

A Letter to Parents ...

Safe Sitter® graduates who stay home alone, watch younger brothers and sisters, or babysit other children have many new responsibilities. Parents of a Safe Sitter® have some new responsibilities, too.

First, your child has learned many new things during the Safe Sitter® course. However, completing this course does not necessarily mean your child is ready to stay home alone, watch younger siblings, or babysit. **Decide if your child is ready based on his or her maturity level.** If your child is going to babysit or do odd jobs for friends or neighbors, monitor their job requests and activity, and help him or her decide which jobs he or she can handle.

Help your child practice good work habits, especially screening jobs, checking references, and being on time. In addition, have a method to track the jobs that your child accepts. For example, a family calendar is a great place to keep this information, and there are several online calendars and apps that make it easy for you to share information.

Help your child stay safe: don't allow your child to advertise on the Internet. Many of those sites require users to be 18 and over, and it isn't safe for young teens to advertise to strangers. We encourage our students to babysit or do odd jobs for friends, acquaintances, neighbors, and other people that either they or you know personally.

Talk to your child after each job. Young teens need guidance, and when you ask your student how each job went, you're likely to learn more about what he or she experienced.

Sibling sitting is especially difficult. **You can help by letting younger children know that your Safe Sitter® is in charge while you're gone.** Review the rules in front of the siblings and urge them to support the sitter's authority while you are gone. Sibling sitting is an important family contribution, so be sure to show your appreciation to your Safe Sitter®.

Last but not least, we have taught these students that if they are ever in a situation that is unsafe, they should call or text you **"I'm ready to be picked up now."** If you get that message, that means "Come immediately and pick me up. Don't ask questions; I'll explain later." They can use this Safety Signal if they are in an unsafe babysitting situation, but they can also use it in any situation, now or in the future, where they feel they are in danger.

The life skills learned in Safe Sitter® are valuable whether or not your child decides to babysit. Safe Sitter® graduates gain skills in responsibility, planning, and decision making. We have many wonderful stories of Safe Sitter® graduates who have stayed calm in emergencies and used their choking rescue skills to save the lives of their friends and family.

Thank you for enrolling your child in Safe Sitter®.

Sincerely,



Sara Ross, M.D.
Medical Director
Safe Sitter, Inc.

