

## PARENTS GUIDE To Responsible Babysitting

Leaving your children in the care of a babysitter is a serious responsibility for any parent. Following these guidelines will help to ensure the experience is a safe and pleasant one for you, the babysitter and your children

### Before the babysitter arrives:

- Go over your home fire escape plan with your children, making sure that they know the escape routes and the location of the outside meeting place.
- Test the smoke alarms to make sure they are working. Smoke alarms will detect fire in its early stages and could give the babysitter and children time to escape.
- Speak to a neighbour who will be home for the evening. If there is an emergency, the babysitter can contact this neighbour to get help immediately.
- Post "POLICE, FIRE" and "AMBULANCE" emergency numbers right beside the phone. Include the neighbour's name, telephone number and the telephone number where you can be reached.

### When the babysitters arrives:

- Show the babysitter the home, pointing out the children's bedrooms and exits from those rooms.
- Review the home fire escape plan with the babysitter indicating the location of the meeting place and neighbour's house. Tell the babysitter that if there is smoke or fire, get the children out of the house as quickly as possible and call the fire department from the neighbour's house.
- Show the babysitter the emergency numbers by the phone and give him/her a separate EMERGENCY Information Sheet to keep in their pocket. They may have to leave the house quickly and run to the neighbour's. This sheet should include the telephone number where the parents can be reached.
- If babysitter will be cooking or heating up food, demonstrate the use of all appliances they will be required to use.
- Never allow babysitters to smoke while on the job
- If parents smoke, make sure that the matches/lighters are kept out of the reach and sight of the children at all times.
- Give the babysitter information about the children's routines and special needs, including allergies, medical conditions and medication.