

The following is an informational pamphlet prepared by Olmsted County Child and Family Services. It is intended to provide basic information and guidelines for residents of Olmsted County.

If you have any additional questions please contact:

*Olmsted County
Child and Family Services
2117 Campus Drive SE
Suite 200
Rochester, MN 55904*

*Phone: (507) 328-6400
Fax: (507) 328-6633*



*Olmsted County
Child and Family Services*

HOME ALONE: How old is old enough?










*A guideline for
supervision of
children*

Olmsted County Child and Family Services
2117 Campus Drive SE - Suite 200
Rochester, MN 55904

How old is old enough?

As a parent you often wonder at what age your child can be left unsupervised or can baby-sit other children. The following are some guidelines to consider for leaving your child unattended or allowing them to baby-sit other children.

-  The age and maturity of your child
-  The availability of parent, guardian or caretaker by phone or in person
-  Child's awareness of how to react to an emergency situation which may include a fire, severe weather, injury to self or others, etc
-  The health status of your child
-  Your child's awareness of the dangers of appliance use (stove, iron) or unusual hazards in the home

-  What is your child's reaction to being left alone?
-  What is your child's reaction to the babysitter?



Age Specific Guidelines

- Children 7 years of age and younger should not be left alone for any period of time
- Children 8 to 10 years of age should not be left alone for more than 3 hours
- Children 11 to 13 years of age should not be left alone for more than 12 hours

Supervision By Older Children Guidelines

- A child age 11 to 13 years of age may baby-sit with the expectation that the parent, guardian or caretaker will be returning within 12 hours to supervise the children
- An adolescent aged 14 to 15 can baby-sit for up to 24 hours as long as they can contact their parent, guardian or other responsible adult
- An adolescent 16 years of age or older providing baby-sitting for younger children for more than 24 hours, must know the whereabouts of the parents, when they will return and have adult backup
- Consider enrolling your child in a babysitting clinic. Check your community education booklet or call your child's school