

What You Can Do to Protect Your Baby



Choosing a Baby Sitter



Interview all potential baby-sitters.

Ask the baby-sitter's age, if (s)he is a teen. If you have very young children, you will want to find an older teen or one who has experience helping with infants and young children.

Talk about the baby-sitter's past experience.

What activities is (s)he involved in?

Why is (s)he interested in baby-sitting?

What does (s)he enjoy doing with children?

Has (s)he taken the Red Cross baby-sitter's course? Or any other child care training?

Ask for references. Talking to people who have hired this baby-sitter in the past will give you an idea of the baby-sitter's reliability and trustworthiness.

Invite the baby-sitter to your house. Or visit the sitter's home, if that is where your baby will be.

This will give you a chance to see the sitter interacting with your children, and to show the baby-sitter around your home.

Discuss the household rules, and tell the baby-sitter how you expect your child to be treated.

Make sure that the sitter understands appropriate forms of discipline and understands the dangers of shaking a baby.

Be sure the baby-sitter understands your rules on bed times, snacks, etc.

Leave important telephone numbers with the baby-sitter (your cell phone or pager, neighbors, nearby relatives, doctor, fire, police) in case an emergency should arise.



Talk to your Children about the baby-sitter.

It is important for your children to be comfortable with the baby-sitter.
Respond to concerns your children may have.
Listen to your children and trust them.



When the Sitter should contact parents:

If a child has been crying for more than 20 or 30 minutes and you can't figure out what's wrong.

If a child develops a fever, vomits, or is injured (more than a superficial scrape).

Anytime a situation develops that you feel you can't handle without help.