



Preparing your child for a new babysitter

Ok, so you've made your first booking with a SafeCircle sitter, and despite all the reassurance we can offer you about our stringent recruitment process it's still not surprising you're anxious about leaving your child and about how they will react. It's not a bad thing to feel nervous, after all it means that you love your child and like us consider that only the best babysitters are good enough to look after your precious little ones. So here are some tips to help both you and your child prepare for a new babysitter;

Introductions before the booking:

Your SafeCircle Sitter will call you 2 hours prior to the booking time so you can have a chat with her/him and ask them any questions about their experience. This will give you an opportunity to get a feel for the babysitter and should put you at ease.

Plenty of notice:

Give your child plenty of notice about a new babysitter coming to the house, this will prevent them becoming upset when you leave as a result of a sudden change in their care arrangements. Keep reminding your child about the new babysitter coming and make this exciting for them. You will need to show enthusiasm in your voice when talking about them (even if you're still nervous), as this will ease their own anxieties. Child can pick up on your emotions and reactions so try not to show these, and create an atmosphere of excitement. You could even have them draw a picture for the new babysitter, something they can share when they arrive.

Get the kids involved:

Children love being in control and able to help, so give your child the illusion of control when the babysitter arrives. Ask your child to show the new babysitter where the kitchen is, and where to find the tea and biscuits. Children are very good at showing others how electrical work so why not set the children a task of showing the babysitter how the TV works. Your child will soon settle with your SafeCircle sitter.

Bend the rules:

When it comes to rule of the house children can become very excited at the prospect of these being bent, so why not bend the rules slightly and allow your child to go to bed 15 minutes later, or watch a TV program before bed. The idea of them being able to bend the rules at home when the babysitter is there will soon override any anxieties they had about a new sitter.

Have the difficult conversations:

Teach your child about emergencies. We would hope that your child would never have to use this knowledge but it's always better safe than sorry. Your child should be taught about personal safety and how to call 999 if they needed help in an emergency.

Talk to your child about what a babysitter's job is (to keep child safe, and to stay with them until their parents come home) and continue to talk to your child about the babysitter and what happened whilst you were out.

This will reassure you and give your child an empowered feeling which will reduce stress and anxieties about being in the care of a new babysitter.

Keep them in the loop:

Telling your child who they are being left with, where you are going and how long you will be gone can help a child to relax, with the reassurance that you will be returning to them. Before you leave give them something to look forward to such as a promise of kissing them when you return home or reading a story together in the morning.

Say goodbye:

Once you've told your child that you are leaving, and that the new babysitter will be looking after them, you should tell them you love them and give them a quick kiss/hug and LEAVE. Try not to sneak out whilst the child are distracted as this gives your child the impression you are doing something wrong and will increase their anxiety about being left; say goodbye with a happy tone and a smile.

Once you've done this a quick kiss and hug and leave the house. Don't hang around for too long as this will increase your child's anxiety about being left, your child may cry briefly when you

leave but chances are they will settle and calm a lot quicker than you will, so make it easier on you both and head out for a good evening.

Tips for infants and young toddler:

- Leave a top or item of clothing that you have worn that day in their cot. This will soothe them as young children and babies are sensitive to sound, smell and touch. The item of clothing will calm them through an illusion of your presence.
- Consider putting your child to bed before the babysitter arrives. If your child is a good sleeper this may be a good option for you as they will go to sleep in your care, and hopefully sleep through the time you're out meaning they would never know you were gone. (Only consider this if your child is good sleepers who doesn't often wake in the night).

REMEMBER: All of our babysitters are childcare professionals sourced from the same pool which supply your local nurseries and schools and childminder. They have the skills and knowledge to care for your children to a high standard and can settle children quickly following separation from parents.

OUR PROMISE: The SafeCircle Sitter would not be standing at your door if we would not have them in our own home!