



Fire Safety For Babysitters

Be responsible! Babysitting is one of the biggest responsibilities you will ever take on. When you babysit, the child's safety is in your hands. You must be prepared to give the child your undivided attention. And if you are going to take responsibility for a child's safety, you have to plan ahead. The following precautions are simple, but very important.

Make sure you have an exit plan! Every household should have one. Discuss the plan with the adults in the house. Make sure you are familiar with their home, that you know where all the exits are and how to unlock doors and windows. Establish a meeting place outside the home so that you will know that everyone is out safely. Go [**HERE**](#) to find out more about exit drills.

Put away all matches and lighters! Put them up high and out of sight of the child or children you are looking after. Lock them away, if possible. Don't smoke while you are babysitting. It is not only a bad example for a child...it's a fire risk too.

Make the kitchen a safe place! Cook only if you have permission from the adults in the household. If you do cook, never leave the stove or the microwave unattended. If you're cooking on the stovetop, turn the handles of the pots and pans in, pointing toward the centre of the stove. Make sure a child cannot bump or grab a handle and spill the hot contents. Click [**HERE**](#) to find out more.

Be a Safety Scout! Check to see if smoke alarms are installed and working at the house where you are babysitting. Go [**HERE**](#) to find out more about smoke alarms. Children are curious by nature. Check to see if safety covers are placed on electrical outlets that are not in use so that a small child cannot stick something into them.

Look at the house numbers outside! Remember them. If they are not clearly visible from the road, point it out to the adults of the household. It helps emergency responders if the numbers can be seen, especially at night.

Here's what to do if there is a fire!

- Get everybody out of the house and stay out. Everybody should meet at the meeting place.
- If there is smoke, try to use another exit route. If you can't use one, crawl low, under the smoke. Remember that heat and smoke rise.
- Call 911 from a neighbour's house. If you couldn't get the children out, tell the person on the other end where the children are located inside the house. Don't hang up until they tell you to. Watch the children carefully while you are waiting for firefighters to arrive. Don't let the little ones go near their house.
- After you call 911, you should immediately contact the children's parents. Make sure they leave you a number where they can be reached.

Following all these tips will make you a better babysitter and parents will feel that their children are safe in your care!

