

# FIRE SAFETY TIPS FOR BABYSITTERS



## PLAN AHEAD FOR SAFETY

PLANNING AND PREVENTION are the keys to fire safety. Protect yourself and the children you're watching against fire by taking simple precautions.

## PLAN YOUR ESCAPE

EVERY HOUSEHOLD SHOULD have an escape plan. When you babysit, discuss what to do in case of fire with the adults in the household.

- Be familiar with their home. Learn all the exits and know how to unlock doors and windows. Know two ways out of each room, especially bedrooms.
- All households should have a meeting place outside where everyone gathers after escaping a fire. Have the adults show you the meeting place and don't confuse children with a different plan.
- Discuss the escape plan and meeting place with the children. Make sure every child knows where to meet outside.

With an adult, complete a copy of the emergency information form on the back of this brochure and carry it in your pocket. Be sure you know the location of a neighbor who will be home. In case of fire, call the fire department from a neighbor's phone or alarm box.

## PUT AWAY MATCHES AND LIGHTERS

NEVER SMOKE WHILE babysitting. If you find matches, lighters, or other smoking materials, put them up high (preferably in a locked cabinet) where children can't see or reach them.

## GIVE SPACE HEATERS SPACE

KEEP ANYTHING THAT can burn – such as books, paper, and clothing – at least three feet (one meter) away from space heaters. And keep children away from portable heaters and space heaters, too.



## BE KITCHEN WISE

**COOK ONLY IF** you have permission from the adults in the household. Never leave cooking unattended. Set a timer to remind you to turn everything off.



## TURN POT HANDLES IN

**DON'T LET POT** handles stick out over the edge of the stove where they can be bumped or grabbed. Turn them in, pointing toward the back of the stove, to prevent spilling hot liquids.

## USE MICROWAVES SAFELY

**NEVER PUT ANYTHING** into a microwave unless you are absolutely sure it is safe. Paper, glass, and microwave-proof earthenware are safe. In many cases, metals are not. Read and follow the instructions on all packaged microwave meals.

Keep children away from the microwave. Be careful when removing covers from microwave containers; escaping steam can cause severe burns. Cool all foods sufficiently before serving them to children.

## NEVER LEAVE CHILDREN ALONE

**YOU SHOULD KEEP** children in your sight until you are sure they are sound asleep. Even then, make sure you can hear them when they wake up.

## IN CASE OF FIRE

**Get Out! Stay Out!** If you smell smoke, hear a smoke alarm, or see flames, get everybody out! Don't wait for any reason. Go directly to your meeting place and count heads to make sure everyone has escaped.

**Crawl Low Under Smoke.** If you encounter smoke while you are escaping a fire, use another exit route. If you must escape through smoke, remember that heat and smoke rise, so cleaner air is always near the floor. Crawl on your hands and knees, keeping your head 12 to 24 inches (30 to 60 centimeters) above the floor. Go first, making sure the children follow you.

**Call the Fire Department.** Take the children to a neighbor's home and call the fire department from there. Give the fire department the complete address of the fire and stay on the phone until you're told to hang up. Then call the children's parents.

**Don't Go Back.** Watch children carefully while you're waiting for the fire department. Make sure no one goes back inside for any reason. Keep everyone a safe distance from the fire and out of the way of the firefighters.

**If You Can't Get to the Children.** If smoke or flames are blocking the way to the children's bedrooms, use the phone in the home if possible or go straight to the neighbor's and call the fire department. Tell them that the children are trapped inside and where they are. When you babysit, you are in charge. During an emergency, you must act on your own and right away.

## EMERGENCY TIPS

**Stop, Drop, and Roll.** If your clothing catches fire: Stop, don't run. Drop to the ground and cover your face with your hands. Roll over and over until the fire goes out. Babysitters may have to help children do this. Pull the child to the ground and roll him or her over and over to smother the flames.

**Cool a Burn.** The best first aid for burns is to run cool water over the burned area for 10 to 15 minutes. If a burn blisters or appears charred, get medical help immediately.

## EMERGENCY INFORMATION

**ASK AN ADULT** to complete this form before leaving you alone with children.

Fire: .....

Police: .....

Poison Control: .....

Doctor (name and phone number): .....

Where parents can be reached: .....

Children's family name: .....

Full address where you are babysitting: .....

Town: .....

Phone: .....

Neighbor (name and phone number):

Other instructions:



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