



2-1-1
CHILD CARE



For more information: Dial 2-1-1 or 1-800-505-1000 | www.211childcare.org | www.ctunitedway.org

Helpful tips when hiring a relative, friend, neighbor or nanny to care for your child

Safety

Make sure that the home where your child will be cared for is safe:

- All outlets are covered with child safety caps
- Working smoke detectors on every floor of the home
- First aid kit: easily accessible
- Working fire extinguisher visible
- Cleaners, poisonous plants, and other poisons kept out of reach
- Medications (caregivers and family) locked or out of reach
- Heavy items and furniture secured to prevent falling over (bookcases, TV's, etc)
- Gates to block off hazards (stairs, pools, fireplace, etc)
- Emergency contact numbers posted near phone (poison control, fire, medical)
- Emergency procedures (escape/evacuation plans)
- Blind cords out of reach
- Locks available for cabinets, drawers and toilets
- Window guards to prevent child from falling out

*To reduce the risk of Sudden Infant Death Syndrome (SIDS) place babies to sleep on their backs (click here for more info: http://www.healthychildcare.org/section_SIDS.cfm#pubs)

Health

Keep in mind the following questions:

- Does provider still provide care if child is sick?
- What is your back up plan if the provider is sick? Does the provider have a back up plan in place or someone else to care for your child?
- What happens if the child becomes sick in the care of the provider?
- What will the provider do if the child is injured?
- What types of healthy meals and snacks are to be served?
- What type of activities or exercise will your child do when in the care of the provider?
- How will medications be given to the child if needed?

Communication

Here are some things to consider when communicating with your caregiver to make it a successful relationship:

- Decide what type of discipline will be used
- Be clear in the caregiver's responsibilities and rules of the house
- Set up a system of daily communication
- Be sure to ask questions on things you are unclear of as they arise
- Review your child care agreement yearly or sooner if needed
- Determine personal use of the telephone and visitors
- Show respect and appreciation for a job well done
- Discuss child's eating/sleeping schedule
- Discuss diapering/toileting procedures and how to handle accidents
- Go over use of TV and appropriate shows/music for the child's age
- Discuss how to handle sibling rivalry
- Decide if play dates with friends are allowed
- When a problem arises or there is a disagreement over care of child, be sure to allow time to discuss the issues and resolve them in a respectful way
- Be clear on use of the car and how child will ride in the car (car seat, booster seat, seat belt only, etc)
- Discuss and come to agreement on work hours and days beforehand

If you feel your current child care arrangement is not working effectively find a good time and place to discuss the issues at hand. Show respect for your caregiver's ideas and reinforce that the child's best interest is the priority. Keep the discussion specific to the concerns and do not make it personal.

Remember, your child care arrangement may need to change with the needs of your family. You may need to seek another child care arrangement that suits your changing family needs. These changes may include:

- a child's need for a more social experience
- a shift in your work hours
- an elderly caregiver no longer being able to keep up with your active child
- an additional child to the family

To keep things going smoothly, keep in mind that mutual respect, communication, hard work, and fairness are necessary to balance work and family life.