

Safe Babysitting Tips for Summer and Fall



SAFE BABYSITTING TIPS

LIVE WELL UTAH

Help prepare your older children to be responsible babysitters with these tips and ideas.

Is your son or daughter interested in babysitting? It's important to help youth understand that watching kids is a big responsibility, and keeping them safe adds to their duties. Here are ideas to discuss with them to help keep the children they tend safe.

- Always wear and reapply sunscreen. As a general guideline, the SPF number is the number of minutes you can go before you need to reapply the sunscreen.
- Keep your eyes on the children at all times when you are around water, including ponds and swimming pools. Kids can get hurt even on slip and slides, so keep your eyes out for possible danger.
- Be aware of hot cement. The cement can often get so hot that it burns the kids' feet. If you want to have fun with sidewalk chalk, find a shady part of the sidewalk where children can draw their creations.
- Be aware of strangers. Play in the backyard as much as possible. If this is not possible, keep an eye out for strangers and suspicious vehicles.
- Drink plenty of water, especially if you are outside and sweating and losing water. Both you and the kids need to stay hydrated.
- Be aware of the temperature outside. If it is above 90 degrees, it is probably safer to find something to do inside.
- Prepare simple snacks that are healthy and safe. Make sure vegetables, fruits and hot dogs are cut up in small pieces. Don't give children a treat on a stick unless they are sitting down to eat it. Running around and

eating food on a stick could cause them to fall and jam the stick in their throat.

- Have a first aid kit handy.
- Have fun and be safe!

Another responsibility a babysitter has is dealing with tantrums, bad behavior and irrationality. These behaviors can often be handled through a time out. Attached is a recipe for a glitter “calm down jar” that also doubles as a timer. As kids focus on the settling glitter, it helps them calm down. Once all the glitter settles, the time out is over. It can be found here. Your youth may want to add a “calm down jar” to their babysitting kit.

This article was written by Kayla Orton, Intern with Utah State University Extension – Salt Lake County