

Leaving a child alone requires serious consideration and sound judgment on the part of a responsible parent.

Some things to consider when planning to leave your child alone:

- Is the child emotionally mature?
- Is the child trustworthy and responsible?
- Does the child have special needs?
- Does the child feel comfortable being left alone?
- Has the child practiced the safety plan?

Children (at any age) who parents feel are not emotionally capable or mature enough should NEVER be left alone.

Emergency Contact Numbers

Emergency Services: 911

Fire Department: 911

Medical Emergencies: 911

Poison Control: 1-800-222-1222

Family Members' Contact Numbers:

Unattended
CHILDREN
...it's against the law!

Maryland Department of Human Resources
311 West Saratoga Street
Baltimore, Maryland 21201

Department of Human Resources
1-800-332-6347



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Plan For Your Child's Safety



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In Maryland there are laws that are meant to protect your children from harm and danger.

Maryland Family Law §5-701 states that leaving a child unattended could be considered CHILD NEGLECT, which is defined as failing to give proper care and attention to a child.

Also

Maryland Family Law §5-801 states that it is a CRIME to leave a child younger than 8 years old unattended, locked or confined to a home, car, building or other enclosure without proper supervision.

The law also states that a child cannot be left unattended without proper supervision by a reliable person at least 13 years of age. This is punishable by fines or imprisonment.

But there's more to it than this...

Unattended children at any age can get hurt, injured or even killed without proper supervision.



What can you do?

As a parent or care provider ALWAYS PLAN FOR SAFETY!

Develop a safety plan to practice with your child.

Make sure your child understands these potential dangers and how to avoid them:

- Fire and medical emergencies
- Household hazards such as matches, cleaning solutions, drugs, stoves and swimming pools
- Knives, guns and other weapons
- Strangers and visiting friends
- Create a plan for responding to these dangers and practice it with your child
- Make sure your child knows who to call in case of an emergency

When planning to go out without your child:

- Call a reliable babysitter, friend or family member to watch the child in your absence
- Provide meals not requiring the use of oven, stove or microwave
- Leave an emergency number so you can be contacted quickly

Younger children:

- Keep children in eyesight when possible
- Use a room monitor to listen for them while they are sleeping or napping
- Be present with children in bathroom, bathtub and kitchen
- Do not leave children alone while answering the phone or involved in other activities

When shopping:

- Supervise your child at all times
- Plan your shopping times when you have someone to help watch your child
- Always take your child with you when leaving the car

Taking your child with you when leaving the car prevents:

- Heat or cold exposure
- Carbon monoxide poisoning
- Kidnappings
- The child being physically injured by a window, door, car lighter or other vehicle parts
- The child being injured or harmed by accidentally placing the car in gear
- Siblings harming each other while left unattended in a vehicle

A parent or caregiver who does not plan for safety may be investigated by Child Protective Services and/or law enforcement.

Call somebody to watch the kids!

...so plan for your child's safety!!