

# Poison Prevention Fact Sheet

## for Teen Babysitters

### Why do babysitters need to know about poisoning?

Caring for children is a great job for teens, but keeping children safe from injuries is a serious and important part of babysitting. Poisoning is one of the most common childhood injuries, and most of the time it happens right at home. Children who are between the ages of eight months and six years old are most likely to be involved in an unintentional poisoning.

### What are some common poisons?

Here's a list of SOME of the poisons that may be at home:

- Cleaning products
- Cosmetics
- Medicines
- Plants
- Cigarettes
- Vitamins
- Lighter fluids
- Batteries
- Pesticides
- Alcohols

### How can children be kept safe from poisons?

Poison prevention is the key to poison safety. Remember these tips:

- Young children are curious, and are likely to taste products that look colorful or smell nice .
- Never leave small children alone, even for just a minute. Continue to watch them closely when answering the door or telephone.
- All medicines and household chemicals should be out of sight in locked cabinets, not just up on a high counter, and definitely not in a purse.
- Safety latches on drawers or cabinets, and child resistant caps on bottles, are helpful in keeping poisons out of the hands of children, but do not substitute for your careful and constant supervision... they aren't "child-proof".
- If you're asked to give medicine to a child, follow the instructions exactly, and return the container to a safe storage place immediately after using it. Never leave a child alone with the medicine.

### What information about each child should you have?

Before parents leave you in charge of a child, make sure they've written down basic information such as :

- Each child's age and weight
- Any allergies or medical conditions
- Their doctor's name and telephone number
- How the parents may be reached in an emergency

### What should you do if you think someone's been poisoned?

Don't take a "wait and see" approach because there are poisons that cause damage that can't be seen right away. **CALL THE POISON CENTER IMMEDIATELY!!** Call **1-800-222-1222** for help. Get a card or sticker with this Poison Center emergency telephone number and carry it with you on your babysitting jobs. The experts at the Poison Center will tell you exactly what to do for someone who's been exposed to a potential poison. Call the **Virginia Poison Center** at **1-800-222-1222** for treatment advice immediately, if you suspect a child has gotten into something that may cause poisoning.

**For more information on poison prevention and first aid, check out the American Association of Poison Control Centers website: [www.aapcc.org](http://www.aapcc.org)**