ARIZONA
DEPARTMENT
of CHILD SAFETY
Office of Prevention

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" It takes more patience than I thought to care for my baby. But, he is worth it. "

Who do you trust with your child?

For tips on choosing a safe caregiver contact Childhelp:
1-800-4-A-CHILD (1-800-422-4453)
www.Childhelp.org/MyChild

Suspect child abuse? Call 1-888-SOS-CHILD (1-888-767-2445)

Who do you trust with your child?

Tragically, each year many children are abused and die at the hands of unsafe caregivers. Of course, most caregivers give loving attention to children and keep them safe. But sometimes we don't plan ahead or think it through. Sometimes we are in a rush and trust someone we should not.

Unsafe caregivers could be your boyfriend or girlfriend. They may be a relative or a neighbor. Children are more likely to be abused or neglected by someone they know than from a stranger.

Please consider these simple warning signs and tips before deciding on a caregiver for your child. Think before you trust. A little planning could save a precious child.

Warning signs of an unsafe caregiver:

- Has problems with anger or is severely impatient when children have tantrums, cry or misbehave
- Is violent and/or controlling with their partner(s) or others
- Is physically or verbally abusive
- Abuses alcohol or other drugs, including marijuana
- Uses prescription medications that have bad side effects or make them drowsy
- Is not trustworthy for any reason - trust your instincts
- Is already stressed
- Your child is not happy to see the caregiver and has become anxious or withdrawn
- Is not open about what they did during the time with your child
- The child has had multiple accidents that could have been avoided
- Your requests are not followed by the caregiver

A safe caregiver:

- Has experience caring for babies and young children
- Is patient and mature enough to care for a fussy, overexcited or crying baby
- Understands that young children must always be watched
- Will be only watching your child or a limited number of children so that each child is given adequate attention

- Will never shake, hit, yell at, make fun of, or withhold food from a child as punishment
- Does not abuse alcohol or drugs, or carry a weapon, and will not surround a child with others who may be drinking, using or selling drugs, or carrying weapons
- Keeps your child clean and safe - accidents are infrequent
- Is recommended to have first aid training
- Talks to you and asks questions, as necessary - your caregiver should be able to tell you everything your child did and discuss any concerns
- Is aware of safe sleep practices - babies can suffocate if they sleep face down so they should always be placed in a crib on his/her back with no blankets, crib bumpers, toys, or pillows that might interfere with breathing. For information on Safe Sleep guidelines, see **www.healthysafebaby.org/sleeping-safely.html**
- Is aware of Shaken Baby Syndrome - **www.nsbaz.org**

General safety tips to consider:

- Does he/she get angry or impatient when your child cries or has a tantrum?
- Does he/she call your child bad names or put down the child?
- Does he/she think it's funny to scare your child?
- Does he/she scare your child by using guns, knives, or other weapons?
- If guns or other weapons are in the house, are they in a locked cabinet?
- Have others recommended your caregiver and/or can your caregiver provide references?
- Have you checked your caregiver's criminal history?

Help your caregiver:

- Provide your contact numbers so the caregiver can call if they are feeling stressed caring for the child
- Ensure that he/she has someone else to call for help if the parents are unavailable
- Discuss techniques that have effectively soothed the crying infant in the past
- Encourage the caregiver to put the crying baby down in a safe place if he/she is getting frustrated
- Reassure the caregiver that it's OK to call for help if he/she can't get the infant to stop crying or they are feeling frustrated or stressed
- Make your expectations very clear
- If you are leaving your child with a caregiver in your home, make sure the caregiver has the home address to provide to emergency personnel in case of emergency

Fussy child tips:

- Never shake the child – shaking a baby can cause bleeding in the brain, which can injure or kill a child. It takes only a few seconds of shaking to seriously hurt a baby's brain
- Make sure he or she isn't hungry, wet, cold or hot
- Offer a pacifier to calm and sooth the baby
- Walk around holding the baby close to you, in your arms or in a carrier; try walking or singing
- Call a trusted friend, relative or neighbor who is able to come over and talk and keep you company
- If all else fails, put your baby in the crib. Make sure the child is safe. Check in every five minutes or so. It is much better to let the baby cry than to do something to stop the crying that may be harmful.

Prepared by the Arizona Coordinated Prevention Campaign, a group of professionals dedicated to the prevention of child abuse and neglect.

Members:
Arizona Broadcasters Association; Casey Family Programs; Child Crisis Center; Childhelp; Department of Economic Security; Department of Health Services; Eight, Arizona PBS-Educational Outreach; Phoenix Children's Hospital; Prevent Child Abuse Arizona; Southwest Human Development.

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