



by Karen Stephens

Emergency & Routine Information to Leave for Babysitters

Most parents use a babysitter now and then, whether it's for an evening out, a short overnight, or a full week vacation just for mom and dad. Occasional family time apart relieves the stress of daily parenting, but only if it's well planned. Part of helping children feel safe, secure and comfortable when you're away is acquainting caregivers with the regular routines your children rely upon. Even more vital is preparing babysitters to respond quickly if something goes wrong. Family emergencies are never easy to handle, but they pose extra challenges to a young high school or college-age babysitter. To help sitters remain calm, cool, and collected, fill out the form below. The information helps sitters (and if necessary, emergency medical personnel) respond wisely when fast action makes a difference.

Enlarge this form to whatever size you choose and print. (Or make a custom form tailored to your family.) Fill in the information that will always remain the same, such as children's names and birth dates. Then make multiple copies to keep on hand by the telephone or in a prominent place. Each time you hire a sitter, you'll only have to fill in information that applies to that particular date (or dates). Before you leave, go over the information with your sitter so he or she understands its purpose and can ask questions. This little bit of paperwork will help your kids when you're not there and will be much appreciated by your sitter in times of emergency.

“Family emergencies are never easy to handle, but they pose extra challenges to a young high school or college-age babysitter.”

Baby Sitter's Help Sheet

Family Name _____
Address _____ **Phone** (____) _____
How to reach parents:
Parents' destination _____
Expected return to home _____
Phone number _____ Parent cell phone or pager # _____
E-mail address _____
People to call for help:
Nearest neighbor's name and phone number _____

Nearest relative's name and phone number _____

Emergency phone numbers:
Police Department _____
Fire Department _____
Hospital _____
Ambulance _____
Poison Control Center _____
Child care or school(s) _____
Health Care Contacts:
Doctor _____ Dentist _____
Eye doctor _____ Pets' Veterinarian _____

Vital Information, Child #1

Full Name _____ Birth date and Age _____
Height and Weight _____
Health Conditions and/or Special Needs _____
Allergies, symptoms and treatment response _____

Medication name(s)	Dosage amount	Times to give
A. _____	_____	_____
B. _____	_____	_____
C. _____	_____	_____

Vital Information, Child #2

Full Name _____ Birth date and Age _____
Height and Weight _____
Health Conditions and/or Special Needs _____
Allergies, symptoms and treatment response _____

Medication name(s)	Dosage amount	Times to give
A. _____	_____	_____
B. _____	_____	_____
C. _____	_____	_____

Location of Emergency Supplies

First aid supplies _____ Flash light _____
Fire extinguisher _____ Key to house and car _____
Health insurance carrier and ID number _____ Parent authorization for emergency treatment _____

Emergency Procedures

Fire exit locations _____
Rooms for storm evacuation _____

Regular Routines

Bathroom and/or diapering routines _____
Bedtime routines _____
Snacks and beverages _____
Meals available _____
Tips on picky eater _____
Acceptable television, movies, computer games and/or web sites _____
Telephone rules _____
Friends who may visit _____
Places teens may go and curfews _____
Neighbors young children may visit _____
Times for outdoor play _____
Favorite games, books or music _____
Tips to soothe frustration or tears _____
Tips for handling temper tantrums _____
Phone numbers for household troubles _____
Electrical power outage report _____ Refrigerator repair _____
Furnace repair _____ Plumber _____
Electrician _____ Gas Co _____
Other Details _____

About the Author — Karen Stephens is director of Illinois State University Child Care Center and instructor in child development for the ISU Family and Consumer Sciences Department. For nine years she wrote a weekly parenting column in her local newspaper. Karen has authored early care and education books and is a frequent contributor to *Exchange*.