



parents in a pinch, inc.



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## TIPS FOR WORKING WITH A TEMPORARY CAREGIVER

Leaving your child with someone you don't know can feel stressful, both for you and for your children. For you, your children and the caregiver, who has to immediately jump into your routine, here are some tips to make it easier!

- Your assigned caregiver will call you beforehand to introduce herself and review details, reconfirming the time, address, and directions to your house. This may also be a good time to tell her a bit about your children's temperaments and preferences, so that the caregiver can be thinking ahead about what activities would be most appropriate and fun. If you have a child with food allergies or have certain household dietary restrictions and would prefer that the caregiver not bring certain foods into your home, let her know this as well.
- Once your caregiver arrives, be sure to review the following:
  - Review your house rules including naptime, meals and snacks, use of the computer, permissible videos, etc.
  - Go over your emergency contact information, including instructions about how best to reach you during the day.
  - Be sure to tell the caregiver what you planned for the children's lunch. Also, let her know beforehand whether or not she has permission to eat the same or another meal in your home.
  - Give her hints about what will delight, calm and comfort each child.
- Stay UPBEAT about the caregiver and what a great day the children will have with her. Experts suggest that the more cheerful and confident you are about leaving, the easier it will be for your children. If you prolong your goodbye or seem nervous, chances are that your child will feel the same. The best goodbye routine is to wait until you're really ready to go. Then: kiss your child, say goodbye and leave. When you're outside, turn around and wave. If your toddler is crying, give the caregiver a call when you arrive at work. You most likely will hear giggles and fun in the background.
- The caregiver is there to keep your children safe and happy. On a temp basis, caregivers do not do housework or run errands.
- Another note from child development experts: it is not leaving a child to go to work that is most disturbing to them – it is the rushed "re-entry." Children have waited all day to tell you a funny joke or show you a picture or just to feel your secure presence. Therefore, try not to rush into the house and start your evening routine immediately. If you can, schedule ½ hour for calmly regrouping with your children.
- If, at the end of the day, you feel that the caregiver provided excellent care for your children, don't hesitate to say so. Everyone loves to feel appreciated!