



FACT SHEET

TOPIC: Babysitting for Children in Foster Care Placement

Adapted from DYFS Resource Family Babysitting Protocol

WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Supervision:

It is the resource parents' responsibility to ensure that children in foster care receive adequate care and appropriate supervision while living in the resource home. As specified in the Manual of Requirements for Resource Family Parents, Subchapter 6, Resource Family Home Program Requirements, Section 10:122C-6.1, Supervision of Children in Placement, (a) 1 and 2, Level 1 supervision requirements are:

1. The resource family parent shall ensure the supervision of each child in placement, as appropriate to the child's age and particular needs, at all times.
2. The resource family parent shall be reachable by telephone in the event of an emergency or illness when the child in placement or resource family is not in the home.

What if I have to run an errand and can't take the children with me?

At times when it is necessary for the resource parent to be absent from the home, appropriate babysitting arrangements shall be made for the resource parents own children and children in care.

What is babysitting?

Babysitting is considered as short term care and supervision of a child/ren on an occasional basis.

Hiring a babysitter:

Hiring a babysitter takes planning on the part of the resource parent. The resource parent should use the same good judgment in determining if a person is appropriate to baby-sit that they would use in considering someone to care for their own children. When hiring a babysitter it is important to consider the child's age, physical, developmental and social needs and remember that the provider must be an appropriate caregiver capable of meeting the child/ren's needs.

(over)

April 2009

Fact Sheet #4

PO Box 518, 4301 Route 1 South, Monmouth Junction, NJ 08852

1.800.222.0047; 609.520.1515 (fax)

www.fafsonline.org; e-mail: mawrachow@fafsonline.org

Can a youth (the resource parent's own child, relative, or neighbor) be a babysitter?

A youth who is the resource parent's child or who is a relative or neighbor whom the resource parent knows to be of sufficient reliability and maturity may care for children in foster care. The length of babysitting time depends on the maturity and needs of the foster child and the maturity of the babysitter. This care should be short term and occur on an occasional basis.

Can a youth (in foster care) be a babysitter for a child/ren in care?

Resource parents are encouraged to provide the most normal of experiences for children in foster care as they would with regard to their own children. Therefore, children in foster care shall be permitted to provide care for other children in foster care and/or a resource parents' own children, or other children upon the agreement of the child providing the care and the consent of the case manager.

Basic guidelines to consider before hiring a babysitter:

- Meet the sitter and consider checking references and any training they may have had in advance.
- Be sure the sitter is mature enough to handle common emergencies and provide first aid.
- Have the sitter spend time with you before babysitting to meet the children and learn their routines.
- Show the sitter around the house. Point out fire escape routes and potential problem areas. Instruct the sitter to leave the house right away in case of fire and to call the fire department from a neighbor's house.
- Discuss feeding, bathing and sleeping arrangements with your children.
- Tell your sitter of any allergies or specific needs your children have.
- Have emergency supplies available including a flashlight, first aid chart, and first aid supplies.
- Tell the sitter where you will be and when you will return.
- Post your address, phone number and emergency numbers near the phone.
- Provide the phone number of a neighbor or someone else who can assist in an emergency if you can not be reached right away.
- Be certain that the sitter is aware they should never leave the child alone unattended in the house or car - even for a minute.
- Establish rules for the sitter; especially if a teenager; such as, no visitors in the home while they are babysitting.

Can I be reimbursed for babysitting expenses?

Reimbursements are made to resource parents for babysitting expenses when the reason for the resource parent's absence from the home is an activity directly related to foster parenting, for example but not limited to, attendance at Child Placement Reviews, DYFS Case Conferences, court hearings, school conferences, DYFS meetings or medical/dental appointments for a child/ren in care. The babysitting may be for the resource parent's own child/ren and/or child/ren in foster care in the home. Babysitting expenses are not reimbursed for the resource parent's personal activities. Babysitting reimbursement requires local Office Manager or designee's approval.