

As a babysitter, you have a big responsibility—you are responsible for the safety of the children you sit with and for the property of your employer. To help with this responsibility, I have some suggestions:

### Prevention Before a Fire Starts:

When you arrive at the house, ask for the following information... (in Pleasant Hills, all emergency services can be reached by dialing 9-1-1).

- Poison Control Center phone number 1-800-222-1222
  - The full address of the residence
  - A phone number where the parents can be reached
  - Familiarize yourself with the house... (how do doors & windows lock, etc?)
  - Ask if they have a fire escape plan...do the children know it?..have they practiced the plan?...where is the meeting place?
  - Where are the exits from the house? (know at least 2 ways out)...
  - Find out where the smoke detector is. Check to see if it works. Ask the children if they know what it sounds like.
- After the parents leave, walk around with the children. Check the kitchen to ensure the stove & coffee pot is off, etc...
- Check to ensure there are no lit cigarettes or candles left behind, etc...
  - The Pleasant Hills Fire Inspector recommends that young babysitters do not use cooking or heating stoves.

### What to do if a Fire Occurs!!

- Your first responsibility is to get the children out!
- Never place yourself or others in jeopardy by attempting to extinguish a fire.
- Don't waste time getting the children dressed; wrap them up in a blanket.
- Once the children are in a safe place, call the fire department (9-1-1)
- *Once you're out, do not re-enter the building!*
- If you smell/see smoke, or hear the smoke detector, sound a warning. SHOUT FIRE!
- If you can't see, crawl close to the floor, where the fresh air is.
- Close all doors behind you. Call 9-1-1 from a safe place, like a neighbor's house.

- If you smell gas, get out; do not turn on or off any lights or electrical appliances. Call
- 9-1-1 from a safe place.

### Babysitting in an Apartment Building

- If you are babysitting in an apartment building and the fire alarm goes off, check the
- door for heat. If it's not warm, open and check the hallway for smoke, if clear, close the door behind you and go to the nearest exit.
- Pull the fire alarm...use the stairs to exit the building...NEVER use the elevator...take the apartment key with you.
- If the door is warm or if there is heavy smoke in the hallway, it may be safer to remain in the apartment. Close the door and stuff a towel at the bottom of it.
- Call 9-1-1 and let them know your location. Hang a white sheet or towel out the window, or use a flashlight to signal your location.
- If a fire should start in your apartment, stay low, get the kids out, close all doors behind you, especially the front door.
- Pull the fire alarm on the way out while you exit the building.

If your clothing or children's clothing catches fire, smother the flames with a towel, blanket or other thick material OR stop/drop/& roll.

**For further information, contact Jim Rush, Pleasant Hills Fire Inspector at 412-292-5118 or e-mail me at [phfiremarshal@yahoo.com](mailto:phfiremarshal@yahoo.com) .**