



415 Elm Grove Lane
Hazelwood, MO 63042-1917
Phone: 314-839-3700
Fax: 314-839-0249

Search 

Hazelwood Fire Activities

02/27/2009

[back](#)

Selecting a Sitter with Confidence

Selecting a baby sitter can be an experience that is filled with anxiety and uncertainty. Every parent wants to feel confident that their kids are in the best hands possible when they are away from home. Finding someone who can provide proper supervision and handle any emergencies that may arise can be an overwhelming task. There are a number of proactive steps parents can take to ensure their child is in good hands. "Every parent wants to know their child is safe when left in someone else's care," said Battalion Chief Randy Getz of the Hazelwood Fire Department. "Parents are responsible for knowing if the sitter they've selected is experienced enough to provide proper care and supervision for their child, and can handle any emergencies that may occur."

Interviewing a Sitter

When looking for a baby sitter, talk to relatives, friends and neighbors about their personal experiences. Interview several candidates before making your final decision. Here are a few questions to ask potential sitters:

- * Are you at least 13 years of age?
- * Are you responsible and trustworthy?
- * What kind of experience do you have? Can you provide references?
- * Have you taken a baby sitter training course?
- * Are you certified in infant and child CPR?
- * Do you know what to do in an emergency?
- * Are you willing to accept our guidelines for taking care of our child?
- * Do you understand the importance of constant supervision?

Communicate With Your Sitter

Now that you have selected a sitter, you may feel a great deal a relief but your work is not over yet! Make sure to do the following before leaving your children in the hands of a sitter:

- * Childproof your home. Explore your home at a child's level (on hands and knees, for example) to look for hazards.
- * Give the baby sitter a tour of your home. Inform your sitter of the safety precautions you've taken; point out baby gates, child resistant locks, smoke alarms, carbon monoxide detectors, electrical outlet covers, toilet locks, etc.
- * Show the sitter where phones, first aid supplies, fire extinguishers, flashlights and extra blankets are located. Make sure your sitter knows your planned fire escape routes.
- * Show the baby sitter where to find emergency telephone numbers. Lists near every phone should include a number where you can be reached, as well as numbers for the fire and police departments, poison control center, ambulance, hospital or emergency services, your doctor, a neighbor and a relative.
- * Make sure the sitter knows which rooms are off limits to your children especially infants

and toddlers. For example, your child should not be allowed to play in the kitchen or the bathroom because too many hazards exist in those rooms.

* Provide clear written instructions about appropriate dosage and schedule for any medications the sitter might have to give your child. Go over these instructions with your sitter before you leave.

* Leave instructions regarding protective gear. If your child is allowed to ride a bike, skateboard, scooter or inline skates while you're away, make sure the sitter knows where to find your child's helmet, knee and elbow pads and other protective gear. The sitter should also insist your child wear them.

* Instruct your sitter never to leave your child alone - even for a second. There is no substitute for constant supervision.

If you are planning to leave your child at your sitter's home, make sure you review the information mentioned above and check their home for childproofing first. The time and energy spent on these preliminary steps can make an important difference in your child's well-being.

By taking a few precautions, your babysitter can help prevent a serious mishap.

© City of Hazelwood.