

# Finding Competent and Affordable Childcare



Professors Brower and Davis (2021) recently reviewed the need for parent self-care on USU Extension's Relationship website. They reminded readers that when we experience mental and emotional fatigue, it is hard to provide quality care to our children that show love and support. Obtaining a babysitter to care for your children while you take time to recharge may be necessary. So, how does a caregiver make sure they hire someone who is a good fit for their needs and family?

Let's discuss how to find someone you believe to be competent in the care of your child and the affordability of care.

## **Finding Competent Providers**

- Ask family and friends for referrals. Ask them who they trust and why.
- Take the time to call and talk to referrals from friends and family. What may work for them might not for you.
- Interview care providers. Think about how you would want someone to handle child behaviors or safety concerns. Ask questions based on your desires and concerns.
- If CPR and first aid certification are important to you, verify that the individual has current training and

certification. They should have a card confirming what training they received and when it will expire.

- Please note that childcare does not include housekeeping. Informing your chosen caregiver that you expect toys to be put away is advised. However, if you expect more to be done, then an additional fee should be arranged for in advance for those services.
- Take time before you leave home to talk with your children and the sitter about home rules to be followed. That way, everyone is on the same page, and the sitter will have less trouble getting children to follow home rules.

### **Finding Affordable Care**

- Ask friends and family what they pay per hour for babysitting. Consider the number of children you have when calculating what you are willing to pay them.
- Have an open conversation about the cost per hour of care with your babysitter prior to hire. Think about what you can afford; if their price is too high, then be honest with them about what you are willing to pay per hour.
- Ask friends and family members with children if you can do a babysitting swap.
- Talk with those you know and trust about the possibility of watching your child if ever you find you need time for self-care. You can always make a treat and deliver it later as a thank you.
- If you have a child with disabilities, some Utah counties have programs designed to give parents a few hours of respite. See <https://kotm.org/programs/respite-care>
- Here is another resource for those experiencing crisis or feeling overwhelmed. This center will provide respite if you need a break. See <http://www.utahvalleyfamilysupport.org/how-we-can-he>

lp/crisis-services/. Be sure to call ahead if using this resource.

## References

Brower, N., & Davis, E. (n.d.). *Becoming a better parent through self-care*. Utah State University Extension: Relationships. Retrieved February 1, 2022, from <https://extension.usu.edu/relationships/faq/becoming-a-better-parent-through-self-care>

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