



YOUR BABY IS COUNTING ON YOU



Very few people believe that someone they love or trust could ever hurt their child. But it happens. Choosing an appropriate caregiver, including a care-giving partner, is one of the most important decisions a parent can make. Just because someone is a lover, relative or close friend does not mean they are capable of taking care of a child. How well do you know the person who will be caring for your child? Do they make good decisions? Are they responsible and trustworthy? **If you wouldn't leave your valuables with this person, don't leave your baby with them.**

Questions to ask yourself:

- How does he treat **other women** in his life? How does he treat **other children** (nieces, nephews, friends' children)?
- Does he **get angry** when you spend time with your child?
- Does she **get angry or impatient** when your child cries or has a tantrum?
- Does she call your child **bad names or put him down**?
- Does she think it's funny to **scare your child**?
- Does he **make all the decisions** for you and your child?
- Does he **put you down**, tell you that you're a bad parent or that you shouldn't have your kids?
- Does he pretend **when he hurts your child** that you are to blame or that it's no big deal?
- Does he tell you that your child is **a nuisance**?
- Does he **scare your child** by using guns or knives or other weapons?

If you answered "yes" to even one of these questions, your child could be at risk. Never leave your child with someone you don't trust with your child's life.

Choose your partner carefully. Your child's life depends on it. **Never** leave your child with someone you don't trust to keep your child safe. Many children are harmed each year by unrelated adults who just don't know how to take care of a child. **Your baby is counting on you to make the right decision.** Contact the Parenting WARMLINE at Family Resources, 1-800-641-4546, for more information and support or visit the website at: www.familyresourcesofpa.org



This Child Abuse Prevention Month message was made possible by collaboration of



UPMC HEALTH PLAN

When choosing a caregiver, you should select someone who:

- has **experience** caring for babies and young children
- is **patient and mature** enough to care for an excited or crying baby
- understands that young children must **always** be watched
- will **never** shake, hit, yell at, make fun of, or withhold food from a child as punishment
- does **not abuse alcohol or drugs or carry a weapon**, and will not surround a child with others who may be drinking, using drugs, or carrying weapons



Before leaving your child in someone's care, ask about the **caregiver's experience** and **how that person would respond to an upset or unwell child**. Post an emergency contact list in a visible place, on your refrigerator, for example.

Make sure your caregiver knows what to do when your baby won't stop crying:

- check to see if she or he is **hungry, wet, cold, or hot**, etc.
- offer a **pacifier**
- **walk around** holding the baby close to you, in your arms or in a carrier; try talking or singing
- **call a trusted friend**, relative, or neighbor who is able to come over and talk to you
- if all else fails, put the baby in the crib on her or his back, making sure the child is safe – check in every five minutes or so... **it is much better to let the baby cry than to do something to stop the crying that may be harmful**
- **never shake the child** -- shaking a baby or can cause bleeding in the brain that can injure or kill a child...it takes only a few seconds of shaking to seriously hurt a baby's brain



I loved him so I thought I could trust him to watch my child.

Be careful about who takes care of your child.

The warning signs of a potentially dangerous caregiver include:

- being **angry or very impatient** when children have tantrums, cry, or misbehave
- being **violent and/or controlling** with his partner
- being **physically or verbally abusive** toward children
- **abusing alcohol and drugs**, including marijuana
- **using prescription medications** that have bad side effects or make the person drowsy
- being **untrustworthy** for any reason

