



Babysitter's Manual





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Babysitter's Manual

Name: _____

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Welcome to the Canadian Red Cross

Our Mission

The mission of the Canadian Red Cross is to improve the lives of vulnerable people by mobilizing the power of humanity in Canada and around the world.

Our Values

Our actions and decisions are based on:

- Humanitarian values, as expressed in our Fundamental Principles;
- Respect, dignity, and care for one another within and outside the Canadian Red Cross; and
- Integrity, accountability, effectiveness, and transparency.



Our Volunteers

The Canadian Red Cross relies on more than 25,000 volunteers across the country to fulfill its mission. Red Cross volunteer opportunities are dynamic and varied, with engagement levels varying by geographic location and program. Go to redcross.ca/volunteer for more details.

How We Help

The Canadian Red Cross is dedicated to helping make families and communities safer at home and around the world.

Disaster Management

The Canadian Red Cross provides aid to individuals and families across Canada following emergencies such as house fires, flooding, ice storms, and even chemical spills.



International Operations

The Canadian Red Cross works around the world to protect and promote the rights of all people affected by armed conflict, and also provides aid following emergencies such as natural disasters and disease outbreaks.



First Aid Programs

As the largest provider of first aid training in Canada, the Canadian Red Cross offers first aid and CPR training for individuals, groups, workplaces, and first responders.



Swimming & Water Safety Program

The Canadian Red Cross offers courses at community pools, beaches, schools, and summer camps to help people of all ages and abilities learn about water safety and learn how to swim.



Respect Education

The Canadian Red Cross offers programs to teach children, youth and adults about healthy relationships, signs of abuse, dating violence, personal safety, and bullying prevention.



Community Health and Wellness

The Canadian Red Cross offers nutrition-based programs, transportation services, and health equipment loans to help individuals continue to live independently in their homes despite injury, illness, or other circumstances.



Red Cross Fundamental Principles

There are Red Cross or Red Crescent Societies in more than 190 countries around the world. In every country, our programs and activities are guided by seven Fundamental Principles.

Here's how the Red Cross Fundamental Principles apply to you as a babysitter:

HUMANITY: You serve the needs of the children in your care.

IMPARTIALITY: You don't discriminate, regardless of the nationality, race, religious beliefs, class, or political opinions of the child and his or her parent or guardian.

NEUTRALITY: You never show favouritism when working.

INDEPENDENCE: You follow the rules of the household where you work, but you place the safety of children above all else.

VOLUNTARY SERVICE: Your job is never done solely for your own gain.

UNITY: You and the family you work for recognize that everyone's responsibilities are connected to one another.

UNIVERSALITY: You acknowledge that everyone has equal responsibilities in creating a safe and harmonious environment.

ACTIVITY

Putting the Seven Fundamental Principles Into Action

The guardian of the children you're babysitting gave you permission to make dinner. You ask the children to help you set the table. You ask the oldest child to bring the glasses to the table and pour the cold drinks and the youngest to place napkins on the table. Once the table is set, you all have dinner together.

List all the fundamental principles that are used in this scenario.

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

ACTIVITY

What to Keep in Your Babysitting Kit

You've been called at the last minute to babysit two preschoolers for a few hours. What should you take with you?

Rank each of the following items in order of importance, with 1 being the most important and 10 being the least important.

_____ Change of clothes

_____ Picture book

_____ Toy building blocks

_____ First aid kit

_____ *Babysitter's Manual*

_____ Your homework

_____ Stuffed animal

_____ Crayons

_____ Mobile phone

_____ Flashlight

Democratic Leadership Style

What it is: You ask for each child's opinion and then work out a solution together, using a positive attitude. Each child feels that his or her opinions are heard and respected.

When to use it: The kids are trying to make a decision that affects everyone but doesn't involve safety.

Hands-Off Leadership Style

What it is: You let the kids work out small conflicts on their own. You keep an eye on the situation and step in if the conflict gets worse or the kids are unable to resolve the problem alone. The children have an opportunity to learn how to solve disagreements on their own.

When to use it: The children are getting along, and no important decisions need to be made.

Sympathetic Leadership Style

What it is: You focus on making the children feel valued and cared for, rather than focusing on what they're doing. Be patient and listen to what each child has to say. Ignore their minor attention-seeking behaviour. By doing this, you can earn their trust.

When to use it: Safety is not at risk and you are just getting to know the children, emotions are running high, and/or it's more important to focus on how the children feel than on how they're acting.

Directive Leadership Style

What it is: There is some sort of emergency or a potential hazard, and you have to tell the children what to do with little or no discussion. Once the situation is under control, take some time to explain to the children what happened and why.

When to use it: You need to make an important decision quickly. Safety is at risk, and you need to take immediate action.

Leadership Skills

Anyone can learn to be a leader. As with other skills, the more you practise leadership skills, the better and more comfortable you will become with them. Leadership skills can be broken down into four areas:

- Role modelling
- Respecting household rules and diversity
- Taking action
- Decision-making

Role Modelling

As a babysitter, you are a role model, which means you are a leader in setting good examples for children to follow. For example, always washing your hands before preparing or eating food will encourage the children to wash their hands. You can be a good role model by:

- Following household rules.
- Following the instructions from the child's parent or guardian.
- Focusing on safety.
- Having a positive attitude.
- Making the best out of difficult situations.

Respect

Respecting Household Rules

An important part of being a good leader is knowing what is expected of you. The parents or guardians of the children you babysit will have specific instructions for how they want you to handle certain situations. Respect and follow all the household rules. The children will be happier, feel more secure, and behave better if you follow their usual routines.

ACTIVITY

What Type of Leadership Style Should You Use?

Read the following scenarios. What type of leadership style should you use in each scenario to reach a fair solution?

Scenario 1: You are babysitting two children and have plans to take them to the park. It begins raining outside, so you let the children watch a movie instead. You let the children pick from a few age-appropriate movies, but each child wants to watch a different movie.

Scenario 2: You are caring for three small children when the power in the house goes out. You turn on the flashlight you have in your babysitting kit and give the children some colouring books that you also brought along with you. However, the youngest of the children is afraid of the dark and begins to panic. As you are comforting her, the other two children also get scared.

Scenario 3: The father of the children you are babysitting has given you permission to let the kids use the backyard playset. While supervising the children, you notice that one of the older children is about to jump off the top of the slide.

Scenario 4: The two sisters you are babysitting are colouring in their colouring books and are happily sharing a set of crayons. After a few minutes, they decide that they both want to use the green crayon, and there is only one.

Respecting Diversity

People have a lot in common, but every person is also unique. People look different, act differently, and believe different things. This is called diversity. Respecting diversity is a great way to model respect.

You may find that the children you babysit are diverse in the following ways:

Age: Children look, think, and behave differently as they get older. For example, an 8-year-old boy does not play the same way he did when he was 4 years old. Having interests that change is a part of growing up.

Developmental stages: Children of the same age have usually reached the same types of milestones. These are called developmental stages. For example, at about 9 to 12 months old, most babies can pull themselves up into a standing position. However, these are only rough guidelines: Even though some children may be the same age, they may not have achieved the same milestones yet.

Gender: Don't assume that the children you babysit will act certain ways or like certain things just because of their genders. Traditional ideas of "toys for girls" or "how boys behave" are based on stereotypes that often aren't true. Instead of making assumptions, take the time to discover the interests of the children as individuals.

Individual differences: People, including children, don't always think or feel the same way—that's what makes us individuals! It's important to remember that even children from the same family may think and react differently.

Cultural differences: If you babysit for a child whose family is from a different country or is of a different culture than your own, the family might speak another language and eat certain foods or dress in clothes that are unfamiliar to you. Be respectful of these differences and don't be afraid to ask questions.

Religious beliefs: You may care for children with religious beliefs that are different from your own. For example, the child's parent or guardian might give special instructions, such as making sure the child says his or her prayers or that the child doesn't eat certain foods. Be respectful of all families and their religious beliefs.

Family members: Each family is different in some way. You might care for children who live with both parents, or with only one parent. Other children may live with a step-parent, a guardian, or other relatives who are not the child's birth parents. Be respectful of all family members of the children you babysit.

Family lifestyle: You may notice that some families have different types of homes and cars and the children have different types of clothing or toys. It's your job to do your best on each babysitting job and give the same care to all children, no matter how many or what kind of things they have.

Remember, every child is different. Your job as a babysitter is to get to know the children you look after and appreciate their differences.

Taking Action

People look to leaders to take action when no one else will. In difficult situations, it's easy to think that someone else will handle things. But if no one takes responsibility, no one will act. A leader will risk sounding foolish or standing out to make the right choice in a difficult situation. There are three steps to taking action in a difficult situation:

1. **Notice that action is needed.** Be alert and notice any changes in the children's behaviour or in your situation that might lead to problems.
2. **Take responsibility.** Ask yourself if action is needed and then take responsibility for the situation.
3. **Act.** Take action to fix the situation. Remember, only do what you are trained to do and what you can do safely.

Decision-Making

Deciding how to handle challenging situations is part of your job as a babysitter. Parents and guardians rely on you to make good decisions when they can't. When you are faced with a tough situation, use the FIND Decision-Making Model to help you decide what to do.

FIND Decision-Making Model

- Step 1** **F**igure out the problem:
Focus on the exact problem that is causing trouble.
- Step 2** **I**dentify possible solutions:
Think about all the possible ways you could solve the problem.
- Step 3** **N**ame pros and cons for each solution:
Think about the positive and negative consequences of each way to solve the problem.
- Step 4** **D**ecide which solution is best, then act on it:
Pick a solution where the pros outweigh the cons, then put the solution into action.

ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

You are babysitting three children aged 3, 5, and 7 years. Their mother gave you permission to take the children to the park across the street, so you take the kids for an hour before lunch. After 15 minutes at the park, the oldest child decides that she wants to go home. She keeps saying, "If we don't leave, I'll go home without you!" What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

Recognizing Child Abuse and Neglect

Ensuring children are safe is the most important role of a babysitter. If you see or hear things that make you question children's well-being or think they are being abused or neglected, it is very important that you talk to a trusted adult, no matter what the possible consequences may be.

Child abuse is when someone hurts a child physically, emotionally, or sexually. Child neglect is when someone does not provide the basic needs for a child.

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF PHYSICAL ABUSE

- Bruises and welts in unusual places (for example, on the back, bottom, or upper arms)
- Old and new scars
- Unexplained injuries

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF EMOTIONAL ABUSE

- Depression
- Lack of confidence
- Many temper tantrums
- Lots of crying and sulking

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF SEXUAL ABUSE

- Physical injuries in genital or anal area
- Knowledge about sex that is beyond his or her age
- Sexual behaviour or conversation
- Fear of undressing or physical contact

POSSIBLE SIGNS OF NEGLECT

- Constant hunger
- Dirtiness beyond that caused by usual playing
- Exhaustion
- Inappropriate clothing
- Lack of medical or dental care

Physically abused children may be afraid of physical contact. They may try to hide their bruises and scars or make many excuses for them.

You may have children demonstrate signs of emotional distress. Any of the following signs are serious and should not be ignored:

- Cutting themselves
- Suicidal statements or gestures
- Any intentions or statements of self-harm

What Do You Do?

1. DO NOT question the child about your concerns or suspicions.
2. DO NOT be part of the secret—if you are concerned, you cannot promise that you will not tell anyone.
3. Immediately tell an adult you trust about what you are seeing, hearing, or thinking. You can also call the Kids Help Phone at 1-800-668-6868.
4. Together, you and your trusted adult will decide what the next steps will be. If you suspect abuse or neglect, contact child protection or the police.

3 Childhood Characteristics and Behaviour

Stages for Babies

Communication is important to a baby's development. While they can't yet talk, babies (0 to 12 months old) are sensitive to your voice and touch. Speaking to them often and holding them gently lets babies know that they are not alone and helps them feel secure.

Here are some developmental characteristics of a typical baby:



0 to 3 MONTHS

PHYSICAL

- Raises head and lifts chin when lying on stomach
- Grasps and shakes hand-held toys
- Moves arms and legs
- Follows moving objects and sounds with eyes and head

SOCIAL

- Calmed by cradling and other types of baby-holding
- Begins to smile at others' faces

MENTAL

- Explores with mouth and hands

3 to 6 MONTHS

PHYSICAL

- Rolls or wiggles toward toys
- Holds head steady
- Can sit up (but may require support)
- Uses thumb and finger to pick up objects

SOCIAL

- Remembers familiar people and objects for a short period of time
- Begins to imitate actions, facial expressions, and sounds

MENTAL

- Begins to communicate more with face and body (for example, coos, babbles, and smiles)

6 to 12 MONTHS

PHYSICAL

- Can crawl
- Pulls self up to a standing position
- Side steps while holding onto furniture
- Starts to walk

SOCIAL

- Anxious or shy with strangers

MENTAL

- Says a few words

Stages for Toddlers

Most toddlers (1 to 3 years old) like walking, climbing, and exploring. They may understand what you say, but they may say only a few words, or words that only their parents or guardians understand. This can be challenging for you and frustrating for the toddler.



Here are some developmental characteristics of an average toddler:

PHYSICAL

- Feeds him- or herself
- Runs, skips, jumps, and climbs (typically seen in older toddlers)
- Dresses him- or herself (with help)

SOCIAL

- Imitates others
- Wants to do things his or her own way
- Begins to test rules and boundaries

MENTAL

- Uses one- to three-word sentences
- Begins to understand the feeling of independence

Stages for Preschoolers

Preschoolers can walk, run, talk, dress themselves, and feed themselves. They are also learning to use the toilet alone. They're beginning to know more about their world and may tell you how they think things should be. That's why it's important that toddlers' parents or guardians explain rules and routines to you. It helps if the preschooler hears his or her parent or guardian explaining the rules to you.



Preschoolers like to say "No," so remember to ask open-ended questions that can't be answered with a simple "Yes" or "No." They are also typically noisy, so silence often means trouble. If it seems too quiet, check it out!

Here are some developmental characteristics of an average preschooler:

PHYSICAL

- Learns to ride a tricycle or a bicycle with training wheels

SOCIAL

- Likes to show off
- Plays both independently and with a group

MENTAL

- Speaks well
- Asks lots of questions
- Understands time

Stages for School-Aged Children

School-aged children (5 years of age and older) are used to being around people. They admire “big kids” and teenagers and like to show off. School-aged children are likely to be more cooperative if you show an interest in them and what they like to do.

School-aged children are old enough to know the rules and routines. If the child breaks the rules, follow the instructions for handling misbehaviour as provided by the child’s parent or guardian. Afterward, let the incident be forgotten.

Here are some developmental characteristics of an average school-aged child:

PHYSICAL

- Does many things by him- or herself

SOCIAL

- Is interested in specific subjects (such as sports or music)

MENTAL

- Knows what is pretend and what is real
- Understands games that have rules



Babysitting Children With Disabilities

Many children who have different abilities or needs can interact without challenges. Other children may require special equipment, such as a wheelchair. In either case, it’s very important to follow the instructions of the children’s parents or guardians. Remember to be patient with the children: Their bodies and minds may work differently than yours.



Types of Disabilities

Motor and physical: The child may have challenges performing certain muscle movements, either small or big.

Vision: The child may be blind or partially sighted and may use special devices when walking, such as a cane. Be careful not to leave items around that can be tripped over or run into.

Hearing: Children may be completely or partially deaf. Children who are partially deaf often use hearing aids to assist with hearing sounds.

Developmental: This may impact how much a child understands and communicates, and how the child behaves. For example, a 9-year-old child may behave and understand information more like a 6-year-old.



Assistive Devices

Some children require special equipment to help them with daily tasks. Remember, assistive devices are tools, not toys. The child's parent or guardian should always explain when and how to use an assistive device, what the child can do independently, and what the child will need your help with. Assistive devices should be treated carefully so they do not get lost or broken. Always use the device the way it was designed to be used.



If you are not clear on how to use an assistive device or you are not comfortable helping the child use his or her assistive device, make sure you let the child's parent or guardian know.

Service Animals

Some children may be assisted by a service animal, usually a dog. Remember, a service animal is not a pet. When a service animal is harnessed, he or she is working. You should avoid interacting with the animal, including talking to it and petting it.

ACTIVITY

Match the Activity to the Developmental Stage

Draw a line connecting each child to the appropriate activities, depending on his or her developmental stage. Activities may be used more than once.

A collection of activity icons arranged in a grid-like fashion. The icons include: a stuffed rabbit, a bottle of bubble solution with bubbles, a pair of maracas, a soccer ball, a stack of books with one open showing a horse, a tablet with various app icons, a green bicycle, a board game with a map, a dress and a hat, a game controller, a coloring book with a rabbit and a tiger, and several colorful building blocks.



4 Injury Is No Accident: Creating Safe Environments

Safety Begins With Me

Children of all ages usually have a difficult time understanding danger and predicting injuries. It's up to you to anticipate any possible hazards. Constant supervision is the best way to prevent injuries. If the children are behaving unsafely, suggest a different activity. It's a good idea to carry a portable or mobile phone with you at all times so you can call for help if necessary without leaving the area. If you need to step away for any reason, you can:

- Take the child with you.
- Secure babies, toddlers, and preschoolers in a safe place, such as an age-appropriate playpen, if you cannot take them with you.




Information to Get From the Child's Parent or Guardian

Before you're left alone with the child you're babysitting, go through the Babysitter's Interview Form and Checklist (provided by your Youth Leader) with the child's parent or guardian. This will help you collect all the information you need to do a good job and keep the child safe.

Make sure to ask the child's parent or guardian for the following emergency information:

- The parent's or guardian's emergency contact number. Keep this near the phone or save the number to your mobile phone.



Babysitter's Interview Form and Checklist

Before your first babysitting job for a family, complete this form with the child's parent or guardian to make sure you get all the information you need to do your job right. Have the child's parent or guardian confirm the answers to any questions that were already asked during your phone interview. Keep track of the questions you've asked by checking off the boxes. You can write down the answers or any notes to yourself in the space provided.

Today's date: _____

Family Information and Emergency Numbers

What is your family name? Ask the child's parent or guardian to confirm the spelling.

What is your home phone number? _____

What is your home address? _____

What is your email address? _____

What is the nearest major intersection to your home (ask the child's parent or guardian to provide directions if the family lives in a rural area)? _____

What is your mobile phone number? _____

At what phone number can I reach you during my babysitting shift? _____

What is the name and phone number of an adult who can make decisions if you cannot be reached? _____

Is there a neighbour or trusted adult nearby who I can call in an emergency? _____

- The family's home escape plan.
- Any allergies or medical conditions the child may have, as well as any medications the child may be taking.

It is a good idea to have the child there when you speak to his or her parent or guardian about the family's rules and routines. This will prevent conflicts with the child later.

Home Safety

Remember these general home safety tips:

- Keep the doors locked at all times.
- Close curtains and blinds when it gets dark outside.
- Carry the house key with you at all times to ensure you don't get locked out.
- If possible, carry a portable or mobile phone with you at all times.
- Bring your first aid kit with you if you leave the house.

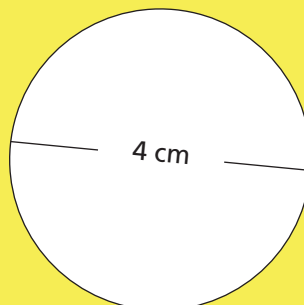
Precautions for All Developmental Stages

Suffocating and Choking

You can reduce a child's risk of choking or suffocating by:

- Supervising the child at all times, especially when playing, eating, or drinking.
- Keeping small objects that the child can swallow out of his or her reach, as well as larger toys with removable parts or batteries.
- Removing possible hazards such as plastic bags, balloons, and bubble wrap, as well as any extra pillows, blankets, and stuffed animals from the child's bed.
- Checking that loose scarves, drawstrings, and mitten strings have been removed when children play on playground equipment to lower the risk of strangulation.
- Cutting the child's food into small, easily manageable pieces.

Toys for babies and toddlers should be no smaller than 4 cm (1.5 in.) in diameter. Most toys are labelled with the age group the toy is safe for.



Poison Prevention

While the bottle caps of most medication and poisonous materials are childproof, the cap may be faulty or may have not been closed properly when last used. Make sure any harmful substance is sealed correctly. If you see any medicine (including vitamins), cleaning products, or other hazardous materials that haven't been stored properly, put them safely out of the child's reach. Tell the child's parent or guardian where you stored these items.



Giving Medication


If it is not taken correctly, medication can be poisonous rather than helpful. You should never give a child medication unless you've been given very clear permission and instructions by the child's parent or guardian:

- **Clear permission:** The child's parent or guardian must give you permission in writing and include the name of the child and the medication.
- **Clear instructions:** The child's parent or guardian must give you clear, written instructions on how to give the medication. Review the instructions with the child's parent or guardian. If any part of the instructions is unclear to you, always ask for more explanation.

If you have been given permission to give the child medication and you feel confident about how to do so, use your Babysitter's Report Card (provided by your Youth Leader) to mark down:

- The name of the medication.
- The time you gave the medication to the child.
- How much medication was given.
- What reactions the child had (if any).

If you are not comfortable giving the child medication, politely decline the babysitting job.



Babysitter's Report Card

Behaviours

1. I noticed these good behaviours:

2. I encountered the following behavioural challenge:

What the Child Did/Did Not Do:	What I Did

Safety

1. We received the following phone calls and visitors:

Date/Time	Name	Reason for Calling or Visiting	Visitor's or Caller's Phone Number

2. The following incidences and illnesses happened while you were gone:

Date/Time	What Happened	What I Did

1

Identifying Hazardous Materials

The international hazard symbols on product labels make it easier to identify harmful materials. Knowing what these symbols mean will help you keep the children you babysit safe.

THE INTERNATIONAL HAZARD SYMBOLS



"Flammable"

These materials catch fire easily and burn quickly when exposed to any form of ignition (such as fire or heat). They can cause a fire or explosion.



"Toxic"

These materials can be fatal, toxic, or harmful if they are absorbed through the skin, inhaled, or ingested.



"Explosive"

These materials can explode when exposed to heat, flame, or pressure.



"Corrosive"

These materials can damage metal, burn skin, and cause permanent blindness.

If you must handle a product that is labelled with any of the international hazard symbols:

- Carefully read the warnings and follow the instructions.
- Wear protective equipment (such as eye goggles and rubber gloves).
- Ensure the product is properly sealed and stored after use.

ACTIVITY

Identify the Poisonous Hazard

There are potentially poisonous materials that can't be marked with an international hazard symbol, such as certain types of plants. See if you can spot the possible hazards below by circling all the items that you think can be poisonous.



Fire Safety

Make sure you know the layout of the house. You should know where the family's fire escape routes are and the location of their planned outside meeting place.

Fire can spread very quickly. If there is a fire, get everyone out of the house as fast as possible! Don't stop to pick up anything else. Once you are out of the house, stay out!



Once you reach the outside meeting place, use a mobile phone to call EMS/9-1-1 or the local fire department. Then call the child's parent or guardian. If you do not have a mobile phone, use the phone of a trusted neighbour who lives a safe distance from the fire. Be sure to take the children you are babysitting with you and keep them near you at all times.

In the event of a fire, remember these safety tips:

- If you are upstairs and fire is coming up the stairs, move to the room farthest from the fire.
- Close all the doors between you and the fire.
- Always touch a door before opening it. If the door is hot, do not open it. Shout or telephone for help.

If clothing catches fire, remember to "Stop, Drop, and Roll":

- Stop immediately where you are.
- Drop to the ground.
- Roll over and over until the flames are out, covering your face and mouth with your hands.

Scalding and Burn Prevention

To prevent scalds and burns, always closely watch children when in the kitchen or bathroom, and especially when near a stove, fireplace, radiator, or baseboard heater.

Young children are particularly curious and like to touch things that catch their attention—this includes hot items that could burn or scald the child.



In the Kitchen

- Never leave children alone.
- Keep children safely out of your way when preparing hot drinks or meals, and keep these items out of their reach.
- Use back burners as much as possible and turn pot and pan handles toward the back of the stove.
- Before giving food or a drink to a child, stir it well and test the temperature on the inside of your wrist. It should be about the same temperature as your wrist.

In the Bathroom

- Never leave children in the younger stages of development (babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and early school-aged children) alone.
- When washing a child's hands, always use lukewarm water or cool water.

Other Risks of Scalding or Burns

- Make sure electrical outlets are covered. Electrical wires should be safely out of the child's reach and sight. Never let a child play near electrical outlets or cords.
- Make sure children do not play with heaters, matches, or lighters because the child can easily be burned.

Playtime Safety

Playing and learning how to behave appropriately are very important to a child's growth and development. As a babysitter, guiding children in playing safely and appropriately are some of your key responsibilities.

Bumps, Bruises, and Blows

When babysitting, be aware of cupboards, drawers, and doors that can close on small hands.

Be aware of objects that might get in the child's way while he or she is playing or learning to crawl, stand, or walk.

If the child is playing with other kids, be sure to watch how the other kids play, too. If the children are getting too wild, distract them with another game or activity. If the child you're babysitting isn't able to calm down, follow the instructions from the child's parent or guardian on how to handle misbehaviour.

Falls

Always watch the children you babysit carefully, stay with them as much as possible, and anticipate possible falls. Make sure that children play safely and use age-appropriate equipment. If the home is equipped with baby gates, check that they are closed at all times.



ACTIVITY

Spot the Home Safety Issue

Take a look at this household. Circle all the possible home safety issues you can find. What makes these items unsafe and what could you do to create a safe environment?



Community Safety

Ask the child's parent or guardian what public places you are allowed to bring the child to. If you take the child you are babysitting to any public space, you need to assess the area to make sure that it is safe for the child and yourself.

Look around and ask these questions to make sure it is a safe place:

- Are there any sharp objects or broken glass?
- Are there any dogs who are not on leashes?
- Are there any strangers who make you uneasy?
- Are there other people around who could assist you if you needed help?

Street Safety

If the child you are babysitting wants to go outside and play with friends, go along and constantly supervise. Make sure the children walk on the sidewalk near you or hold your hands. Stop and look carefully before crossing the street.

Bicycle, Scooter, and Board Safety

Everyone using bicycles, scooters, skateboards, and longboards should wear helmets (including you)!

Be outside with the children when they are riding. You are the traffic controller! Make sure every child is wearing a helmet properly.



Remember to ask how well the children can ride and about any specific household rules, for example:

- Where is the child allowed to ride?
- Do you need to assist the child?
- Does the child wear other protective equipment (such as knee pads or wrist guards) in addition to a helmet?

Sometimes, especially if the child's friends are around, the child may forget about riding safely. Before going out for a ride, review the safety rules with him or her:

- Always ride single file.
- When riding, use a bike lane if possible; if not, ride in the same direction as the cars.
- Always follow the traffic rules (for example, stop at stop signs, signal turns, and obey traffic lights).

Water Safety

Drowning is a leading cause of injury and death of babies and children. A small child can drown in only a few centimetres of water—just enough to cover the mouth and nose.

You should never agree to give a baby a bath while you are babysitting. Babies can be easily scalded by water and can drown in just a few seconds in very little water. This is a responsibility for a baby's parent or guardian only. Being in, on, and around the water carries risks. It is safest to stay away from open water when babysitting children.



Rural Babysitting

Babysitting for a family who lives in a rural area—more than 10 km out of town—has some safety precautions that don't exist when babysitting for a family who lives in town.

As part of your safety checklist, review the safe areas for playing and the absolutely off-limits areas with the child's parent or guardian. It's a good idea for you, the parent or guardian, and the child to walk the farm or property together so that everyone knows where it is safe to play and what must be avoided. Remember to always enforce the off-limits areas with the child:

- Avoid farm equipment and machinery.
- Respect livestock. Always ensure that there is a closed fence between the children and animals.
- Avoid dugouts, sloughs, silage pits, and manure pits.



As part of the emergency procedures, make sure the child's parent or guardian writes down the correct address and specific directions so that you can provide clear instructions if you have to call for help.

Personal Safety and Security

Staying safe and creating a safe environment means more than just preventing and managing injuries. It also means being and feeling secure. All children have a right to be respected and protected from harm. The children you babysit need to know they can trust you and depend on you to provide that protection and respect.

Dealing With Strangers

A stranger is anyone you and the children do not know well. Strangers may be friendly, and they may not have any intent to hurt you, but you cannot take chances! You have to watch out for the children and yourself at all times.

Never go, or allow the children to go, anywhere with a stranger for any reason. Stay where there are a lot of other people around. Never approach a stranger who is in a vehicle (for example, someone asking for directions).

Don't be afraid to call for help: As a babysitter, it's part of your job.

On the Phone

Follow these simple rules when you answer the phone while babysitting:

- Say that the child's parent or guardian is busy and can't come to the phone. Offer to take a message.
- If someone insists on speaking with the child's parent or guardian, take a message and call the parent or guardian to relay the message.
- If a caller is aggressive or threatening, hang up. Phone the police and then the child's parent or guardian.



Visits

Follow these simple rules if a visitor arrives while you are babysitting:

- Look through a window or a peephole to see who is knocking at the door. Open the door only for people who have permission from the child's parent or guardian to come in. Before you're left alone, ask the child's parent or guardian if a visitor is expected.



- Don't answer the door at all, or talk to strangers through a closed door, chained door, or closed window. Say the child's parent or guardian is busy and can't come to the door. Offer to take a message.
- If a stranger is aggressive and won't leave, call the police. Don't go outside.

Online Safety

Online safety is about protecting the identities and managing the online activities of the kids you babysit. Ask the children's parents or guardians what devices the children are allowed to use and what the rules are for them. Always monitor the children when they use a device that has Internet access, including devices such as video game consoles and smart TVs.



General Strategies for Online Safety

To avoid online safety risks and privacy issues for yourself and the children you babysit:

- Don't say online when or where you are babysitting, either as a public status update or a private message.
- Children you babysit may want to send you a friend invite; check with the child's parent or guardian first, as this may be inappropriate.
- If you notice inappropriate content or concerning interactions, intervene immediately. Document the incident and tell the parent or guardian when he or she returns.

Don't be distracted by your own mobile device. If you are allowed to use your mobile device, it should be used as a helpful tool (for example, to access educational activities or to store emergency contact details), not for your personal entertainment.

Social Media and Images

- Take pictures while you are babysitting only if the child's parent or guardian has given you permission to do so.
- Pictures should never be taken with a child in a vulnerable position (for example, when the child is using the washroom or undressing).
- Pictures taken while babysitting must never be posted to social media, ever! This not only puts you at risk while you are babysitting but also exposes the children to online predators.

Bullying Behaviours

Bullying is repeated, unwanted, and aggressive behaviour. This behaviour can be physical, verbal, or social, or it can occur as cyberbullying.

If the children you babysit are involved in bullying:

- Stop the behaviour.
- Make sure the children are safe.
- Explain that the bullying behaviour is unacceptable.
- Separate the children until they are ready to play together safely.
- Play with them to set a caring tone.



If the children you are babysitting are being bullied online:

- Don't respond to the bullying message.
- Write down or save what you see when you see it.
- Tell the child that he or she doesn't deserve to be bullied.
- Tell the child's parent or guardian about the bullying.

5

Caring for Children

Care of Children

Caring for children at different developmental stages requires different skills. For example, holding a baby is very different from holding a toddler. Using the techniques described in this chapter will let you care for children of any age.

Holding

Babies

Cradle Hold

Most babies like being held, although some may not. Respect individual differences. Remember, a small baby cannot support his or her own head or neck until the age of about 6 months. Always support the head and neck when holding small babies!



1. Slide one hand under the baby's bottom. Spread out the fingers of your other hand and slide it under the neck and upper shoulders.
2. Lift the baby slowly and gently and hold him or her near your body.
3. Gently lower your hand that is supporting the baby's head to meet the elbow of your other arm. Carefully remove your hand, so that the head is now supported by your elbow.
4. Hold the baby close to your body, with the baby's back straight and protected.

Your arms should form a cozy hammock for the baby, with the head resting near the inside of your elbow.

Shoulder Hold

1. Slide one hand under the baby's bottom. Spread out the fingers of your other hand and slide it under the neck and upper shoulders.
2. While supporting the baby's head and neck, gently lift the baby while holding him or her near your body. Lift the baby so that he or she is in an upright position and can look over your shoulder.



Toddlers and Preschoolers

Hip Carry

Most toddlers and preschoolers have the strength to hold up their heads and support their upper bodies. You can use the hip carry to hold a toddler or preschooler.

1. Bend your knees or squat down to lift the toddler or preschooler without hurting your back. Lift the toddler or preschooler by placing your hands under each of his or her arms.
2. Once you're upright, place the toddler or preschooler on the hip that feels most comfortable to you. The toddler or preschooler should have one leg on each side of your hip.
3. Put one arm under the toddler's or preschooler's bottom and support his or her back with your other arm.



Use your hip to help support your arm that is placed under the toddler's or preschooler's bottom.

Lowering the Risk of Infections

To keep germs from spreading and to lower the risk of infections, you and the children you babysit should take preventative steps, such as:

- Covering small cuts with adhesive bandages.
- Using the arm to cover the mouth when sneezing.

As a babysitter, things you can do to lower the risk of infections are:

- Washing your hands and the children's hands frequently.
- Wearing disposable gloves when necessary.
- Only taking babysitting jobs when you are healthy.

Handwashing

When to Wash

Wearing gloves helps protect you from infection, but it does not replace the need for proper hygiene, such as handwashing. You should always wash your hands thoroughly:

- Before and after giving any kind of first aid care (even if you wear gloves).
- Before preparing any food or drinks.
- Before and after changing diapers or training pants.



You should always wash your hands and the children's hands thoroughly:

- Before and after eating.
- After using the washroom.
- After coming home from a public place.
- After touching any animal.

To wash a baby's hands, use a washcloth, soap, and lukewarm or cool water, rather than putting his or her hands directly under the faucet.

How to Wash Hands

1. Remove any jewellery from the hands and wrists and turn on the faucet to run warm water.



2. Wet the hands with water and apply some mild soap.



3. Rub the hands together for at least 30 seconds (about the time it takes to sing "Happy Birthday" twice).



4. Rinse with water.



5. Dry with a paper towel or clean towel.



6. If you are in a public washroom, turn off the faucet using a paper towel and use the paper towel to open the door. Then throw the paper towel away.

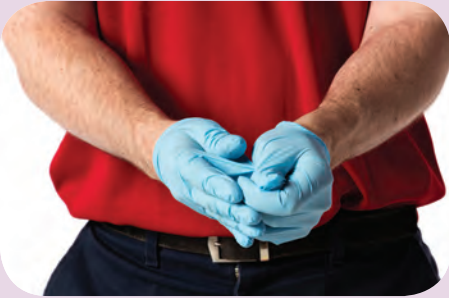


Gloves

Removing Disposable Gloves

You should remove disposable gloves without letting your skin touch the outside of the gloves (where harmful germs and bacteria may sit). Always discard used gloves appropriately, and wash your hands when you are finished.

1. With one hand, pinch the glove at the wrist of your other hand, being careful to touch only the glove's outer surface.



2. Pull the glove down and off your hand, form it into a ball, and hold it in the palm of your gloved hand.



3. Insert your gloveless fingers under the rim of the glove of your other hand, near your wrist.



4. Pull the glove down and off the hand. The glove will turn inside out and trap the balled glove inside.



Diapers and Toileting

Diapers—Babies and Toddlers

There are two common types of diapers: cloth diapers and disposable diapers. The styles can vary, so it's a good idea to ask the baby's or toddler's parent or guardian to show you how to change the child's diaper.

While the baby or toddler is on the changing surface:

- Never leave him or her alone! The baby or toddler can squirm and roll off the changing surface if you're not careful. If the phone rings, let it ring!
- Be sure to use the safety straps or guardrails on a changing surface.
- Keep one hand on the baby or toddler at all times.

When changing diapers for toddlers, be sure to tell toddlers what you are going to do to get their cooperation. They probably even know how to get a clean diaper for you!

1. Gather the supplies you'll need and set up the diaper changing surface before doing anything else.
2. Wash your hands and put on disposable gloves.

3. Carefully place the baby or toddler on his or her back.



4. Remove the soiled diaper and set it out of the way, where the baby or toddler can't reach it.



5. Lift the baby's or toddler's ankles to raise the legs and hips. Clean the diaper area with a baby wipe or warm, damp cloth. Wipe the baby or toddler from front to back to prevent infections.
6. Apply cream or powder if the child's parent or guardian has told you to use some when changing diapers.



7. Raise the baby's or toddler's legs and slide a clean diaper under the bottom.

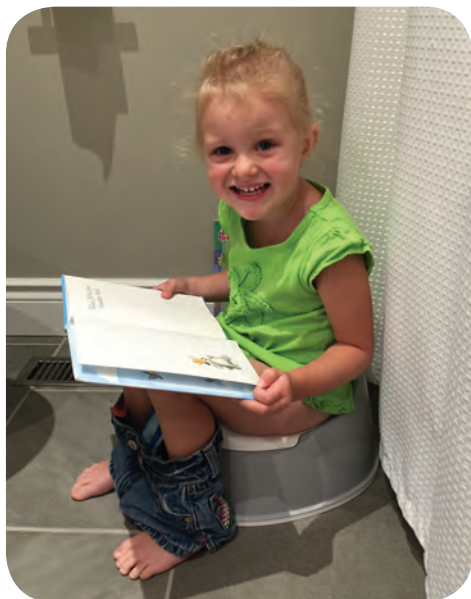


8. The sticky or Velcro® tabs should be on either side of the child's hips. Use the tabs to securely close the diaper.
9. Follow the instructions the child's parent or guardian gave you for taking care of dirty diapers and then wash your hands.



When changing a boy, keep him covered with a clean baby wipe or diaper as much as possible to avoid being sprayed.

Toilet Learning and Training Pants—Preschoolers



The preschooler you're babysitting will probably wear training pants and/or use the toilet, but he or she may need your help. Ask the preschooler's parent or guardian what the toilet routine is and how the preschooler tells people he or she "has to go." Some toddlers use a special "potty" that must be emptied and rinsed after each use, and others may use an insert that fits onto a regular toilet seat. Remember, girls should wipe from front to back to prevent infections.

Encourage the preschoolers you babysit to use the toilet before you go out, before meals, and before bed. You'll probably have better luck if you say, "Okay, let's go to the toilet!" than if you ask, "Do you need to go to the toilet?" If you ask, the answer will almost always be "No."

Most preschoolers can put on and take off their training pants by themselves. However, if the child has an accident, he or she will need your help to clean up.

1. Don't make a fuss if there is an accident. The child will probably feel bad about it. Let him or her know it's okay.
2. Clean the preschooler and change the soiled training pants the same way you would change a diaper for a toddler.
3. Once you've finished, remember to encourage the child to try again next time.

ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

Jody has just learned how to use the toilet. She feels pretty confident about knowing when she has to go to the bathroom. While playing a game she really loves, she forgets to use the washroom and has an accident. She knows that she did not make it to the toilet and starts to cry. What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

Dressing

Babies

Babies can be messy and often need their clothes changed several times a day. If the baby's parent or guardian hasn't left clothing out, find something that is easy to put on and comfortable for the baby to wear, such as a sleeper with snaps or a zipper. When undressing or dressing a baby, always support the head and neck. Never leave a baby alone on the changing surface.

1. Gather all the clothes you'll need before you start dressing the baby. It depends on the weather, of course, but the baby will likely need an undershirt, a shirt, overalls or pants, socks, and maybe a sweater.
2. Be gentle as you slip the baby into his or her clothes: A baby's arms and legs are very flexible.

Babies don't need or like to be dressed in several layers of clothing. Dress the baby as warmly as you are dressed. For babies younger than 6 months old, add one more layer.

Toddlers

Use the following tips when dressing or undressing a toddler:

- Avoid brand new clothes if possible: Toddlers are very messy.
- Be gentle and let the child help you as much as possible.
- Toddlers who are toilet training should wear pants that are easy to pull off and on.
- When pulling a shirt over a child's head, pull it first over the back of the head and then down over the face.



Preschoolers

Most preschoolers will be able to dress themselves, and they will probably have strong opinions about which outfit they want to wear. It's okay to let the child pick out the outfit he or she wants to wear or let the child choose between two outfits, but make sure it is suitable for the weather and activity that you have planned.

ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

Eighteen-month-old Samuel just woke up from his afternoon nap. You tell him, "Since it's such a nice day outside, we are going to play in the backyard!" As you try to help him put his pants on, he kicks his legs so that the pants fall on the floor. He seems pleased with his actions, and he runs around the room refusing to get dressed. What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

Feeding

Rules and Routines for Mealtimes

If the parents or guardians of the children you babysit ask you to feed the kids during your babysitting shift, you should ask about any rules and routines for snacks and meals. Some questions to ask include:

- Does the child have any allergies?
- When should he or she eat?
- What foods are okay for him or her to eat?
- What are his or her favourite meals and snacks?



Preventing Allergic Reactions

Discuss any allergies the child has with the parent or guardian before you're left alone with the child. Be sure to ask at least the following questions:

- What is your child allergic to?
- What signs will tell me that your child is having an allergic reaction?
- What should I do if your child has a reaction?
- Does your child have any allergy medications, such as an EpiPen® Auto-Injector?

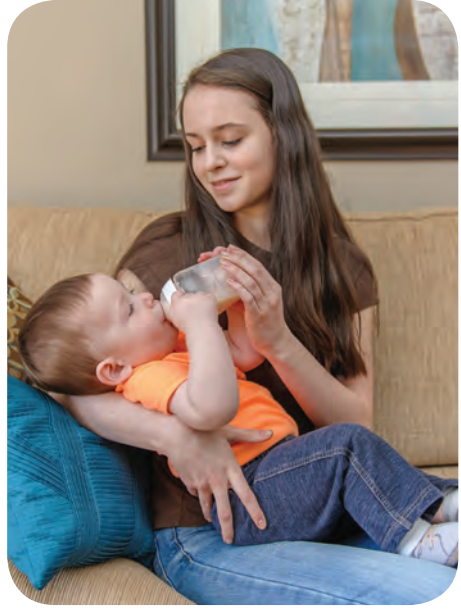
Read all the ingredients on all food package labels when preparing and cooking food.

Babies

If you are expected to feed a small baby, make sure you have clear instructions before the baby's parent or guardian leaves. Babies have very specific diets, so only give the foods the baby's parent or guardian tells you to give.

Bottle-Feeding

1. Wash your hands before handling any part of a baby's bottle.
2. Prepare the bottle by following the instructions from the baby's parent or guardian.
3. Carefully shake the bottle to make sure it is evenly heated and test the temperature by sprinkling a few drops on the inside of your wrist. It should be lukewarm.
4. Sit down with the baby in your arms. Keep the baby's head higher than his or her shoulders to prevent choking.
5. Tilt the bottle so that the nipple is full of milk and free of air bubbles. Put the nipple in the baby's mouth.
6. Never leave a baby alone with a bottle! The baby could throw up and choke on the vomit!



If the baby cries and won't take the bottle, you may need to calm him or her down by rocking a little bit. For very young babies, touch their cheek with the nipple. They will turn their head toward it to suck. If the baby spits out the nipple, it could mean several things—that the nipple is clogged, that he or she has to burp, or that the baby isn't hungry anymore. Never force a baby to finish a bottle.

Burping

Burp the baby when he or she has finished a third of the bottle:

- Place the baby upright with his or her head on your shoulder. Warning: Place a cloth between you and the baby. The baby may spit up and things could get messy!
- Pat or rub the baby's back gently until you hear a burp.
- After burping the baby, give the bottle to the baby again. Repeat the burping process when the bottle is two-thirds done and again when the baby has finished the bottle.



You can also burp the baby by sitting him or her on your lap and patting gently on the back. Make sure you support his or her head.

Spoon-Feeding

1. Gather the supplies, such as a bib, a cloth for spills (there will be many), and the baby's feeding spoon.
2. Prepare the food by following the instructions from the baby's parent or guardian.
3. Stir the food to make sure it is heated evenly. Test the temperature on the inside of your wrist; it should be lukewarm.
4. Put the baby in the high chair and secure the straps. Never leave the baby alone in the high chair.
5. Place a bib around the baby's neck. Have the cloth handy.
6. Put a small amount of food on the spoon at a time, and feed the baby.



A baby's parent or guardian may ask you to use a booster seat for feeding, rather than a high chair. Before you are left alone with the baby, ask the parent or guardian to show you how to attach the booster seat and strap in the child. Always secure the seat to an adult dining chair first, and then place the child in the seat and strap him or her in securely.



Keep the following safety tips in mind when using a high chair or booster seat:

- Move the high chair or adult dining chair and booster seat away from hazards.
- Keep the chair away from tables and walls so that the child cannot push the chair over.
- Do not allow the child to stand in the high chair or booster seat.

Don't expect the baby to eat all of the food you provide, and don't force the baby to eat more than he or she wants.

Toddlers

Toddlers may be able to eat by themselves in a high chair or booster seat. Toddlers still need to wear bibs! They will need their food cut into tiny pieces or mashed a little bit. They especially like finger foods that they can hold.



Preschoolers

A preschooler may have strong ideas about the foods he or she eats. Don't argue, but encourage the preschooler to eat what is on his or her plate. Most preschoolers eat with their fingers, although some will use a small fork or spoon. Eating is fun for most children. Don't worry if they are messy.

Some preschoolers need booster seats to sit at the table. You may have to push the chair toward the table so the child can reach the food easily.

School-Aged Children

School-aged children like being treated like big kids. Get them involved with snacks and mealtimes by having them help plan, prepare, and create their food.

Always supervise the school-aged child when in the kitchen, especially if he or she uses appliances or a knife to prepare his or her food. Actively supervising the child will help keep him or her safe and ensure that he or she follows the mealtime rules and routines outlined by his or her parent or guardian.

Sleeping

Bedtime Rules and Routines

Before the child's parent or guardian leaves, ask him or her to walk you through the child's bedtime routine. If you're babysitting a toddler, preschooler, or school-aged child, make sure he or she hears the parent or guardian explain the bedtime routine and rules to you. Some questions to ask the child's parent or guardian include:

- What time does the child go to sleep?
- Does the child take a soother or a favourite toy or blanket to bed?
- Should I leave the lights on or off?
- If the child wakes up or the baby cries, should I go in right away? If not, how long should I wait?

Stick to the child's bedtime routine and be firm if the child doesn't want to go to sleep or stay in bed. If you're babysitting a toddler or preschooler, tell him or her that you're close by, and say goodnight. If you're babysitting a school-aged child and he or she says, "I can't sleep," let him or her look at books or play quietly in bed for 10 minutes. Tell the child that when the 10 minutes are up, it's time to sleep.

ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

It's time for lunch, so you help 4-year-old Colter wash his hands and climb into his booster seat at the table. You've made Colter's favourite—macaroni and cheese—but he doesn't seem to want to eat. Instead, he plays with the macaroni and is starting to make a mess. What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

Give advance warning about naptime or bedtime so that the child can finish what he or she is doing. Don't hurry the child. Bedtime should be a quiet, relaxing time. To help relax the child before bedtime, do quiet activities such as reading. Noisy play may overexcite the child rather than tire him or her out.

When children are sleepy, they may rub their eyes or suck their thumbs. They may also be fussy or cranky. As you get to know a child you will begin to notice the signs that he or she is getting tired.

Bedwetting

At any developmental stage, children can occasionally wet the bed. If this happens, don't make a big deal about it. Let the child know that it's okay. Change the child's clothes and then change the bedsheets and blankets. Tell the child's parent or guardian what happened.

Nightmares

If you think a child has had a nightmare, go to him or her right away. Hold, comfort, reassure, and listen to the child. Stay with him or her and gradually shift the conversation to pleasant things. When the child is calm and relaxed, tuck him or her back into bed. Explain that you are close by.

Babies

Have the baby's parent or guardian show you ahead of time how the crib works.

1. Use a gentle voice and move slowly while going through the bedtime routine.
2. Always remove small objects, toys, and stuffed animals from the crib, as well as any extra pillows or blankets (there should be just one light blanket in the crib).
3. Put the baby in the crib. Always place babies on their backs. Say goodnight and quietly leave the room.
4. If you are watching TV or listening to music, make sure the volume is low so you can hear if the baby cries.
5. Some babies cry for a few minutes at bedtime or may wake up and cry. If he or she cries, check on the baby. Enter the baby's room quietly, keep the lights off, and talk quietly to calm the baby.
6. Quietly check on the baby every half-hour while he or she is asleep.



ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

It's naptime for 6-month-old Lily, so you gently place her on her back in the crib. As soon as you put her down, she begins to cry. As you pick her up again to try to soothe her, she stops crying. After a few moments of quiet, you lay her down in the crib again. She lets out a wail. What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

Playing

Why Is Play Important for Children?

Play is an essential part of children's development. Through play, children are able to:

- **Develop physically.** Running, colouring, and other activities that get the small or big muscles moving help children to grow.
- **Improve their learning skills.** Learning rhymes, counting, and doing puzzles all help children learn.
- **Understand and control their feelings.** Playing make-believe, asking "what if" questions, and playing fairly with others all help children learn about and sort through their feelings.
- **Develop socially.** Following rules, acting out stories, and playing in bands all help improve children's social skills.

While watching a movie or playing with a tablet can be fun, it's important to have a variety of activities and to encourage children to be active. Keep screen time to a minimum while babysitting.

Why Should You Play With Children?

Playing with children makes it easy to supervise them and notice if there are any safety-related problems you need to fix. Playing also gives you the opportunity to model appropriate behaviour, control any behaviour problems, and offer praise for good behaviour. When you are playing with children, remember to:

- Respect their likes and dislikes when choosing toys and games. If a child wants to play with an inappropriate toy or game, be sure to explain why he or she cannot play with it.
- Keep toys and play areas clean.
- Cheerfully resolve any problems that arise.
- Be truly interested and involved, and enjoy yourself!

The best way to get along with children is to be positive. If you keep kids busy and happy, you will all enjoy the time you spend together.



Toys and Games, Getting Along, and Having Fun

When playing with children, it is important to match the toys, games, and activities with the children's ages and developmental stages. This will help to not only avoid frustration, but also, more importantly, to keep the children safe.

Babies

Babies love faces, voices, and music. Younger babies tend to like anything that appeals to their senses of sound, sight, and touch. It is important to keep babies busy since they can get bored and fussy quite quickly. If the baby is restless or wants to move, place a blanket on the floor where he or she can wiggle and move around more safely. Babies usually enjoy games like patty cake, this little piggy, and peekaboo.



Babies can play safely by themselves in a crib or playpen with some toys—but you should supervise closely at all times.

Toys that are suitable for babies up to 1 year old include the following:

- Brightly coloured soft toys
- Musical toys and rattles
- Cloth or board books
- Filling and dumping toys
- Big blocks

Toddlers

What toddler doesn't love surprises? Surprise the toddler you babysit by packing toys and games that would interest him or her in your babysitting kit. Be sure that the items you bring are safe for a toddler to use. Be clear with the children that these are your things for sharing and that you are taking them home with you.

Don't forget to use your imagination! For example, pretend to be an animal and have the toddler guess which one.



The best way to keep toddlers out of trouble is to play with them! Remember, toddlers still like to put things in their mouths, so keep toys with small parts or batteries out of their reach.

Toys that are suitable for toddlers up to 2 years old include the following:

- Toy cars and trucks
- Picture books
- Playdough
- Puzzles with large pieces
- Large blocks and stacking blocks (knocking them down is often the best part)

Preschoolers

Preschoolers have more independence, and they can be more involved in deciding how they want to play. They have lots of energy, so active play is very important. They also enjoy imagination games, especially if you are playing too! Preschoolers often enjoy guessing games, simple board games, and active games like follow-the-leader.



Toys that are suitable for preschoolers include the following:

- Dolls or stuffed animals
- Toy cars and trucks
- Puzzles
- Balls
- Dress-up clothes
- Colouring, drawing, and painting supplies

School-Aged Children

School-aged children have specific interests. Ask the child you are babysitting what he or she likes to do. Really listen and show an interest, and try to do things that the child enjoys. Ask the child what he or she would like to do. School-aged children may enjoy listening to music, playing a sport or musical instrument, or baking.



If the child prefers to play independently, that's okay too, just make sure that you are aware of what he or she is doing. School-aged children may also have homework or school projects to complete. Be available to assist if necessary.

Toys suitable for school-aged children include the following:

- Board games
- Card games
- Storybooks or books of jokes or riddles
- Musical instruments
- Building or robotics sets

Comforting Crying – Babies

Crying is the only way small babies can tell the world around them that something is wrong or that they need something. Ask the baby's parent or guardian what is normally done when the baby cries.



1. Things to check:
 - Did the baby's favourite blanket or soother fall out of the crib?
 - Is the baby's diaper clean and dry?
 - Is the baby tired?
 - Is the baby hungry?
 - Does the baby need to burp?
2. If you don't know why the baby is crying, don't take it personally. Try rocking or walking the baby. Talk in a soothing voice. Sometimes babies are fussy for no apparent reason.

If you've tried everything and the baby still won't stop crying, stay calm. If you are upset and angry, the baby will sense your feelings and will likely cry more. Place the baby on his or her back in a safe place and let him or her "cry it out" for a few minutes, while you stay nearby. Relax and take some deep breaths and then try again to soothe the baby.



Never shake a baby or a child, no matter what. Shaking is very dangerous and can cause serious injury or death. Remember, no matter how you are feeling—never shake a baby or a child. Take a break, never shake!

3. If the baby keeps crying and the cries are piercing or uncontrollable, call his or her parent or guardian. Don't be embarrassed. The baby's parent or guardian will either tell you over the phone what to do, or he or she will come home.



Safe vs. Unsafe Touching

Touch is important to the development and well-being of children. Safe touch is respectful, caring, and kind.

There are many situations in which you will have to touch the children you babysit. Babies will need to have their diapers changed, and younger children may need help going to the bathroom or getting dressed. Respect their feelings and give them only the help they need. If they are old enough to understand, always tell them what you need to do and ask for their permission.

Remember, a child's body belongs to the child. Their bodies, like their feelings, need care, gentleness, and respect. There are many examples of appropriate and inappropriate actions:

APPROPRIATE ACTIONS

- Changing diapers
- Bathing children who are unable to do it themselves
- Cleaning children's genital and anal areas if they are unable to do it themselves
- Holding a baby while bottle-feeding
- Carrying a baby or young child
- If the child agrees:
 - An arm around the shoulder
 - Holding hands
 - A gentle pat on the back
 - A warm hug

INAPPROPRIATE ACTIONS

- Touching children against their will
- Touching children when you are angry, frustrated, or annoyed
- Tickling children
- Pinching, grabbing, pulling, or shaking babies and children
- Hitting or spanking children
- Touching children's private areas (such as the genital and anal areas) for purposes other than cleanliness
- Kissing on the lips
- Having children touch your private areas (for example, breasts, genitals, and anal area)

ACTIVITY

Create Play

Toys and games do not need to be expensive to be fun. You can use pieces of paper, your five senses, or safe household items to create fun games and toys for different ages and developmental stages. Use your imagination and fill in the blanks below!

	PAPER	FIVE SENSES	HOUSEHOLD ITEMS
BABIES	Peekaboo using a sheet of paper to hide your face.		
TODDLERS		Name colours of common objects.	
PRESCHOOLERS	Make a paper hat.		
SCHOOL-AGED CHILDREN			Put on a play with props and costumes using items found around the house.

Misbehaviour

A child who is misbehaving may be tired, hungry, or bored, or he or she may be trying to get your attention. Try to find the underlying reason for the behaviour.

Types of Misbehaviour

Examples of some of the more challenging but common types of misbehaviour are sibling rivalries and temper tantrums.

Sibling Rivalry

Sibling rivalry is the jealousy, competition, and fighting that breaks out between brothers or sisters (siblings).

Try not to get involved in sibling rivalries, but immediately stop fights that become dangerous. If you have to step in, solve the problem *with* the siblings, not for them. Remember, things don't always have to be fair and equal. For example, an older child may be allowed to play with a certain toy because it is appropriate for his or her age.

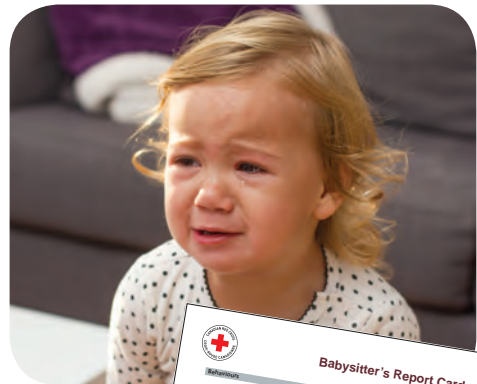


Temper Tantrums

A temper tantrum is a strong outburst of challenging behaviour, such as whining, crying, screaming, kicking, hitting, or breath-holding.

After a temper tantrum, praise the child's efforts to gain control of his or her feelings, but be sure not to reward the behaviour.

If a school-aged child is acting inappropriately, give him or her some time to gain control, and then make time to talk to the child about his or her behaviour. Try to determine the cause of the behaviour. Make a note in your Babysitter's Report Card (provided by your Youth Leader) if children have tantrums or misbehave, and inform their parents or guardians.



Babysitter's Report Card

Behaviour:

1. List and describe any general behaviours: _____

2. List and describe the following behaviour problems: _____

Date/Time	Child's Name	Age	Time Left

Safety:

3. We received the following phone calls and visitors:

Date/Time	Name	Reason for Calling or Visiting	Values or Other Phone Number

4. The following injuries and illnesses happened while you were gone:

Date/Time	What happened?	How long?

Preventing Misbehaviour

The best way to deal with misbehaviour is to prevent it from happening in the first place. Some tips are:

- Move forbidden items out of the child's sight and reach.
- Don't let the child get too tired, hungry, or bored.
- Follow the family's rules and routines. Changes often cause anxiety, stress, and misbehaviour.
- If the child's parent or guardian does not have rules in place for a situation, set fair and simple rules that the child can understand. Let the child's parent or guardian know what you decided.
- Give the child the chance to make simple choices.
- Give children time to prepare for a change. For example, "In 5 minutes, it will be time to turn off the computer to have dinner."
- Be consistent with your expectations.

Dealing With Misbehaviour

Just as rules and routines differ between families, so do expectations on how babysitters should deal with misbehaviour. Remember, pinching, grabbing, pulling, hitting, or spanking are unacceptable behaviours and should never be used to discipline a child. Additionally, behaviours such as yelling and screaming, belittling, name calling, or bullying are also unacceptable. If you are uncomfortable with how the child's parent or guardian would like you to deal with misbehaviour, politely decline the babysitting job.



The following are ways you can handle misbehaviour if you're babysitting a toddler, preschooler, or school-aged child:

Gentle touch: If the child begins to lose control, put your arm around him or her. If holding makes the child angrier, let go, remain calm, and wait until the child calms down.

Consequences: Let children experience the consequences of their actions if it is safe to do so. For example, "If you can't play with the blocks without throwing them, then the blocks will be put away." If the child is doing something that is unsafe, remove the child from danger immediately—you can explain the consequences later.

Time out: A time out can be effective with children between the ages of 2 and 12 years. The time out gives the child a chance to calm down and cool off after a frustrating or exciting event. Stay within sight of the child so that he or she doesn't feel isolated.



1. Take the child to a safe, quiet place.
2. Be caring and briefly explain that he or she is having a time out because of his or her misbehaviour. Do not argue or discuss at this point.
3. When the time out is over, discuss the positive ways the child can behave. Bring the child back to play.
4. Praise the child's first acceptable behaviour after the time out.

Generally, a time out should be no longer than the child's age in minutes. For example, if you are babysitting a 12-year-old, the time out should last no more than 12 minutes.

Toddlers and Preschoolers

If you're babysitting a toddler or preschooler, you can handle misbehaviour by trying one or more of these methods:

Remind: Gently remind the young child you're babysitting about the rules to help him or her learn.

Distract: Give the child a toy or another activity to do.

Redirect: If the child is frustrated and unable to solve a problem, try a different activity.

School-Aged Children

If you're babysitting a school-aged child who begins to misbehave, you can handle the situation by giving the child choices or helping the child with his or her problem-solving skills.

Teach problem-solving: Let older children practise their problem-solving skills. If the child is part of the solution, he or she will be more invested in what is decided. Use the FIND Decision-Making Model to guide school-aged children through the decision-making steps and come up with a good solution:



- Step 1** **F**igure out the problem:
Have the child focus on the exact problem that is causing trouble. Help the child to define the problem. Ask questions such as "What are you trying to do?"
- Step 2** **I**dentify possible solutions:
Think about all the possible ways the child could solve the problem. Think of some solutions together.
- Step 3** **N**ame pros and cons for each solution:
Ask the child about the positive and negative consequences of each way to solve the problem.
- Step 4** **D**ecide which solution is best, then act on it:
Pick a solution where the pros outweigh the cons, then put the solution into action. Afterward, talk about what worked and what he or she could try next time.

ACTIVITY

What Should You Do?

Three-year-old Olivia is usually very well behaved and hardly gives you any trouble, but today she is acting up. She knows that she is not supposed to get into her mother's makeup, and when you tell her "No" as she reaches for a tube of lipstick, she grabs your arm and bites you. What should you do? Using the FIND Decision-Making Model, try to find a solution.

FIND Decision-Making Model Activity

F

Figure out the problem.

I

Identify possible solutions.

N

Name pros and cons for each solution.

D

Decide which solution is best, then act on it.

6

First Aid: Check, Call, Care

Handling Emergencies

The most important part of being a babysitter is making sure the children in your care are safe.

Before your first babysitting job, download the Canadian Red Cross First Aid App to your mobile device so that you always have a first aid reference handy.



First Aid Kit

You should always have a first aid kit with you when you babysit. Whether you buy a first aid kit or make one yourself, be sure it has all of the items you may need. Check the kit before you start any babysitting job and replace any used or expired supplies.



Check, Call, Care

There are three steps you should always follow when providing first aid:

1. **CHECK** the scene and the child.
2. **CALL** for help and/or call EMS/9-1-1.
3. **CARE** for the child.

✓ Check

Check the Scene

Before rushing to help an ill or injured child, stop and take a good look at the scene. Is the scene safe? Are there any hazards? What happened? How did it happen?



Check the Child

If the scene is safe, quickly check the child.

1. Check if the child is responsive.



2. Check the child's ABCs:

A = CHECK THE AIRWAY

Make sure the child has an open airway.

If the child is unresponsive, perform a head-tilt/chin-lift by gently tilting the head back until the chin is pointing up.



B = CHECK BREATHING

Check for normal breathing for 5 to 10 seconds. Put your cheek close to the child's face so that you can hear and feel air coming out of the child's nose and mouth while you watch the chest rise and fall.



C = CHECK CIRCULATION

Checking circulation means quickly looking at the child from head to toe for signs of life-threatening bleeding.



Call

When to Call EMS/9-1-1

Call EMS/9-1-1 if there is a danger to you or others or if the ill or injured child has any of the following conditions:

- Unresponsiveness
- Difficulty breathing or no signs of breathing
- Life-threatening bleeding
- Seizures
- A suspected broken bone
- Suspected poisoning



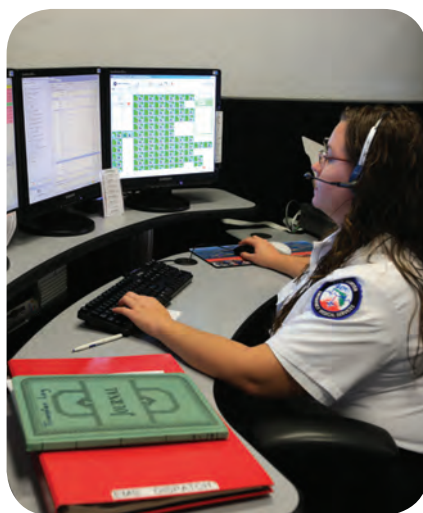
Trust your instincts. When in doubt, make the call. If you think that an emergency exists, it probably does, and you should call EMS/9-1-1 immediately.

Whenever possible, use a mobile phone or ask a bystander to call EMS/9-1-1 rather than leaving the child to make the call yourself. If you are alone with the child and you do not have a mobile phone, call out loudly for help. If no one comes, get to a phone as quickly as you can and call EMS/9-1-1. Take the child with you, if possible.

When You Call EMS/9-1-1

When you call, the EMS dispatcher who answers will probably ask:

- Where is the emergency (for example, the address, nearby intersections, or landmarks)?
- What is the nature of the emergency (in other words, are police, fire, or paramedics needed)?
- What telephone number are you calling from?
- What is your name?
- What has happened?
- How many people are involved and what is their condition?



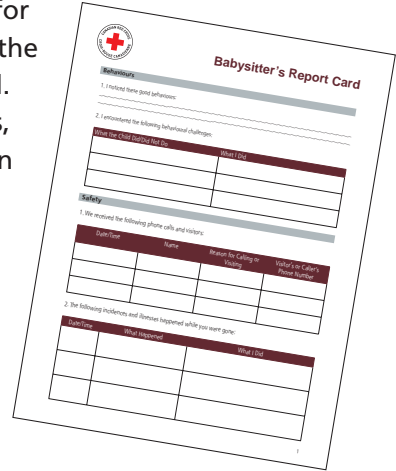
The dispatcher is there to help you and guide you through what to do until help arrives. Do not hang up the phone until the dispatcher tells you to.

Care

Get a first aid kit if one is available. If the child has a life-threatening condition, always care for that condition first. Provide the care that you have been trained to give, and follow these general guidelines:

- Monitor the child's condition.
- Stay with the child until help arrives.
- If necessary, roll the child into the recovery position.

If you have to provide any type of first aid care for a child you are babysitting, you must always let the child's parent or guardian know what happened. Depending on how serious the injury or illness is, you may either call the child's parent or guardian or document the incident on your Babysitter's Report Card and tell him or her in person at the end of your shift.



Babysitter's Report Card

1. I followed home-guest preferences:

2. I encountered the following behavioral challenges:

Date and Time (Start/End)	Child's Name

Safety

1. We received the following phone calls and visitors:

Date and Time	Name	Reason for Calling or Visiting	Used the Caller's Phone Number

2. The following incidences and illnesses happened while you were gone:

Date and Time	What happened	How I did

Download the Canadian Red Cross First Aid App to your phone so you'll always have first aid information at your fingertips!



Recovery Position

A child who is unresponsive should be rolled onto his or her side, into the recovery position. You should avoid rolling a child if it could worsen his or her condition (for example, if the child's leg appears to be broken). As always, you should move the child only if it is safe to do so.

Remember these tips when rolling a child into the recovery position:

- Support and protect the head while rolling the child.
- Try to roll the child as one unit (head, back, and legs at the same time).
- Roll the child into a position where his or her body will stay safely on its side.
- Check the ABCs after you complete the roll.



Guidelines for Medication

You should never give any type of medicine to a child without specific permission and instructions from the child's parent or guardian. The two life-saving medications are the only exceptions: These are asthma rescue inhalers (for example, Ventolin®) and EpiPen® Auto-Injectors. Before giving a child his or her medicine, always check the label to ensure that it is the correct medication.



Illness

If the child you are babysitting seems sick, you should call his or her parent or guardian right away.

Signs of illness include the following:

- Constant crying
- Fever (feeling hot to the touch)
- Headache
- Vomiting or diarrhea



While waiting for the child's parent or guardian to return, have the child rest comfortably and monitor his or her condition. If the child's condition becomes serious, call EMS/9-1-1 and provide care as needed.

Choking

The airway is the passage that allows air to move from the mouth or nose to the lungs. Choking occurs when the airway becomes partially or completely blocked.

What to Do

Baby (Less Than 12 Months)



Call:

Immediately begin providing care for choking. Call EMS/9-1-1 as soon as you are able to do so.





Care:

1. Sit or kneel with the baby face-down along your forearm, holding the jaw in your hand.
2. Deliver 5 firm back blows between the shoulder blades.



3. If the object does not come out, flip the baby face-up, ensuring you support the head.



4. Place 2 fingers in the middle of the chest and deliver 5 firm chest compressions.



5. Repeat the 5 firm back blows and 5 chest compressions until the object comes out.



Child (Over 12 Months)



Call:

Immediately begin providing care for choking. Call EMS/9-1-1 as soon as you are able to do so.



Care:

1. Try to dislodge the object by combining any two of the following three methods until the object comes out: back blows, abdominal thrusts, and chest thrusts.

Most people find a combination of back blows and abdominal thrusts to be the easiest to perform, but the important thing is to choose the two methods you can use most effectively in the situation.

BACK BLOWS

1. Stand or kneel beside or behind the child and place your arm across the child's chest.
2. Bend the child forward and deliver up to 5 firm back blows between the shoulder blades.



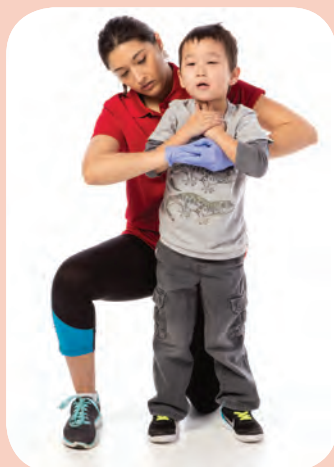
ABDOMINAL THRUSTS

1. Stand or kneel behind the child.
2. Wrap your arms around the child's waist and place your fist just above the belly button.
3. Cover your fist with your other hand and give up to 5 quick, inward and upward thrusts.



CHEST THRUSTS

1. Stand or kneel behind the child and wrap both of your arms around the child's chest.
2. Place your fist in the middle of the child's chest with your thumb facing inward, and place your other hand over your fist.
3. Give up to 5 chest thrusts by pulling straight back toward you.



IF YOU ARE BY YOURSELF AND CHOKING

1. Dial EMS/9-1-1 from a land-line phone and do not hang up. This will tell the dispatcher to send help.
2. If there are people nearby, move to a place where you can be noticed.
3. Attempt to dislodge the object by performing abdominal thrusts against a safe object with no sharp edges.



CPR

CPR, or cardiopulmonary resuscitation, is used when a person is unresponsive and not breathing. CPR involves giving chest compressions to keep blood moving in the body. If you find a child who is not breathing, you must immediately call EMS/9-1-1 and begin CPR.

What to Do

CPR, Baby (Less Than 12 Months)

 Care:

1. Do chest compressions:
 - Put 2 fingers in the middle of the baby's chest.
 - Push down at least $\frac{1}{3}$ of the chest's depth, pushing deep and pushing steady.



What to Do

CPR, Child (Over 12 Months)

 Care:

1. Do chest compressions:
 - Put 2 hands in the centre of the child's chest.
 - Push down at least $\frac{1}{3}$ of the chest's depth, pushing deep and pushing steady.



Continue chest compressions until EMS personnel arrive, someone takes over, or you are too tired to continue.

Don't worry about pushing too hard when performing chest compressions. The most important thing is to push deep and steady.

Asthma

Many children have asthma, a condition that can make breathing difficult. Asthma is normally triggered by something, such as dust or exercise, and it is usually controlled with medication.

What to Look For

The signs and symptoms of an asthma attack include the following:

- Trouble breathing (gasping for air, wheezing or coughing, or rapid, shallow breathing)
- Tightness in the chest
- Anxiety and fear



What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1 if the child is struggling to breathe or the child's breathing does not improve after taking his or her medication.



Care:

1. If you think that something in the environment is triggering the attack, move the child away from the trigger.
2. Help the child to take his or her asthma medication.



Using an Inhaler

1. Rapidly shake the inhaler 3 or 4 times.



2. Remove the cap from the inhaler.



3. Tell the child to breathe out as much air as possible, and bring the inhaler to the child's mouth.



4. Press the top of the inhaler as the child breathes in.
5. Have the child hold his or her breath for as long as is comfortable (up to 10 seconds) and then breathe out.

Using an Inhaler With a Spacer

1. Rapidly shake the inhaler 3 or 4 times.



2. Remove the cap from the inhaler.



3. Put the inhaler into the spacer and press the top of the inhaler.



4. Bring the spacer to the child's mouth.



5. Tell the child to take slow, deep breaths, holding each breath for several seconds.

Anaphylaxis

Allergies are very common among children. While many allergic reactions are very mild, some can be life-threatening. Anaphylaxis is a severe allergic reaction that can lead to death if it is not cared for immediately.



What to Look For

A child with anaphylaxis may have one or more of the following signs and symptoms:

- Swelling of the lips, face, neck, ears, and/or hands
- A feeling of tightness in the chest or throat
- Breathing difficulty (coughing, wheezing, or high-pitched noises)
- A skin reaction (rash, flushing, or hives)

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1.



Care:

1. If the child has an EpiPen® Auto-Injector, help him or her to use it.
2. Have the child rest quietly until EMS personnel arrive.

If the child's condition does not improve 5 minutes after the initial dose of epinephrine and EMS personnel have not yet arrived, help the child take a second dose, if available. The second dose should be given in the leg that you did not use for the first dose.



Using an EpiPen® Auto-Injector

1. Remove the safety cap.



2. Firmly push the tip of the EpiPen® Auto-Injector against the middle third of the outer thigh. A click should be heard.
3. Hold in place for up to 10 seconds.



4. Rub the injection site for 30 seconds.
5. Give the used EpiPen® Auto-Injector to the EMS personnel when they arrive.



Minor Cuts and Scrapes

Minor cuts and scrapes generally do not bleed very much, and the bleeding is typically easy to control.



What to Do

 Care:

1. Wash the wound for 5 minutes with clean, running water.



2. Apply an antibiotic ointment or cream if provided by the child's parent or guardian.



3. Cover the wound with a sterile dressing or bandage.



Splinters

A splinter (or “sliver”) is a sharp, thin piece of something that is stuck in the surface of the skin. If the splinter is completely below the skin, do not attempt to pull it out. Be sure to tell the child’s parent or guardian that it is there.

To remove a splinter that has an exposed end:

1. Grasp the splinter with tweezers and carefully pull it out.
2. Wash the area with water and apply a bandage.



Life-Threatening External Bleeding

Life-threatening external bleeding is bleeding that you cannot stop or control.

What to Do



Call:

Immediately begin providing care for life-threatening external bleeding. Call EMS/9-1-1 as soon as you are able to do so.

When caring for bleeding, you can use any clean cloth to apply pressure to the wound (such as a tea towel).





Care:

1. Apply firm, direct pressure to the wound.



2. While maintaining direct pressure, apply a dressing and bandage it in place.



3. If blood soaks through the bandage, apply another bandage on top.

Nosebleeds

Nosebleeds are usually not serious. They can be caused by bumps to the nose, dry air, or scratching the insides of the nostrils.

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1 if the bleeding continues after 15 minutes.



Care:

1. Have the child sit with the head slightly forward.
2. Pinch the child's nostrils for 10 to 15 minutes.
3. Once the bleeding stops, tell the child to avoid rubbing, blowing, or picking his or her nose.



Bumps and Bruises

A bruise is a red, purple, blue, or black area that is created when bleeding happens beneath the skin. There may also be a bump or "goose egg."

Large bruises, especially on the abdomen or lower back, can indicate life-threatening internal bleeding. A child with life-threatening internal bleeding will often also have nausea, severe thirst, or bloody saliva or vomit.



What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1 immediately if you suspect life-threatening internal bleeding.



Care:

1. Wrap a cold pack with a thin towel and place it on the bruise for up to 20 minutes.



2. Remove the ice pack for 20 minutes and repeat the process.



Burns

Burns are injuries to the skin caused by chemicals, electricity, heat, or radiation.

What to Look For

The signs and symptoms of burns include the following:

- Redness
- Pain
- Possible swelling
- Blisters

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1 immediately if:

- The burns make it difficult for the child to breathe.
- The burns were caused by chemicals, explosions, or electricity.
- The burns have blistered or broken skin, or the burns cover the face, neck, hands, genitals, or a larger surface area.





Care:

1. Cool the burn with water for at least 10 minutes.



2. Once the burn is cooled, cover it with a clean, dry dressing.



Special Burn Situations

Chemical Burns

Before providing care for a burn caused by a chemical, put on gloves to protect yourself from being burned. Remove any clothes that might have the chemical on them, and brush any dry chemical powder off of the child's skin before flushing with water.

Electrical Burns

Before providing care for a burn caused by electricity, make sure that the area is safe and that there is no risk of you being electrocuted. Check the child from head to toe, as there may be more than one burned area (an entrance and exit point).

Head, Neck, and Back Injuries

Injuries to the head, neck, and back can have long-term consequences. You should call EMS/9-1-1 right away if you suspect a head, neck, or back injury.

What to Look For

You should suspect a head, neck, or back injury with the following injuries:

- Any diving injury (for example, diving head-first into shallow water)
- Any strong blow to the jaw, head, or back
- Any injury that damages a child's helmet
- Any fall from any height greater than the height of the child

You should also suspect a head injury if the child's behaviour changes after the injury, if the child becomes dizzy, confused, or unresponsive, or if the child becomes nauseous or vomits.

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1.



Care:

1. Have the child rest quietly and keep still until EMS personnel arrive.

Broken Bones

Any bone in the body can break if it is hit hard enough. You should always call EMS/9-1-1 if you think a bone might be broken.

What to Look For

The signs and symptoms of broken bones include the following:

- Pain
- Deformity, swelling, or bruising
- Difficulty moving the injured body part
- A broken bone or bone fragments sticking out of the skin



What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1.



Care:

The best thing that you can do is keep the child still and comfortable until EMS personnel arrive. If there is any bleeding, provide care as you would for any other open wound.

1. Treat the injury using the RICE method:

Rest: Have the child rest comfortably.

Immobilize: Keep the injured area as still as possible.

Cool: Cool the injured area for 20 minutes to reduce swelling and pain.

Elevate: Raise the injured area, if possible, as long as this does not hurt the child.

Seizures

A seizure is an episode of abnormal brain activity. Seizures often involve uncontrolled muscle movements, of either the entire body or just one part. Seizures have many causes, including epilepsy, poisoning, and high fevers.

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1.



Care:

During the seizure:

1. Do not try to hold the child down or stop the seizure from happening.
2. Roll the child onto his or her side, if you are able to do so safely.
3. Protect the child from injury by:
 - Moving furniture and other objects that could cause injury out of the way.
 - Protecting the child's head with a soft object (such as a blanket).

After the seizure:

The child may be drowsy and disoriented for up to 20 minutes after the seizure is over.

1. Check the child's ABCs immediately after the seizure stops.
2. Place the child in the recovery position.
3. Monitor the child until EMS personnel arrive.

Poisons

A poison is a substance that is harmful if it enters the body. Poisons affecting children are most often swallowed. When providing first aid for a poisoned child, use caution to avoid contact with the poison.



What to Look For

Signs and symptoms of swallowed poisons include the following:

- An open container of poison nearby
- Burns around the mouth
- A burning feeling in the mouth, throat, or stomach
- More saliva than usual or saliva that is an unusual colour
- Dizziness, drowsiness, or unresponsiveness

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1.



Care:

1. Remove any clothing covered with the poison.
2. Wash any poison on the child's skin away from the unaffected areas. If the poison is on the child's face, be sure to wash it away from the eyes.
3. The specific care for poisoning directly depends on the poison: Follow directions from the EMS dispatcher or Poison Control Centre to provide the right care for the situation.

Insect Stings

Insect stings usually appear as red swollen spots. Most of the time, they are just uncomfortable, but allergic reactions and anaphylaxis are always a concern.

What to Do



Call:

Call EMS/9-1-1 if there are any signs of anaphylaxis.



Care:

1. If the stinger is still in the skin, remove it by scraping it away from the skin. A plastic card (such as a debit card) works well.



2. Wrap a cold pack with a thin towel and place it on the affected area to control swelling.
3. Continue to watch the child for signs of anaphylaxis.



7

The Business of Babysitting

Finding Work


The best way to find babysitting jobs is through word of mouth. Talk with your parent or guardian about families you know who may need a babysitter. Ask your friends who babysit to give your name if they can't accept a job.

For your own safety, don't advertise in a newspaper, on a bulletin board, or over the Internet. Never give out your name, phone number, or address to anyone you don't know.



Your Resumé

Your resumé is a quick way to tell people looking for a babysitter a little bit about yourself. It is your chance to summarize your education, training, experience, and skills as a babysitter, as well as some of your personal hobbies and interests. To help you create your own babysitting resumé, use the template here. To help you provide information for some of the sections of your resumé, you may use your Babysitter's Self-Quiz (provided by your Youth Leader).



Babysitter's Self-Quiz

Answer these questions to discover your skills, abilities, likes, and dislikes about babysitting. There is no right or wrong answer. Update the Babysitter's Self-Quiz every six months.

Background and Experience

1. The number of babysitting jobs I have had is:

0 1-3 4-6 7-10 More than 10

2. The most children I have cared for at one time is:

1 2 3 4 5 or more

3. The youngest child I have ever cared for was a:

Baby (0 to 12 months old) Toddler (1 to 3 years old)
 Preschooler (3 to 5 years old) School-Aged Child (5 years of age or older)

4. The oldest child I have ever cared for was a:

Baby (0 to 12 months old) Toddler (1 to 3 years old)
 Preschooler (3 to 5 years old) School-Aged Child (5 years of age or older)

5. My longest babysitting job lasted:

1 hour 2-3 hours 4-5 hours 6-8 hours More than 8 hours

6. I have accepted babysitting jobs (check all that apply):

In my neighbourhood Outside my neighbourhood
 That involved special skills and abilities

YOUR NAME

Your Street Address
Your City, Province, Postal Code

Your Phone Number
Your Email Address

EDUCATION

Your School's Name
Your Grade
Any special classes you have taken and/or awards/achievements you have received

TRAINING

List your babysitting training, followed by a brief description of the course, for example:

Canadian Red Cross Babysitting Course
Leadership, professionalism, safety, child development, basic child care, and care for emergencies

ADDITIONAL TRAINING

List any other relevant training you have completed, for example, Canadian Red Cross Standard First Aid & CPR.

BABYSITTING EXPERIENCE

Starting with your most recent babysitting job, briefly describe your duties and responsibilities. Include the number and ages of the children and the hours of your babysitting job. Do not put down any of the family's personal contact information without the family's permission.

Family Name Date
List job duties here.

Family Name Date
List job duties here.

OTHER EXPERIENCE

List your other volunteer, work, or leadership experience such as volunteering at a church nursery, being a tutor, or participating in scouting.

SKILLS AND ABILITIES

List your skills and abilities from the Babysitter's Self-Quiz (provided by your Youth Leader).

HOBBIES

List your hobbies or interests.

REFERENCES

List up to three responsible adults you know, especially any you have worked for in the past. Make sure those who have agreed to be your references know that you have put them down on your resumé and understand that they may get a phone call asking about you.

Full Name	Phone Number	Relationship
Full Name	Phone Number	Relationship
Full Name	Phone Number	Relationship

Before Your First Babysitting Job

The first time someone asks you to babysit, ask lots of questions. Before taking a job with a new family, you should first conduct a phone interview to see if the job is a good fit, and then arrange a time to meet. This is also a chance to meet the children. If you can't meet ahead of the date, arrange to arrive at least a half-hour before the child's parent or guardian leaves so you have time to ask all of your questions.

Parents or guardians who are looking for a babysitter will appreciate that you are responsible and well prepared. When deciding whether to take a job, remember that you have the right to be safe, get paid, and be respected.

Interview 1: Phone Interview

The purpose of the phone interview is to ask lots of questions to decide whether the job is a good fit for you.

Questions to ask the child's parent or guardian before you're hired:

- What is/are your name(s)?
- What is your address?
- What is the date and time of the job? When will I start and finish work?
- How many children will I look after? What are their names? How old are they?
- Do any of the children have different abilities or needs?
- How will I safely get to and from your home?
- I usually charge \$_____, is that okay with you?
- Are you expecting any household chores (for example, walking the dog or doing dishes) to be done as part of the job?
- May I come over before the day of the job to meet the children and discuss my checklist? If not, may I come a half-hour early on the day of the job?
- Are there any family pets? Are they friendly?




Interview 2: In-Person Interview

The in-person interview gives you an opportunity to go through all of your more specific questions. Ensure that your own parent or guardian is okay with you going to meet the parent or guardian who is looking for a babysitter.



Use the Babysitter's Interview Form and Checklist (provided by your Youth Leader) to know what questions to ask.



Babysitter's Interview Form and Checklist

Before your first babysitting job for a family, complete this form with the child's parent or guardian to make sure you get all the information you need to do your job right. Have the child's parent or guardian confirm the answers to any questions that were already asked during your phone interview. Keep track of the questions you've asked by checking off the boxes. You can write down the answers or any notes to yourself in the space provided.

Today's date: _____

Family Information and Emergency Numbers

What is your family name? Ask the child's parent or guardian to confirm the spelling. _____

What is your home phone number? _____

What is your home address? _____

What is your email address? _____

What is the nearest major intersection to your home (ask the child's parent or guardian to provide directions if the family lives in a rural area)? _____

What is your mobile phone number? _____

At what phone number can I reach you during my babysitting shift? _____

What is the name and phone number of an adult who can make decisions if you cannot be reached? _____

Is there a neighbour or trusted adult nearby who I can call in an emergency? _____

Safety Tips for You

Keeping the children you babysit safe is very important, but so is your own safety. The following tips will help ensure your safety as a babysitter:

- Know the parents or guardians who hire you to babysit their children.
- Give your parent or guardian all the information about your babysitting shift.
- Make sure you know where your own parent or guardian will be while you are babysitting in case you need to contact him or her.
- Before you accept a job, make sure you have a way of getting to and from the job safely.
- Take your *Babysitter's Manual* with you to each babysitting job.
- Know how much responsibility you can handle and only accept babysitting jobs that you are sure about.

If you feel uncomfortable babysitting for a family for any reason, politely tell them that you won't be able to babysit for them anymore. If your own safety is at risk (physically, emotionally, or sexually), say "No," and then get away, phone for help, and report the incident.

Expectations of the Families Who Hire You

The people who hire you trust you with their children. Finding babysitters who are professional about their work is hard. The children's parent or guardian has a right to expect a babysitter who has the right qualities for the job. Once a family finds a babysitter they trust and like, they'll usually stick with that babysitter.

Are you someone who is (check all that apply):

- Interested in children?
- Able to supervise children safely?
- Honest and reliable?
- In good mental and physical health?
- Able to carry out instructions?
- Able to think clearly in emergencies?
- Able to recognize safety hazards?
- Able to provide simple first aid?
- Able to prepare basic meals?
- Able to play with children?
- Able to communicate well?
- Able to discuss job responsibilities and policies?

The children's parents or guardians also have a right to privacy. Remember to respect other people's belongings by not looking through the family's things. Also, avoid gossiping about the family with your friends.

Children's Expectations

Children don't know what makes a "good" and a "bad" babysitter, but they do know the difference between a "fun" and a "boring" babysitter.

Children want to feel happy and secure. They want a babysitter who:

- Knows the household rules and routines.
- Makes them feel comfortable and secure.
- Shows an interest in them.
- Plays with them.
- Knows what to do in an emergency.

A happy child is the best advertisement for a babysitter. Keeping children safe and happy will make your business grow.

Self-Evaluation After the Job

After finishing a babysitting job, ask yourself these questions:

- How do I feel about this job? Did I do well?
- Did I do everything the child's parent or guardian asked me to do?
- How did the children respond to me?
- Were there any problems?
- Did anything happen that I did not know how to handle?
- What are some good things that happened?
- What did I like and dislike about this job?
- What would I do differently for the next babysitting job?
- What could I have done to make this babysitting job go better?
- If this family offers me another job, will I take it? Why or why not?

Your Own Family's Expectations

You will probably need to work out with your own parent or guardian how your babysitting business fits in with your schoolwork and your family responsibilities.

Your own parent or guardian has a right to know:

- Where you are.
- Who you are babysitting for.
- What time you'll be home.
- How you will be getting home safely.

Summary of What You've Learned

You have learned about providing care for babies, toddlers, preschoolers, and school-aged children and know that they are at different developmental stages and have different needs. You have also learned to solve problems that may occur while you are babysitting by using leadership and decision-making skills. You're on your way to becoming a great babysitter!

ACTIVITY

CONCLUSION—What Did You Learn About Yourself?

Answer the following questions to see what you have learned from this course:

What have you learned about yourself that you did not know before taking this course?

Do you feel confident about being a babysitter?

What do you feel most confident about doing as a babysitter?

What do you feel least confident about doing as a babysitter? What would make you feel more confident about it?

What can you do to practise the skills you learned in this course?

What are your next steps in becoming a babysitter after this course?

Resources

As you gain experience as a professional babysitter, you should strive to become a better babysitter. One way of becoming a better babysitter is to get the most up-to-date information. Below are some online resources on child safety tips:

- Canadian Red Cross: redcross.ca
- American Red Cross: redcross.org
- Health Canada: hc-sc.gc.ca
- Safe Kids Canada: safekidscanada.ca
- Parachute: parachutecanada.org
- Fire Prevention Canada: fiprecan.ca
- Kids Help Phone: kidshelpphone.ca

First Aid and CPR Training

This course does not provide you with certification in first aid and CPR. It does provide you with some knowledge and skills practice in these areas. It is always a good idea to get more training. If you want certification, it is recommended that you enrol in a Canadian Red Cross First Aid & CPR course.

Visit redcross.ca/findacourse, or call 1-877-356-3226 for more information on available courses in your area.



Wait! There Is More to Learn!

Congratulations on becoming a trained babysitter! And now that you know the basics of first aid, take your training to the next level with a Canadian Red Cross CPR/AED course.

You can be even better prepared to respond to emergencies that may happen to babies and children—and you could even save someone's life.

In just half a day, you can be trained in CPR and receive your first Red Cross certification card. A CPR certification can open opportunities for great jobs, such as a camp counsellor or lifeguard.

Learn how to prepare for emergencies with the Canadian Red Cross!

Sign up for a Canadian Red Cross CPR/AED course today.

redcross.ca/findacourse | 1-877-356-3226

Red Cross First Aid. Prepare for Life.®



We Welcome Your Feedback

Please let us know what you think about the course. Your feedback helps us improve our courses and their delivery.



redcross.ca/firstaidfeedback

Download the First Aid App

Download our **free** app for your phone and have instant access to videos, interactive quizzes, and simple, step-by-step advice.



redcross.ca/apps

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