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4H Safety Practices for Baby Sitters

Michigan State University Cooperative Extension Service

4-H Club Bulletin Leaflet Series

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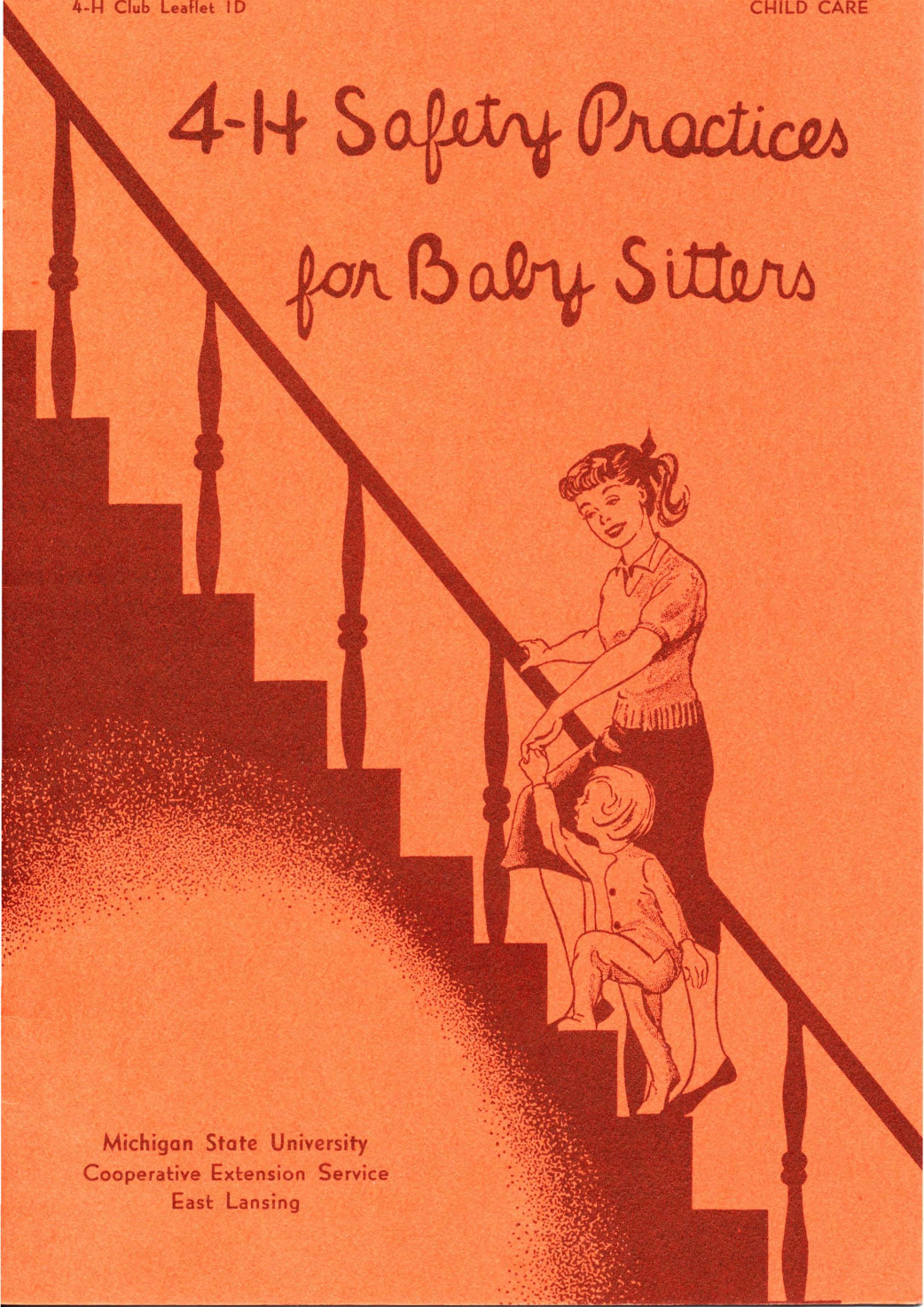
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CHILD CARE

4-H Safety Practices for Baby Sitters



Michigan State University
Cooperative Extension Service
East Lansing

Safety Practices for 4-H Baby Sitters

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(Revised by MARY WOODWARD⁴)

Baby-sitting is a real privilege for you are a "second mother" to the children while you are on duty. You should feel a great responsibility for the safety of the children as well as for their comfort and happiness. They will learn to love you and look forward to your return if you are gentle, speak kind words and are genuinely concerned over their welfare. What brings greater happiness than being loved by a child?

This project is set up to be of help to you in safely caring for children when called upon to be a baby-sitter.

When a parent engages you for a baby sitting date ask if you may arrive 15 to 20 minutes before they leave to get information about the care of the children.

Carry a notebook in which you may write down the following regarding the safety of the children. Other facts about feeding, bed time, books, games, unusual habits may be listed in the same book.

FACTS FOR SAFETY

1. Where parents can be reached: Mother
- Father
2. Name and location of neighbor or friend who might be called
.....
3. Your own telephone number if your parents need to be consulted
.....
4. Telephone number of fire department
5. Telephone number of police department
6. Where to locate the family doctor
7. Location of fire extinguisher and how to use it
8. Location of first aid supplies
9. What antiseptic is used for minor cuts
10. Location of flashlight in case lights go out
11. List danger spots in house, yard, etc. that need to be watched
when children are near that location

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SAFE CARE OF THE BABY

The baby is a helpless bit of humanity who will need your constant protection to keep him safe and happy.

Here are a few suggestions that may help you protect the baby left in your charge.

AVOID FALLS

Protect a baby so he does not fall. Falls can permanently injure a child. Be sure the crib sides are up when he is in his crib. A safety strap should keep him from falling from the high chair or stroller.

BURNS

Hot water is dangerous for small children. Be sure there are no containers of hot or cold water into which he may fall.

Keep him away from electrical outlets or appliances where he may be burned or receive a shock.

PLAY PEN

A play pen is a great protector for the infant who is old enough to sit alone. Here he may be protected from pins and other objects that he might find on the floor. Many children love their play pen. This is often true if they become accustomed to it at an early age.

Suggested Demonstrations

1. How to hold and carry a very young baby.
2. How to hold and carry a 6 months old baby.

SAFE CARE OF CHILDREN FROM 1 TO 6 YEARS

The baby sitter may be called upon to care for young children from ages 1 to 6. Care of these children differs from the care of infants. These children are active and can find more accident hazards than the baby. You must watch them at all times that they are awake.

The baby sitter has two kinds of duties when caring for children of these ages. First, she must *protect* them; and Second, *keep them happy* while the parents are away. Let's read aloud and discuss some things that you should remember about protecting the child.

STRAYING AWAY

Children of this age often have the habit of wandering away from their own yard where there may be additional dangers—such as

busy streets or roads, ponds, open wells or creeks. Ride tricycles only in the yard or on sidewalks in a limited distance from the house. Be sure cars do not cross those walks.

Some parents have provided fenced areas for playground which makes it safe for children to play without watching for short periods of time—about 15 minutes. Without a fence you will need to watch the child and keep him within the yard or house.

CLIMBING

Children love to climb. Ladders, trees and fences are common means for them to get off the ground. Be conscious of the fact that a child may fall and be seriously injured. Remove him from heights that he has reached, then explain why he must stay off the fence or out of the tree.

PETS

A stray cat or dog may be dangerous particularly if the child teases it. Teach children not to touch a dog that they do not know.

MEDICINE CABINETS

Parents usually keep harmful medicine up high where children cannot reach. Do not leave children near a medicine cabinet without watching them. They may climb on a chair and reach the medicine.

ELECTRICITY

Children have been known to insert sharp metal toys or their fingers in electrical outlets. Be sure that they don't play with electrical household appliances.

CHOKING

Everything except food and the tooth brush should be kept out of the mouth. They carry germs to the mouth and provide a great danger of getting lodged in the throat, lungs or stomach. A good slogan to teach a child is "Hold it in your hand, not in your mouth".

Can you list other points of danger that may be present when caring for children 1 to 6 years old? Discuss them.

Suggested Demonstrations

How to carry a two year old.

SAFE CARE OF CHILDREN OVER SIX YEARS

Children over 6 years of age usually are given more freedom of traveling about. They have been to school by this age and have learned something about protecting themselves.

As a baby sitter or "part-time mother" you will want to remind the children of dangers that may come their way. How many times have you heard your mother say, "Be sure to be careful"? She says this whether you are 6 or 16.

Let's list and discuss some of the dangers when caring for children over 6 years of age:

WHEN VISITING PLAYMATES

Find out from the parents if visits are permitted to playmates' homes. Which homes may they visit? Where are the homes located? How long should the children be permitted to stay? Remind them of the hour that they are to return.

BIKES

Riding a bicycle is one of the greatest joys of childhood, yet a great hazard. Can you find time to talk with the children about some of the safety rules for riding a bicycle? Get a copy of Michigan's Bicycle Laws from your local police department.

SIMPLE FOODS

Inquire from the parents what the children should eat and what time. Eating between meals may cause illness. Excessive candy eating may disturb appetites and cause upset stomachs.

BARNYARD AREA

Children living on a farm are especially privileged for it provides a wide space to roam and commune with nature. Find out from the parents about hazards around the barn such as kicking horses, angry bulls, hay mows, open wells, ponds, and farm machinery. Warn the children against these danger spots.

List and discuss other dangers.

IN CASE OF FIRE

In case of fire in a home, it is necessary for you to know what to do immediately. Following is a list of things to do in case of fire:

(1) See that the children are safe.

(2) Call local fire department.

(3) Use fire extinguisher or water on flame. Use water only on paper, wood or clothing fires. Use a carbon dioxide type fire extinguisher on oil or electric fire. *Do not use water on an electrical fire.*

(4) If clothing is on fire, follow these instructions:

A. DO NOT RUN—Running fans the flames.

B. If possible wrap yourself in a rug, blanket, or woolen coat. Wrap it around your neck first. Drop to the floor and roll over slowly.

C. If there is nothing to wrap in, drop to the floor and roll over slowly.

D. Try not to inhale any of the flame. Put your left hand on right shoulder and right hand on left shoulder and pull arms against face for protection.

E. If there is water near at hand, douse yourself with it and roll in the spilled water on the floor.

If the clothing of another person takes fire, use similar measures. It may be necessary to trip him or force him to lie down so you can roll him. Then if water is handy, apply it at once.

ACTIVITIES CLUBS CAN DO

Visit local Fire Department. Find out how to do the following things:

1. How to extinguish various types of fire.

2. How to operate a fire extinguisher.

3. How to call the Fire Department.

4. How to report a fire.

SIMPLE FIRST AID

You must keep in mind that you should call a doctor, the parents, and a neighbor in case of a serious accident.

Minor cuts or scratches may be treated by you, without the need to call the parents or doctor. If a cut is slight wash it well with soap and warm water and apply a sterile dressing such as a band-aid or gauze square.

CUTS

If bleeding occurs from a cut, cover with a clean cloth or gauze bandage and apply pressure over the area with your hand until the doctor arrives.

Even though there is no bleeding, puncture wounds should always be called to the doctor's attention.

If a cut is extensive or deep, apply no medicine; cover the area with a clean bandage and call the doctor.

BURNS

For minor burns involving small areas:

A paste made up of baking soda and water may be applied to shut out the air and help relieve pain. Cover with a clean cloth.

For burns involving large areas of the body: wrap the child in a clean sheet, cover with blankets, and go to the nearest doctor or hospital immediately.

INSECT BITES

If the child is old enough to cooperate, the application of cold compresses will help limit the extent of swelling of the bite.

ANIMAL BITES

Any bite by an animal (dog, cat, etc.) should be reported to your physician at once. Every effort should be made to locate the animal which has inflicted such a wound since it is essential that the animal be kept under observation for the possibility of rabies.

FOREIGN BODIES IN THE EYE

Particles of soot, dirt, dust: Bathe the eye with baking soda (one teaspoon to a glass of warm water). If this does not dislodge the particle consult the doctor. If a foreign body penetrates the eyeball (pencil, splinters, etc.), do not move the child. Cover the eye loosely with a clean cloth or sterile gauze, and call the doctor or hospital immediately.

FOREIGN BODIES IN THE EAR AND NOSE

Make no attempt to remove the foreign body. Call the doctor.

FOREIGN BODIES IN THE THROAT

Swallowing of foreign body: If the child is not choking, call the doctor. If the child is choking and gasping for breath, turn him upside down, holding him by the legs or ankles and slap his back vigorously. If this is not effective, get him to the nearest hospital as quickly as possible. Do not push your fingers down his throat in the hope of grasping the foreign body. This may force it into his wind pipe.

BABY-SITTER'S SAFETY KIT

A small safety kit may be carried along to your baby sitting job. You will find it helpful many times. Be sure to include a notebook and pencil in order to write "Information from Parents".

Suggested containers for the safety kit

1. A strong pasteboard box.
2. A small satchel
3. A metal fishing box

A supply of first aid articles in a small pasteboard or tin box should be included in your "Safety Kit".

Include at least the following in the first aid box.

1. An antiseptic
2. Adhesive Tape
3. Sterile gauze
4. Band-aids
5. Small pair of scissors

The safety kit may well include a few games that will prove to be a joy to "your little family".

Here are a few ideas.

1. A story book or two.
2. Dominos, blocks
3. One or two small safe inexpensive toys.

NOTES

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