

# Preparing for a Day of In-Home Back-Up Child Care



Getting ready for a first time with an at-home caregiver? Following a few simple guidelines can lay the foundation for a positive experience for both the caregiver and your family. By being prepared and setting clear expectations, you can help ensure top-notch communication and the greatest satisfaction with care.

## Prior to the Caregiver's Arrival

Once care is scheduled, you'll receive an introductory call from the caregiver or his/her agency. If you have not received a call by the evening before the first day of care, please contact the *Back-Up Care Advantage Program*® at 877-BH-CARES (242-2737).

Use this introductory call to ask questions about the caregiver, learn about his or her background, discuss special care instructions, provide directions to your home, and confirm arrival time.

Before the caregiver arrives, please download the daily activity log from our website. This document includes a list of items to be completed prior to receiving care and should be reviewed with the caregiver upon arrival.

Items on the list include:

- How to contact you and who else should be contacted in the event of an emergency
- What types of non-emergency situations would warrant a call to you
- Food and drink options you would like offered to your child for meals and snacks (if possible, prepare pre-made meals and snacks for the caregiver to offer your child)
- Allergies or food restrictions
- Daily routines such as nap times, meal times, and favorite activities
- Your child's likes and dislikes
- Behavior situations that might arise and how to best address them
- Household rules for:
  - Playing outside
  - Television viewing
  - Computer, video game, and mobile phone usage
  - Areas of the house that are off limits to certain activities (e.g., eating and drinking)

## After the Caregiver's Arrival

When the caregiver arrives, please take some time to introduce yourself and your child(ren) and discuss your child(ren)'s care needs for the day.

A few things you'll want to do:

- **Provide a home tour:** Point out all exits and indicate any rooms that are off limits. Provide instructions on operating window and door locks and when to lock the house or apartment; indicate if the caregiver is allowed to adjust the thermostat; instruct on television, remote control, and other household appliances (such as ranges, ovens, blenders, washer/dryer) potentially needed to care for your child(ren).
- **Leave house keys:** If you've authorized an outing, make sure the caregiver knows how to lock up and get back in.
- **Discuss phone use:** Specify if you would like the caregiver to answer your phone and outline expectations of use.
- **Show where to find:**
  - A change of clothes or pajamas (if possible, select these items and lay them out in case they are needed)
  - Diapers, wipes, bibs, and other supplies
  - Cooking utensils and serving items (including bottles and baby food)
  - Cleaning supplies for spills, cleaning up after meals, etc.
  - First-aid kit

## When You Return

Take a few minutes after you return home to review the day with the caregiver. Examples of questions you may want to ask include:

- What did you do today?
- Were there any concerns or problems we should discuss?
- Is there anything I could have done to make your day go more smoothly?

## Evaluation

Following the delivery of back-up care services, you will receive a brief survey by email from the *Back-Up Care Advantage Program*® to complete. Your comments and suggestions will enable us to continually revise and improve the quality of our services. Thank you in advance for your assistance!

