet, thinking that if you touch the faucet, you may get germs back on your hands. If you use a blow dryer, touch the button with your elbow.
When Should You Wash Your Hands?

- After you use the toilet
- Before, during and after handling food
- Before eating
- After changing diapers
- After being outside
- After touching dirty dishes
- After touching clothing or hair
- After using any cleaning tools—mops, brooms, rags
- After handling garbage
- After playing with or caring for animals
- When they are visibly dirty
- After coughing, sneezing or blowing the nose
- After caring for or being around someone who is sick.

Caring for a Sick Child

Children may become ill while you are babysitting or you may be asked to babysit a child who is sick or requires routine medical care. When children do not feel well, they need and want the attention of a caring person. When parents must leave a sick child with a babysitter, they need to know that the babysitter will pay particular attention to the emotional needs of their sick child.

Medications

The common cold, flu, and other illnesses are routinely treated with medications. Medications help people feel better and get well. However, medications can be very harmful if they are not taken properly.

- Never give medications unless you have been instructed by the parents, the doctor, or the poison control center.
- Have the parents leave exact written instructions on how to give the medication.
- If you are receiving instructions over the phone, write down the exact name of the medication, the correct dosage, and how often the medication should be given to the child.
- Read the instructions back to the parents to make sure that they are correct.
- Measure the dosage exactly. Use a medicine spoon or measuring spoon. Close the cap on the medication securely and put it out of the child’s reach.
  a. For infants, use a clean dropper. Do not mix medication into formula, juice, or water since the infant may not get the full dose.
  b. Older children will usually cooperate. If not, ask the parents about their technique.
- Ask the parents for helpful ways to insure that the child takes the whole dosage.
Nausea and Vomiting

Nausea is the uncomfortable sick feeling that people experience right before they vomit or throw up. Vomiting is a symptom of illness, poisoning, food reaction, or nervousness. Usually people feel better after vomiting. However, they may vomit several times before they are completely well. Cleaning up vomit is not fun, but try not to further upset the child by showing your dislike of the job.

1. Calm the child by staying with him.
2. Gently clean the child up.
3. If the child is old enough, have him rinse his mouth with cool water and spit it out.
4. Put clean clothing on the child.
5. Wipe the child’s face and hands with lukewarm water to cool and comfort him.
6. Do not offer any food or drink until you’re sure the child is not going to vomit again.
7. Give no medications unless specifically told to do so.
8. After a while if the child is hungry and wants to eat, offer only small amounts of easy to digest foods like flavored gelatin, crackers, toast and soda, if allowed. Avoid dairy products.
9. If the child vomits once and shortly returns to play, tell the parents when they return.
10. If the child vomits more than once or has a fever or other signs of illness, call the parents.

Sickness (Colds, Flu, Etc.)

Some children have colds or flu-like symptoms almost every winter season. Schools are a good place to pass the flu virus back and forth. When you are babysitting with a sick child, make sure the child receives tender loving care along with his medicine.

- Make the child as comfortable as possible.
- Give medication as instructed.
- Do not give any medications without specific instructions.
- Keep the child indoors.
- Keep the child warm and comfortable, not too hot.
- Ask the parents for specific instructions about food and drink.
- Give the child plenty of fluids to drink (only those recommended by the parents).
- Be sure the child rests.
- Play quietly. Read stories. Listen to music.

Fever

A child can develop a fever unexpectedly, or a sick child’s fever may become higher. The child will appear ill and feel warm to the touch. Sometimes the cheeks will be reddened and palms of hands will feel very warm to the touch. The playing child will become quiet and stop playing. She will complain that she doesn’t feel good. You should not take the child’s temperature unless you have been instructed to do so. Never take a rectal temperature unless you have been taught the correct procedure.
• Do not give medications unless you have received specific instructions to do so.
• Always call the parents if a fever comes on unexpectedly or becomes higher.
• Give the child plenty of cool liquids if instructed by the parents.
• Wipe the child’s face, neck, arms, and hands with a lukewarm cloth. Never use cold water; it causes chills. You may be instructed to bathe the child in lukewarm water.
• Avoid drafts and chills. Be sure the child is not dressed too warmly.
• If the fever seems high and you cannot reach the parents, call the family doctor.
• Have the child rest or play quietly. Try reading stories or playing music.
• **BE KIND AND GENTLE.** A child with a fever feels ill. His resistance is down, physically and emotionally. He may be more sensitive than usual.

## Diarrhea…

Diarrhea is a loose or liquid-like bowel movement. Diarrhea can be a symptom of another health problem. When a person eats or drinks something that is not good for the body, the body will reject it. There are two ways the body can get rid of the substance: vomiting and/or diarrhea. Usually one or two diarrhea stools will clear the body of the unwanted substance. However, if the diarrhea is severe and persists, other health problems may develop. Call the parents. If you are unable to reach them, call the doctor. It is normal for infants who are not receiving solid food to have loose bowel movements.

1. No one likes the mess, but stay calm. Do not upset the child further by letting him know how much you dislike cleaning it up.
2. Clean the child gently, calming the child as you go along.
3. Wash the child with lukewarm water.
4. Provide clean clothes as needed.
5. With infants and babies you may need to use ointment to prevent diaper rash. Use only if the parents have instructed you on the proper use of the ointment.
6. Do not give the child milk or other dairy products, fruits or fruit juice.
7. Do not give medication unless told to do so.
8. Call the parents. Tell them how many times the child has had diarrhea, if there is blood or pus in the stool, and if he has a fever or any other symptoms. Ask for special instructions regarding food and drinks.

## Earache

Earaches can be caused by injury or ear infections. They can be very painful. A child may poke, pull, or rub his ear if it aches, and cry in shrieks of pain. If the earache is caused by an injury, you may notice drainage from the ear. The child may cry uncontrollably. You will need to be very patient, kind, and reassuring.

1. Stay calm and console the child.
2. Call the parents. If unable to reach the parents, call the family doctor.
Something in the Ear or Nose

Small objects sometimes find their way into children’s ears and noses. The child is likely to panic. Stay calm. If the object is a bean or kernel of corn, body moisture may cause it to swell and cause pain. Trying to remove the object may cause more harm.

1. Stay calm and calm the child.
2. Keep the child from putting his fingers in his ear or nose.
3. If you can see the object and it is loose, tip the head to see if it will fall out.
4. If you can’t see the object, or if it appears to be tightly wedged in, leave it alone.
5. Call the parents. If unable to reach the parents, call the doctor.

Minor Bleeding Injuries

Minor cuts, scrapes, abrasions, and bruises are all considered minor bleeding injuries. When these injuries occur and there is a break in the skin, there is danger of infection developing in the wounds. Infection can be very dangerous and cause injury to more tissue. First aid measures are to provide comfort and prevent infection.

1. Wash hands before and after helping a person who is hurt.
2. If possible, wear gloves when attending wounds that are bleeding.
3. Wash the wound very gently with warm soapy water.
4. Rinse by pouring warm water over the wound.
5. Apply a dressing and a bandage if the wound is open.

Accidents

Accidents are one of the leading causes of injury and death in children. Listed below are several reasons why so many children are involved in accidents.

- Children are not aware of the dangers that are present in certain situations, especially new situations.
- Children are not aware of the consequences or impact of injuries.
- Children are impulsive and excitable and many times act before thinking about what might happen.
- Children are naturally curious and like to explore a new environment and/or situations.
- Children are little and sometimes may be hidden from view of others or may be able to pass through small spaces.
- Adults may think that children know more than what they really do about certain things.
The environment is not or has not been made safe for children or others.
The welfare of children is endangered by the acts of others.
Social or peer pressure may influence children to become involved in risky behaviors.
Broken equipment or malfunctioning machinery may cause injury.
A lack of knowledge or instructions may result in accidents.
A lack of knowledgeable supervision may endanger children’s lives.

The best way to handle emergencies is to use prevention strategies. However, even though preventive measures are in use, emergencies still happen. An emergency needs immediate action and may require help from emergency personnel.

When an emergency occurs, remember the following steps:

STEP 1: Stay calm. Concentrate on the things that you can do.

STEP 2: Call for help. When calling the Emergency Medical System (911), give this information.

1. “This is an emergency.”
2. “My name is ____________________.
3. I am at ___________________ (address).” Give directions.
4. Be prepared to answer questions, such as…
   a. What kind of emergency?
   b. How many people are involved?
   c. What type of injuries?
   d. Is anyone doing CPR?
5. Do not hang up until you are told to do so.

STEP 3: Call the child’s parent.

STEP 4: Call an emergency contact person if the parents can’t be reached.
Caring for a Child after an Accident or Emergency until Help Arrives

Major Bleeding Injuries

Lacerations and puncture wounds can cause major bleeding problems. Bleeding that occurs in spurts might mean that an artery is involved. When victims lose a lot of blood, they can go into a state of shock. This is a life threatening situation. First aid is to promote comfort, control the bleeding and prevent infection.

1. Wash your hands before and after helping a person who is hurt.
2. If possible, wear clean disposable gloves when attending bleeding wounds.
3. Cover the wound with a clean dressing.
4. Apply direct pressure to the wound.
5. Elevate the wound if there is no risk of further injury.
6. If bleeding persists, apply additional dressings to the original dressing and apply pressure.

If bleeding persists, CALL 911 for emergency medical services.

Sunburn

Sunburns are the most common type of first degree burn. Children have delicate skin and may burn after a short time in the sun. To prevent sunburns:

- Apply sunscreen to the skin area which will be exposed to the sun.
- Limit the time of play in the direct sunlight.

Burns

Burns are another type of soft tissue injury. Burns are classified by their source, such as heat, chemicals, electricity, or radiation (sun). Burns are also classified by depth such as first degree burns, second degree burns, and third degree burns.

First Degree Burns: First degree burns are superficial burns that involve only the top layer of skin. The skin is red and dry and usually very painful. Prevention is most important. The skin is injured and there is danger of infection. First aid is to promote comfort and prevent infection.

1. Apply cool water to the injured areas.
2. Apply burn lotions or antiseptic ointments to the injured area to soothe the skin and keep it soft.
Second Degree Burns: Second degree burns involve two layers of skin. These injuries are red and have blisters that may open and weep clear fluid. The burn area will have some swelling. These burn injuries need medical attention. First aid is to promote comfort and prevent infection.

1. Remove the child from the heat source.
2. Stop the cause of the burn.
3. Cool the burn with large amounts of cool water (may need to use the shower).
4. Apply a clean dressing over the burn area.

Call 911, if the burn:
- Covers more than one part of the body
- Is causing the child to have trouble breathing
- Involves the head, neck, hands, feet, or genitals
- Is caused by chemicals, explosions, or electricity. (Do not cool an electrical burn with water; keep it dry.)

Third Degree Burns: Third degree burns destroy both layers of skin. They may destroy other tissues such as fat, muscle, bones, blood vessels or nerves. These burns may look brown or charred black. An underlying whiteness may also be present. If nerve endings are destroyed, there may not be a lot of pain. If nerve fibers are not injured, the burn will be very painful. These burns can be life threatening if the burn covers a big area. The victim can go into a shock state. First aid is to promote comfort, prevent infection and shock.

1. Stop the cause of the burn.
2. Cool the burn with large amounts of cool water (may need to use the shower).
3. Apply a clean dressing over the burn area.

Call 911, if the burn:
- Covers more than one part of the body
- Is causing the child to have trouble breathing
- Has injured a child
- Involves the head, neck, hands, feet, or genitals
- Is caused by chemicals, explosions, or electricity

Dislocations, Muscle Strains, and Sprains

Muscle, bone and joint injuries can be caused by falls or during active play. There may be severe muscle, bone or joint injuries if:
- The involved limb is bent in the wrong way.
- It feels or sounds like bones are rubbing together.
- A pop or snap was heard when the injury occurred.
- The child cannot move or use the body part.
- The injured area feels cold or numb.
• There is a lot of swelling or a big bruise.
• Bone is visible in the wound.

For the injuries mentioned above, medical attention is needed. X-rays must be done to see if there are any bone fractures. Call 911 and the parents.

First aid is to promote comfort and prevent further injury.

• Keep the child quiet and have the child position himself in a comfortable position.
• Stay calm and stay with the child.
• If the child is in a safe environment, do not attempt to move him.
• Do not try to straighten an injured limb.
• Do not try to splint.
• Depending on the severity of injuries, watch for shock.

For minor injuries apply a cold pack (ice in a plastic bag covered with a towel).

⚠️ **State of Shock**

When people suffer severe injuries, their bodies may go into a state of shock. The most common cause of shock is the loss of blood. Because victims have lost a lot of blood, their blood pressure falls. The brain does not receive enough oxygen and victims can become confused and become unconscious. Signals of shock include pale, cool, moist skin, rapid breathing, or a quick pulse. Persons may be restless, irritable, or confused. They need medical attention or death will occur.

1. Call parents.
2. Keep the victim lying down or in a comfortable position.
3. Stay calm and stay with the victim.
4. Control the bleeding.
5. Observe for further symptoms.
6. Elevate the legs to lower the blood pressure.
7. Do not give the victim food or drink.
8. To maintain a normal body temperature, cover the victim with available material such as sheets, towels, jackets, or blankets.

Call 911.

⚠️ **Allergic Reactions**

Severe allergic reactions may occur when a child is known to have allergies. If you have been asked to babysit with a child who has allergies, the parents should inform you of these
allergies if there has been a previous severe allergic reaction. Be sure to ask about appropriate treatment if an allergic reaction should occur. The symptoms of minor allergic reactions are runny nose and eyes, sneezes, and coughing. The symptoms of severe allergic reactions are extensive skin rash, hives, vomiting, and breathing difficulty and wheezing. Severe allergic reactions are life threatening and immediate medical care is needed.

- If the reaction is minor, call the parents immediately for instructions.
- Ask if you should bathe the child in warm water mixed with 1 cup of baking soda to relieve itching.

If the reaction is severe, call 911 immediately.
- Do not give any medication unless instructed to do so.

**Insect Stings and Bites**

In the summer time insect stings and bites occur frequently. The stings of bees, hornets, and wasps are very painful but cause only local discomfort. However, a child may have an allergic reaction that can be very serious. Other insect bites may just cause a severe itching condition.

1. Calm the child.
2. Wash the bite with soap and cool water.
3. Mix a small amount of baking soda with a little water to make a thick paste. Apply the paste to the bite. This should ease the pain and itching.
4. Use lotions and ointments on these bites only as instructed by the parents.
5. Place an ice bag or cold compress to the bite to prevent swelling.
6. Watch for allergic reactions: puffy eyes, sweats, difficulty in breathing.

**Head Injuries**

A person’s head is easily injured because it lacks the protection of muscle and fatty tissue. The tissue is full of veins and bleeds freely. Any severe blow to the head can cause a concussion. When a concussion occurs, the victim usually loses consciousness for a few seconds. They might say that they “blacked out” or “saw stars.” Head injuries can cause death. First aid is to promote comfort and observe for more severe symptoms.

1. Keep the child quiet.
2. Do not give her food or drink.
3. Do not allow her to fall asleep.
4. Observe for loss of consciousness, headache, nausea or vomiting, unequal pupils, and confusion.

Call the parents or 911.
Nose Bleeds

Nose bleeds can be caused by a blow from a blunt object, high blood pressure, or a change in altitude. If the nose bleed is caused by a blow to the face, there may be other injuries to the bones behind the nose. Nose bleeds are usually easy to control. First aid is to control the bleeding and promote comfort.

1. Sit the child down and lean the head forward.
2. Apply pressure by pinching the nostrils together for 10 minutes.
3. Apply a cold compress to the bridge of the nose to help stop the bleeding.
4. Try using pressure to the upper lip just below the nose to help stop the bleeding.
5. Instruct the child not to blow his nose for a while after the bleeding has stopped.

If bleeding persists, call the child’s parents or 911.

Eye Accidents

Foreign objects such as dirt, sand, or slivers of wood or metal can cause severe damage to the eye. Some eyes are injured when an object penetrates the eyeball or removes the eyeball from the socket. Other eye injuries result when chemicals are sprayed into the eyes. All eye injuries are serious because of the threat of blindness. First aid care is to promote comfort and prevent further injury.

1. Do not try to remove objects sticking in the eye.
2. If tears do not flush the object out, have the child blink several times.
3. Do not allow the child to rub the eyes.
4. Gently rinse the eye with clean water.
5. If the object stays in the eye or pain persists, cover the eye with a clean cloth.
6. Call the parents.
7. If the eyes have been sprayed with chemicals, the eyes should be irrigated with lots of clean water.
8. If only one eye has been sprayed with chemicals, the affected eye should be rinsed in a lower position to prevent the rinse water from contaminating the other eye.
9. These injuries require medical care.

Call the parents or 911.
**Breathing Emergencies**

Breathing problems can be caused by some disease processes. Breathing problems can result in respiratory arrest and death.

For a **Conscious** Victim…

1. Help the victim rest in a comfortable position. Sitting up helps breathing.
2. Stay calm and stay with the victim.
3. Check for other problems.

   ![Call the parents and 911.]

For an **Unconscious** Victim…

1. Stay calm and stay with the victim.
2. Position the victim on their side if they are breathing.

   ![Call 911.]

**Choking**

Choking may be caused by small objects or by food that become lodged in the airway passages and obstruct the flow of air. These airway obstructions can be partial or complete. A partial obstruction may allow some air to pass and coughing or a high pitched noisy breathing will occur. A complete airway obstruction does not allow any air to pass and the victim will not be able to cough or speak. Partial airway obstruction may become complete airway obstructions. Complete airway obstruction will cause the victim to become unconscious. This is very dangerous and care must be given very quickly.

For **Conscious** Victim…

1. Allow the coughing victim to continue to try to cough up the object.
2. Stay calm and stay with the victim.

   ![If the person cannot cough it up, call 911.]

Remember!! If the victim is not breathing, rescue breathing should only be done when you have been properly trained and have protective equipment to use.
For **Unconscious Victim—Sitting**…

1. If the victim cannot speak, cough forcefully, or breathe, CALL 9-1-1 or have someone call 9-1-1.
2. From behind, wrap your arms around the victim’s waist.
3. Make a fist with one hand and place thumb side of the fist against the middle of the victim’s abdomen, just above the navel, but below the rib cage just above the child’s belly button.
4. Grasp your fist with the other hand.
5. Give quick inward and upward thrusts.
6. Continue until the object is coughed up or the Emergency Medical Services (EMS) arrive.

For **Unconscious Victim—Lying**…

1. Position the child on his or her back on the floor or on a table.
2. Kneel at the child’s feet if the child is lying on the floor.
3. Stand at the child’s feet if the child is lying on a table.
4. Place the heel of one hand on the child’s abdomen in the midline slightly above the navel and well below the rib cage just above the belly button.
5. Place the free hand on top of the positioned hand.
6. Deliver abdominal thrusts inward and upward.
7. Several thrusts may have to be given before the object is dislodged.

**Caution!!** Abdominal thrusts are given with care to prevent further harm to the victim. Thrusts are delivered upward in the midline and not to either side of the abdomen. Abdominal thrusts are not given to infants and must be done very cautiously on small children.

For **Infants**…Back Blows and Chest Thrusts

1. Place the infant facing down in a straddling position over your arm.
2. Position the head lower than the trunk and support the head by firmly holding the jaw.
3. Support the infant’s trunk by laying the infant across your thigh.
4. Deliver four back blows with the heel of your hand between the infant’s shoulders.
5. Support the infant’s back, neck, and head with your free hand and turn the infant to lie on its back. The infant is sandwiched between the arms.
6. Deliver four chest thrusts or chest compressions with 2 or 3 fingers on the center of the infant’s breastbone, just below the nipples.
7. Several cycles of back blows and chest thrusts may be necessary before the object is dislodged.

If the infant becomes unconscious, call 9-1-1 immediately.
Manual Removal of Foreign Bodies

Blind finger sweeps are to be avoided in infants and children since the foreign body may be pushed back into the airway, causing further obstruction. In the unconscious, non-breathing victim, following the chest thrust, the victim’s mouth is opened by grasping both the tongue and the lower jaw between the thumb and finger and lifting (tongue-jaw lift). This action draws the tongue away from the back of the throat and may itself partially relieve the obstruction. If the foreign body is seen, it should be removed by side sweeping the mouth with a finger.
Suspected Poisoning

Poisoning results when external substances enter the body. A poison is any substance that causes injury or illness when introduced into the body. Some poisons cause death.

Poisonous substances can enter the body in the following four ways:

1. Ingestion or swallowing (such as food or medications)
2. Absorption (such as poison ivy, oak, or sumac)
3. Inhalation (such as toxic fumes from gases or spray chemicals)
4. Injection by snake bites, insect bites, stings, or hypodermic needles (shots)

The signals of poisoning include nausea, vomiting, diarrhea, chest or abdominal pain, breathing difficulty, sweating, confusion, loss of consciousness, and seizures. These victims may go into shock.

Poison Control Centers

Poison Control Centers exist throughout the United States to help people deal with poison emergencies. From any U.S. location, use the phone number: 1-800-222-1222.

First aid for poisoning will be different, but some general rules can apply to all poisoning. First aid is to promote comfort, determine the type of poisoning, and call for medical help.

1. Survey the scene for your safety and clues to what might have happened.
2. Remove the victim from the source of poison.
3. Care for life threatening situations.
4. Call the Poison Control Center or 9-1-1. (Take containers to the phone with you). Contact parents.
5. Follow the Poison Control Center instructions.

Additional care may include:

1. Keep the victim comfortable.
2. Stay with the victim and check breathing and mental alertness.
3. Do not give the victim anything to eat or drink.
4. Keep the victim laying on her side in case of vomiting.
**Common Household Poisons**

**Pills and Medicines**
- Adult and baby aspirin
- Adult and baby vitamins
- Prescription drugs
- Cough syrups
- Laxatives
- Antacids

**Cleaning Agents**
- Drain cleaners
- Glass cleaners
- Floor cleaners
- Floor wax
- Furniture polish

**Cosmetics**
- Liquid base/foundation make-up
- Nail polish
- Nail polish remover
- Hand lotions
- Shampoo and conditioner
- Hair spray/mousse/gels

**Arts and Crafts Materials**
- Powdered clay
- Glaze
- Turpentine
- Dyes
- Permanent markers
- Papier-mâché
- Epoxy, instant glues
- Powdered tempera paints
- Liquid hand soaps
- Air fresheners
- Liquid dish soaps
- Dish washer detergents

**House Plants**
- Asparagus fern
- Azalea
- Daffodil bulbs
- Dieffenbachia
- Holly berries
- Hyacinth
- Larkspur
- Lily of the valley
- Mistletoe berries
- Mushrooms
- Ornamental pepper
- Poinsettia

**Laundry Products**
- Bleach
- Detergent
- Liquid laundry soaps
- Powdered laundry soaps
- Fabric softener
- Stain remover
Chapter 6

Safety Issues

Become Safety Conscious

Accidents and injuries are a primary health problem in America today. Accidental injuries are often predictable and therefore are preventable. Children’s physical and emotional development can’t be changed, but the environment and caretaker behavior can be changed.

It is our responsibility to prevent accidents by providing a safe environment and practicing prevention strategies. Learning how to prevent accidents and developing a safety consciousness will protect you, your family and the children with whom you babysit.

Developing a Safety Consciousness

- Learn cardiopulmonary resuscitation (CPR) techniques.
- Learn choke prevention skills.
- Learn the characteristics of children that make them prone to having accidents.
- Learn what causes accidents. Be on a constant lookout for hazards.

Ways to Create a Safe Environment in the Home

- Supervise children at all times.
- Never leave children unsupervised, especially when seated at the table, in the high chair, or bathtub.
- Never open the door to strangers.
- Never hold a baby while handling hot foods or drinks, or while cooking or doing dishes.
- Place pots on the back burners and keep pot handles turned toward the back of the stove.
- Keep household cleaning products, knives, matches, and plastic bags away from children.
- Keep the play area free of trash.
- Always check the temperature of the bath water.
- Keep stairwells and walkways clear of objects such as toys, shoes, etc.
- Keep small objects off the floor and out of the reach of babies and young children.
- Keep passageways well-lit.
- Avoid scissor-like mechanisms which could crush fingers.
- Keep children from climbing on furniture so that they do not pull it over on themselves.
- Never leave the side of a mesh playpen or portable crib down. The mesh creates a loose pocket that a baby could roll into and suffocate.
- Do not hang items with strings or cords on baby furniture (cribs and playpens).
- Never tie pacifiers around a baby’s neck.
- When choosing toys, look for labels that give age recommendations.
- Make sure they are playing on appropriate playground equipment.
Ways Parents Can Create a Safe Environment in the Home

- Never place the baby’s crib or furniture near window blinds (strings) or open windows.
- Replace loose or missing hardware so the baby’s crib will remain sturdy.
- Choose furniture with no exposed screws, bolts, or fasteners with sharp edges or points.
- Choose a high chair with safety straps that are easy to fasten and unfasten so they will be easily used each time.
- Avoid cutout designs that could entrap a child’s head.
- Choose a toy box with sliding panels, a removable lid, or a supported lid rather than a free-falling lid.
- Use safety plugs to cover electrical outlets.
- Keep medicines, chemicals, and cleaning supplies locked away from children.
- Reduce hot water heater temperature to 120°F.
- Use safety gates to block stairways.
- Install smoke and carbon monoxide detectors on each floor of the home, especially near sleeping areas.

Dangerous Situations in the Home

Emergencies in the home do not happen frequently, but everyone should be prepared to deal with them. A Kentucky 4-H Babysitter has the responsibility to keep her/himself and the children safe from these hazards. In this section, you will learn what to do in case one of these emergencies does happen when you are at home or when you are babysitting.

Situation: Fire

1. Plan in advance what you will do in case of fire.
2. Get the children! Don’t worry about saving anything.
3. Get out of the house!

Call 911 from a mobile phone or go to a neighbor’s home and ask them to call.

To get out of the house...

If there is smoke in the house, stay close to the floor to prevent smoke inhalation while you are trying to get out. Use wet cloths to cover faces which makes it easier to breathe.

1. Test doors for heat before opening. If the door is cool, open it as little as possible to get out. If the door is hot, do not open it. Try another exit.
2. Close the door behind you.
3. If you must wait for rescue, wait near a window and open the window just slightly for air. Too much air helps fire spread.
4. Hang clothing or other object out the window to help rescuers locate you.
**Situation: Clothes on Fire**

1. Do not let the child run.
2. Put the child on the floor and roll him over and over slowly.
3. Smother burning clothes with a blanket, coat, or other item made of heavy fabric, like a small throw rug.

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Call 911.
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**Situation: Grease Fire**

Grease fires cannot be put out with water.

1. Be sure children are safe.
2. Cover the burning pot with a lid or another pot.
3. If handy, smother flames with baking soda or salt.
4. If you cannot put the fire out quickly, get the children out of the house.

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Call 911.
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**Situation: Broken Items & Accidental Spills**

Accidents happen. Don’t get upset. If the child caused the accident, try not to get angry. The child is probably frightened and upset enough already.

**Broken Items**

1. Remove the child to a safe place. Older children may want to help clean up—just be sure not to let children handle broken glass.
2. If the broken item is electrical, unplug it.
3. Be sure everyone is wearing shoes.
4. Clean up as much as possible, putting dangerous pieces safely out of the way. Save broken pieces that may be able to be repaired.
5. Tell the parents what happened when they return. Most parents don’t appreciate finding “surprises.”

**Situation: Accidental Spills**

- Soak up spills immediately by placing an absorbent material on top of the spill and pressing down. Continue with fresh paper towels or napkins until no more food or liquid is absorbed. Try not to rub the spill into the carpet.
- Cold water will rinse most food spills out of clothes.
• Do not use any cleaning products on carpet or furniture without specific instructions to do so.
• If you’re concerned about stains, call the parents for instructions. Most parents prefer a telephone call to a permanent grape juice stain on their sofa.

**Situation: Suspicious Person**

Remember, normal sounds outside and inside the house often seem louder when you’re alone babysitting. But if the noise doesn’t seem normal, call the police. Be sure to tell the parents what happened. They’ll be glad to know you’re protecting their children. Try not to alarm the children.

1. If you see someone outside the house who seems suspicious and has no reason for being there, do not open the door. Stay inside.
2. Make sure all doors are locked.

**Call 911 (the police).**

Be prepared to calmly give the following information and answer the dispatcher’s questions.

- I’m the babysitter.
- Describe what you saw or heard.
- Give as much detail as possible about the appearance of the prowler, his movements and actions.
- If you see the prowler leave, note the direction in which he goes.
- If a vehicle is involved, try to write down the number on the license plate.

**Situation: Telephone Calls**

Telephone calls in the employer parents’ home are not for you. Do not answer the telephone. The only exception would be if you have pre-arranged for your parent or the employer parent to call you. If you have a telephone of your own with you, you should not use it except in the case of emergency.

**Situation: Electrical Outage**

1. Stay calm.
2. If it is in the daytime, you can get by without electricity.
3. If it is in the nighttime, reassure the children.
4. Locate the flashlight in your babysitting bag. Do not use candles.
5. Don’t allow a lot of activity in the dark.
6. Call the electric company.
7. You may want to call the parents just to let them know what’s happening.
8. Try not to open the refrigerator and freezer doors any more than necessary.
9. If you need to warm a baby bottle, run it under hot tap water. Test it for temperature before giving it to the infant.

**Situation: Suspected Gas Leak**

Gas fumes can be serious. If you detect the distinctive "rotten egg" smell of gas, take the following precautions.

1. Stay calm.
2. Keep the children close to you.
3. Don’t light any matches.
4. Don’t turn any light switches on or off.
5. Check the stove to see if burners are off.
6. If you can’t immediately find the source of the leak or if the smell is very strong, take the children out of the house.
7. Call the parents.

**Situation: Broken Water Pipes**

1. Stay calm.
2. Make sure the children are safe and in a dry area.
3. Stay away from electrical appliances in the area where the water is leaking.
4. Don’t touch any wires. Those wires, when in contact with water, can cause severe electrical shock.
5. Call the parents.
6. Try to locate the main water cut-off for the house and turn it off or contact the building manager if you are in an apartment.
7. If you can do it safely, put some towels just beyond where the water is spreading to keep the water contained in a limited area.
8. If you can move any items that might get damaged by the water, do so.
9. Remember not to take any chances; the child is your main responsibility.
10. If the water main breaks outside the house, call the local water department.

**Situation: Sudden Illness or Injury to You as the Babysitter**

1. Stay calm.
2. Call your parents, or a relative, friend, or neighbor to relieve you.
3. Call the parents and tell them who is coming and why.
5. If you can’t find a suitable person to relieve you, call the parents. Stay with the children until the parents return.
Situation: Storms and Tornadoes

Thunderstorms and tornadoes may occur especially in the spring, summer, and fall. Be alert to sudden changes in the weather. Listen for sirens. Turn on the television or radio and follow any weather-related instructions.

A **severe thunderstorm watch** means that weather conditions are right for a severe thunderstorm with high winds, hail, lightning, and heavy rain. A **severe thunderstorm warning** means that severe thunderstorms have been sighted in your area.

A **tornado watch** means weather conditions are right for the formation of tornadoes. A **tornado warning** means an actual tornado has been sighted. Watches are less serious than warnings. Watches mean to keep a close watch on the weather in case a thunderstorm or a tornado develops. Severe thunderstorms can spawn tornadoes.

**Thunderstorm and Tornado Watch**

1. Stay calm.
2. Keep the children inside and away from windows.
3. Locate the flashlight and batteries in your babysitter’s bag.
4. Close windows and doors as much as necessary to keep rain out.
5. Listen to the television or radio for local weather news. If a battery-powered radio is available, keep it nearby in case the power goes off.
6. Prepare to protect yourself and the children with sleeping bags, thick cushions, exercise pads, or small mattresses.
7. To divert the children’s attention from the storm, make up stories or sing songs.
8. If possible, call the parents and tell them about the severe weather conditions. They may want to return home or give you specific instructions for safety.

**Thunderstorm and Tornado Warning**

1. Stay calm.
2. Continue to listen to the television or radio for local weather reports as long as the power is on. If a battery-powered radio is available, keep it nearby in case the power goes off.
3. Take the children, flashlights, radio, and protective items to a safe location in the basement or an inside hallway—away from doors, windows, bookshelves, and heavy furniture that could fall and cause injury. (Put as many walls between you and the outside as you can.)
4. Stay in the safe place until the warning has been officially cancelled.
Chapter 7

The Business of Babysitting

Setting Rates/Fees

Fees charged by babysitters vary from location to location. Use the Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics Market Rate Worksheet to figure out what is customary in your community. Other factors may impact the rate of services—such as age of the children, whether transportation to and from the home of the employer parent is included, whether a meal is included, number of hours involved, whether the parent returns on time, how late the services end at night.

Record Keeping

Record keeping is a part of every job. Babysitting is no different. Keeping accurate records helps you see and understand the financial picture of your business. Just as your parents keep records in order to fill out income tax forms, you need to keep accurate records, too. No matter what one’s age, there may be a requirement by the IRS, state, and local government to report your earnings and pay taxes. Because the tax obligations are impacted by your unique situation, you will need to talk to your parent and a public accountant/tax preparer about your obligation to pay taxes and report income. Check related websites, such as www.irs.gov, and state and local government sites.

Keep a roster of the families for whom you babysit and include the date of services, amount you were paid, and any work-related expenses. For personal knowledge, you may want to keep up with the number of hours you babysit and rate charged per hour. For each family keep the completed “Safety Checklist.” Each time you babysit the same family, you can simply update the information rather than start over.

Marketing Your Babysitting Services

You may want to create a resume, flyer, or business card to market your services. For your safety, give these items only to friends of your family. Never post them on the web or in a public place like a library or grocery store.
Kentucky 4-H Babysitting 4 Fun and 4 Profit

Market Rate Worksheet

What is the current minimum wage?  1. _______________ per hour

What do my friends earn for providing child care?

Friend #1  2. _______________ per hour
Friend #2  3. _______________ per hour
Friend #3  4. _______________ per hour
Friend #4  5. _______________ per hour

What do my friends earn in other jobs?

Fast food  6. _______________ per hour
Lawn mowing  7. _______________ per hour
House cleaning  8. _______________ per hour

How much does licensed child care cost?

Mother’s Day Out  9. _______________ per hour
Child Care Center  10. _______________ per hour

Average:  Add all 10 rates per hour:  _______________ + 10 = $______________ per hour

Range:  $______________ to $______________ per hour

Lowest  Highest
Kentucky 4-H Babysitting 4 Fun and 4 Profit

Business Variables

Average range copied from front: $__________________ to $__________________ per hour

Lowest          Highest

Will you charge extra for more than one child? Circle one: Yes / No
If so, how much? $_________________

Will you charge extra for all day? Circle one: Yes / No
If so, how much? $_________________

Will you charge extra after midnight? Circle one: Yes / No
If so, how much? $_________________

Set Your Fee/Rate Range

Decide the range for your child care fees. You may decide that you will charge between $3 and $5 per hour. Find out what most of your friends are charging, then charge what seems right to you.

My child care fees will range from $__________________ to $__________________ per hour.

Lowest          Highest

This sample was created by Christy Eastwood, Boone County Extension Agent for 4-H Youth Development, and used with her permission.
### Babysitting Customer Roster

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Family Name</th>
<th>Address</th>
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<td>Phone</td>
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**Totals**

| Income | Expenses | Balance |
SAMPLE RESUME

Name: _______________________________________________________________________

Address: _____________________________________________________________________

Phone: _______________________________________________________________________

Education:  School:  
Grade:  

Training:  Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics Class—Training in helping children behave, basic child care, safety and safe play, first aid, and professionalism.

Additional training: [include whatever applies]

Babysitting experience:

Hobbies:

Skills and abilities:

References: (List the name and phone numbers of families for whom you have babysat in the past year. Ask them first if it is okay to use them as references.)
Fill your babysitter’s bag with supplies that you may need and are appropriate for the age of the children. Bringing your own toys makes you special and the children will look forward to your visits!

**Basic supplies to always keep in your bag:**

- Kentucky 4-H Babysitting Basics 4 Fun and 4 Profit Member’s Manual
- Flashlight and batteries
- First aid kit
- Band aids
- Foam ball
- Blank notepad and pencil
- Completed Safety Checklist

**Infant**
Small rubber toys
Rattle
Board book

**Toddler**
Large rubber or plastic toys
Board book
Blocks in a container

**Pre-School**
Blank paper, crayons, lunch-size paper bags or paper plates (for drawing or making puppets.)
Puzzles
Peg board
Beads for stringing

**School-age**
Playing cards
Simple board games
Safety Checklist

For fire, get out of the house.  
Call 911

For accident requiring immediate help,  
Call 911

- Tell the 911 operator your name
- Tell where the emergency is happening
- Stay on the phone and listen for directions until help arrives

Information to request from child’s parent or guardian before he/she leaves:

**Family Name:** _________________________________________________________________

**Family’s Address:** _______________________________________________________________

**Nearest intersection or landmark:** ________________________________________________

**Parent/Guardian 1**  
__________  
Phone Number  
Cell Phone Number  
______________________________  
Parent will call home at: ________  
Parent will BE home at: ________  
______________________________  
Alternate Contact
______________________________  
Alternate’s Phone Number

**Parent/Guardian 2**  
__________  
Phone Number  
Cell Phone Number  
______________________________  
Notes:
______________________________

**Family Doctor’s Phone Number**

**Poison Control Center Phone Number**
QUESTIONS TO ASK EMPLOYER PARENT

What are the children’s favorite play activities?

What are the routines for naps and bedtime? When is bedtime?

What can the children eat and drink? And when?

How would you like me to handle misbehavior?

What are the children’s favorite play activities?

What are the household rules?

Do the children have allergies?

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Sources


American Red Cross Babysitter’s Training Participant’s Set, #655633. Rev. 3/08. Includes Babysitter’s Training Handbook, Babysitter’s Training Emergency Reference Guide and the Babysitter’s Training CD-ROM. Price: #14.95. Access at [https://www.shopstaywell.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCptItmDspRte_arr.jsp?section=17782&item=188409&JServSessionId=drootistore3=kqomptncuc2.0lboPr9zaMTN65TrqGp2TxpQOUtxCLbx0Ka0- &dbprod_prodl=LYoT8EFTh6KAdCrFs3QWo6bm:S&dbprod_prodp ses=ZGCCF5B63AEBD0EE2D085F21276C81172D7A0C211885FACD0CFF1BB6FB5971AAE84AD483876FB9E8AFA28BD338B55EF120BDBF20936C58E8EC9B79F066D43A0202](https://www.shopstaywell.com/OA_HTML/ibeCCptItmDspRte_arr.jsp?section=17782&item=188409&JServSessionId=drootistore3=kqomptncuc2.0lboPr9zaMTN65TrqGp2TxpQOUtxCLbx0Ka0- &dbprod_prodl=LYoT8EFTh6KAdCrFs3QWo6bm:S&dbprod_prodp ses=ZGCCF5B63AEBD0EE2D085F21276C81172D7A0C211885FACD0CFF1BB6FB5971AAE84AD483876FB9E8AFA28BD338B55EF120BDBF20936C58E8EC9B79F066D43A0202).


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Gnatuk, C. A. and Quick, J. S. (2001/2009). *Keys to great parenting: Fun and learning with your baby or toddler.* FCS7-179-185. Lexington, KY: Kentucky Cooperative Extension Service. Available at http://www2.ca.uky.edu/agc/pubs/fcs7/fcs7179/fcs7179.pdf, same URL for all seven English publications, except for replacing the publication number. Spanish paper publications are available by contacting the author at cgnatuk@uky.edu. Other parent, caregiver and group facilitator resources available for this program by contacting the author.


Hofer, M. (2013). Telephone communication on 9/27/13, regarding emergency teaching scenarios used with Cook County, Illinois 4-H babysitting sessions. Cook County Office, University of Illinois Extension, Chicago, IL.


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Layout by: Becky Simmermacher and Anna Meador


Poison Help Logo, used with permission of American Association of Poison Control Center, pages 49-50

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