

Back-Up Care Advantage Program® *Caregiver Training Module*



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Back-Up Care Advantage Program

Bright Horizons’ back-up care programs provide working families with a safety net for those days when regular arrangements fall through. Back-up dependent care supplements, rather than replaces these arrangements and is a comforting emergency alternative when families need it the most.

The Bright Horizons *Back-Up Care Advantage Program* provides access to back-up care for children—both well and mildly ill – as well as elders and adults through a nationwide network of quality, licensed child care centers, including hundreds of Bright Horizons child care centers, as well as in-home care provided by trained, credentialed in-home care professionals.

Caregiver Responsibilities

Introductory Call

As soon as you are given an assignment you should call the family and introduce yourself. Keep in mind that the client employees have never met you and don’t know how wonderful you will be with their family member. It is up to you to help them feel comfortable and secure. Most often individuals using the *Back-Up Care Advantage Program* are under stress because their usual care arrangements have fallen through. When calling the family, please answer their questions as best you can and most importantly, let them know that you enjoy being a caregiver and have experience. The more you can reinforce this, the more comfortable they will be using this program.

Timely Arrival

The reason that you are needed to watch their family member is so the client employee can get to work. If you are late, they will be late, and that adds to their stress in an already stressful situation. We are counting on you to be on time.

Introduction Upon Arrival

It is up to you as the professional to immediately make the family and the care recipient feel secure and comfortable. Imagine a complete stranger coming to your home, knocking on your door, telling you they are there to watch your family member and you need to leave to go to work. They need to hear from you that you have the appropriate background, training, and experience to care for their loved one. Arriving at the home on time, looking clean, neat, and professional are all steps toward making a good first impression. Sharing previous caregiving experience will also help to ease concerns. Greet the care recipient warmly and be sure to make eye contact.

Client Employees Directions and Basic Understanding of Family Philosophy

Every household has its own rules, philosophy, beliefs, and way of doing things. It is your responsibility to listen carefully to the client employee so you are able to provide care that matches their expectations. They should advise you whether or not their family member is allowed to watch television, when they should sleep or nap, what they may eat, if they are allowed to go outside, and any other rules that the family may have. Please listen carefully to what the client employee tells you. If you have any questions or do not understand, ask for clarification before they leave. If you think they are requesting anything that is inappropriate, call your agency or direct the family to call Bright Horizons.

Telephone Usage

Ask the client employee how or if they would like you to answer the telephone. (E.g., “Smith residence, this is Mary” or just “Hello, this is Mary.”) Always identify yourself when answering the telephone. Be sure to write down the caller’s name, phone number, and what time they called. Have emergency phone numbers and the client family’s address by the phone at all times for your reference. NEVER use the phone for personal use.

End of Shift Report to Client Employee

The client employee will be anxious to hear about their loved one’s day. Share with them the events of the day, what activities you did, what they ate, and how they slept. Client employees appreciate specificity regarding their family member. Chances are they may feel badly that they had to leave their loved one to go to work, so it will make them feel better to know that their child had a wonderful day and that you replicated their daily routine to the best of your ability.

General Guidelines Safety

It is important that the caregiver be safety conscious and take extra precautions to ensure that the care recipient is safe and that no accident occurs.

Household Safety

- Keep the doors and windows locked; do not open them to see who is there
- Never tell anyone you are alone
- Do not give out any information over the phone unless it is the client employee checking in
- Keep the television and radio volume low so you can hear the care recipient at all times (especially if they are asleep)
- Keep the house tidy
- Keep anything that is potentially dangerous away from the care recipient
- If you are preparing food, keep anything that could hurt the care recipient out of their reach
- Know where all of the exits are
- Be aware of potential hazards in the home (open stairways, electrical outlets, sharp objects, etc.)
- Keep gates up and across all stairways; this will help prevent falls
- Don’t let children play near glass windows or glass doors
- Be sure that medicines, cleaning products, pesticides, and plants are out of the reach
- Do not smoke

Personal Safety

- Don't be careless or in a hurry or you may have an accident
- Always carry a child or a package below eye level so you are able to watch your step
- If you should hurt yourself, ensure the care recipient is safe and nearby while you apply first aid
- If you are in doubt or question any unusual situation or encounter any strange people call your agency or your emergency contact
- If you become ill during care call your agency

Questions to Ask the Client Employees Before They Leave

- Phone number(s) of client employee
- Phone number and address of emergency contact, doctor, and hospital
- Does the care recipient have any favorite games, songs, toys, rhymes, or books?
- Is the care recipient allowed to watch television? If so, for how long?
- How do the television and VCR/DVD player(s) work?
- Can the care recipient play video games?
- What are the rules regarding the computer?
- Does the care recipient have any allergies?
- Ask about specific meal times and what food to prepare. Can they have snacks?
- What time is naptime? Bedtime? Any special instructions or rituals?
- Ask if the care recipient has any medical conditions you need to be aware of
- Be sure you ask where they keep any supplies you may need (diapers, formula bottles, reading materials, etc.)

Dos and Don'ts of Back-Up Care

The Do's

- Do call the client employee the night before and introduce yourself
- Do know the address of the place the care is to take place
- Do have exact directions to the house or address where care is to take place
- Do know what time your shift is to begin
- Do know what time your shift ends
- Do give yourself extra time for driving and locating the family home
- Do arrive at the designated time (or early) — never late
- Do call if there is a problem keeping you from a timely arrival
- Do ask the client employees about the child's routine
- Do ask about any food allergies the child might have
- Do bring your own lunch
- Do ask for and follow instructions given by the client employee regarding care for a mildly ill child
- Do ask for any house rules
- Do change the baby's diapers as necessary
- Do have training in CPR or First Aid
- Do prepare nutritious snacks and meals
- Do care for and maintain family's belongings and clean up after child
- Do behave in a professional manner
- Do listen to and follow the family rules, schedules, and any other expectations (within reason)
- Do call your agency if there are any problems or you are uncomfortable for any reason

- Do spend time interacting and playing with the child
- Do accompany the care recipient on public transportation if client employee requests you to do so. The client employee will be expected to pay for any transportation
- Do call the client employee if the care recipient becomes ill or if an existing illness becomes worse
- Do try and occupy the care recipient if the client employee is working from home

The Don'ts

- Don't administer any medication
- Don't drive the dependent in your car or any other car
- Don't leave the dependent unattended
- Don't allow strangers into the home
- Don't use the telephone unless it is absolutely necessary
- Don't send the child over to the neighbors to play when you are caring for them
- Don't allow any other children/adults in the home other than those you are caring for
- Don't release the person in your care to anyone other than who you were told to
- Don't go into rooms with closed doors
- Don't sit in front of the television all day
- Don't adjust the thermostat
- Don't spend time attending to any personal matters – you are there to attend to the dependent
- Don't help yourself to the family's food unless told to do so
- Don't assume you know everything, ask questions
- Don't answer the door unless the client employee told you someone was specifically coming over
- Don't smoke

- Don't leave a baby alone anywhere other than the crib
- Don't accept payment from the client employee. This will all be taken care of by your agency and Bright Horizons

Adult/Elder Care Specific Tips

Providing Back-Up Care for Adults or Elders

Providing back-up care for an adult or elderly person can provide tremendous relief to a family who might be feeling stress as a result of a short term breakdown in the normal caregiving for the individual(s) in need. Providing high-quality care that meets the daily needs of the individual allows our client's employees' to get to work when they otherwise would have to be absent.

It is very important for you to ask the person you are caring for if they are comfortable. You must notify the client employee in the event they are experiencing physical pain, breathing problems, confusion, or other symptoms. Call 911 as needed.

Entertainment

The following is a list of activities that can also enhance the daily routine of the individual requiring care:

- Check the TV listings and choose their favorite programs to watch during the day rather than having the TV on nonstop
- Read a book out loud
- Play a game together — board games, card games, and trivia games can help the time go quickly and enjoyably
- Eat lunch together
- Work on a puzzle or craft project together

Child Care Specific Tips

Definition of Back-Up Child Care

The definition of back-up child care is to take care of or tend to a child or children in the temporary absence of a parent or guardian. Taking care of children is all about responsibility. As long as you are on the job, you are in charge. Not only is it your responsibility to make sure the children are happy, you must keep them safe and meet their needs.

Child Safety

- Never leave a young child alone if they are awake
- Check on the child frequently if they are napping or sleeping
- Never leave a baby unattended on the changing table, in a high chair, bathtub, or walker
- If there are safety straps on anything, use them
- Never rest or sleep; stay alert at all times — you never know when the child may need you
- Never leave a child alone on a high place
- Never leave a child alone in a crib with the sides down
- Never smoke around a child
- Be careful of hot liquids you are eating or drinking
- Do not let the child play anywhere that you think may not be completely safe
- Keep the child away from closets, medicine chests, drawers, and storage locations, as these are not safe places to play and the child could get hurt
- Keep child away from hot objects, stove, iron, electrical appliances, and electrical outlets
- Make sure knives and scissors are out of reach
- Keep all small objects off the floor and out of the child's reach (buttons, pins, small toys, etc.)
- Don't bathe the children unless you are given explicit directions by the parent, and be very careful around water — it takes very little for a child to drown

- Be sure to cut food into very little pieces to prevent choking
- Avoid foods such as popcorn, hotdogs, grapes, and hard candy
- Make sure the child sits while eating
- Don't let the child play with garbage bags, plastic bags, pillows, or anything that could cover their face and impede their breathing
- Put gates across any steps or stairways
- Watch closely when older children play with a baby
- Never leave a child alone with a pet
- NEVER HIT OR SHAKE A BABY
- Remove strings or straps that may pose a threat to a child being strangled, including drapes, blinds, and electrical cords
- Close the bathroom door and keep the lid down on the toilet when not in use
- Be careful of furniture with sharp edges

While you are alone with a child, keep in mind that both the child and parents are counting on you to maintain safety and well being. In order to do so, you must keep yourself safe.

Toy Safety

- Be sure that any object small enough for a child to swallow is out of reach of the child
- Make sure that any toy you give the child to play with is safe with no long strings or cords
- Ensure that stuffed animals' eyes aren't loose before letting a child play with them
- Be sure that any toy you give a young child is age appropriate
- Keep balloons away from babies and small children as they can suck on them and asphyxiate

Outdoor Safety

- It is up to you to keep a child safe while playing outdoors; children are usually not aware of dangers so you must always watch them
- Do not let a child walk in front of a moving swing or glider
- Place the child in the center of a swing and make sure they can hold on or are in an infant seat
- Be careful playing with rings as a child's head could get caught
- Let the child know your expectations for outside behavior
- No pushing
- No climbing up the slide the wrong way
- No playing rough
- Children must take turns and go one at a time
- Be very cautious around any wading pools, swimming pools, spas, or hot tubs; keep close watch even if there is a cover or a fence
- Do not take your eyes off of the child around water
- Keep gates locked at all times

Discipline and Behavior Guidelines

- Instill discipline not punishment
- Children acting out or misbehaving is normal and part of their growing up
- It is up to you to always keep your cool and know how to act or respond appropriately
- It is not up to you to punish someone else's child
- Never hit, shake, slap, spank, lock up, punch, bite, shove, or raise your voice
- Never make fun of or ridicule a child
- Ask the client employee what would be appropriate for their child in the way of discipline

Below are some common reasons for a child's unhappiness or acting out:

- The child is tired and needs a nap
- The child is not feeling well
- The child is hungry or thirsty
- The child is over stimulated, bored, or needs attention
- The child is lonely, perhaps missing their parents
- The child is feeling frustrated
- The child is frightened around people she doesn't know
- The child needs a sense of control or power

Acceptable Consequences for Unacceptable Behavior

- Infants and toddlers are easily distracted. Divert their attention away from the problem and present them with another play activity.
- "Time out" or "calm time" works well; it gives the child time to settle down and think about their behavior. You must be soothing and calm while you do this. (Generally one minute per years old)
- If the behavior is not too disruptive you may choose to ignore it. Often it is a way for the child to try to get attention.
- Try to pay more attention to positive behavior.
- Often you can redirect their attention to more acceptable behavior.
- It is important to attempt to divert their negative energy to positive energy (e.g., if they are throwing a ball make up a game where they can roll the ball).

Feeding and Nutrition

Infants

It is important to relax when feeding an infant; they will be able to tell if you are nervous. There are only two options for feeding an infant; breast feeding and bottle feeding. Most babies drink formula for their feedings, however, breast milk may be provided beforehand by the infant's mother for you to use.

Remember to feed them only what you are told, NEVER substitute without permission and ask how much to give the infant at each feeding. If the bottle is to be warmed be sure and ask how they prefer you warm it (microwave, bottle warmer, etc.) If you heat the bottle make sure to check the temperature of the formula before feeding it to the baby. Always shake the bottle before you give it to the baby. Ask if the infant may also drink water or juice through out the day and how much is acceptable.

Bottle Feeding

- Find a comfortable chair
- Hold the baby on your lap with one arm around them so their neck is on the crook of your arm for support
- Keep the head higher than the body
- Brush a finger across the baby's cheek closest to your body, the baby should turn his/her face towards you and part his/her lips slightly
- Push the nipple of the bottle gently into the baby's open mouth, keep head and upper body raised at a slight angle so it is easy to swallow
- Tip the bottle up, keeping the nipple full to prevent the baby from swallowing air
- If the baby is drinking too slowly or having trouble sucking loosen lid slightly
- If the baby is drinking too fast tighten lid

Burping a Baby

- Make sure to burp the baby during and after feeding to help air escape from the baby's stomach
- Put a cloth towel or a diaper on your shoulder
- Hold the baby's head over your shoulder, or sit the baby on your lap gently supporting head and face by the chin
- Gently but firmly pat the baby's back to get the air bubbles up; the baby should give a little belch
- The baby may spit up some formula — this is normal

Solid Foods

Rice cereal is usually the first solid food that is introduced to the baby; fruit is usually next, followed by vegetables. Ask the parent or guardian what the baby may eat and how they prepare it so the baby will be fed in the manner they are familiar with.

Infants

- Hold the baby in sitting position or put him/her in a high chair
- If the baby is in a high chair be sure that she is securely in and do not leave him/her unattended
- Use a small, skinny spoon to feed the baby
- Put a small amount of food on the spoon
- Put the food towards the back of the baby's mouth
- Baby may spit food out as they are learning how to chew
- If baby spits the food out, repeat putting more back in his/her mouth
- Do not force the baby to eat
- If the baby will not eat, wait and try later
- Feeding time is messy; keep a moist cloth nearby to wipe his/her face
- Older infants and toddlers will grab the spoon to try to feed themselves

Toddlers

- Ask the parent or guardian what the child usually eats and how well they chew beforehand
- Toddlers like finger food because their use of utensils is limited
- Make sure the utensils the child uses are child sized
- Toddlers most often eat three meals a day
- Toddlers eat healthy snacks every two to three hours; ask the parent or guardian if acceptable
- All foods should be cut into very little bite size pieces for easy chewing and to prevent choking
- Ask if the baby sits in a high chair or booster seat at the table
- Remember it is important to maintain routine

Preschool and School-Age Children

- Ask parents or guardians what the child eats and about their eating habits — all children differ in their needs for food and their feelings about food; some children may be good eaters, others may be picky eaters
- Serve child-sized portions
- Do not force a child to eat
- Be patient
- Share with the parent or guardian upon their return how and what the child ate

Diapering and Toileting

Diapering

- When you are caring for a baby you will need to change their diaper (cloth diapers or disposable diapers) regularly or as necessary
- Wash your hands
- Gather all items that will be needed: clean diaper, wipes, ointment, lotion, or powder
- Put the baby on the changing table or other designated flat surface, **DO NOT LEAVE THE BABY UNATTENDED**, fasten safety restraint if there is one

- Be sure to ask where to dispose of dirty diapers
- Undo the corners of dirty diaper; use corners to remove any excess bowel movement
- Be aware that when you remove the diaper the baby may urinate, so have something handy to cover the appropriate area
- Gently hold the baby's ankles together with one hand to lift the baby's bottom off the table
- Use wipes to clean bottom, creases, and folds thoroughly
- If baby is female clean front to back to minimize chance of infection
- Apply lotion, ointment, or powder as directed; be sure to do so sparingly
- With bottom still in the air, slide out dirty diaper while folding it for disposal
- Lift the baby's bottom off the table and slide the new diaper under
- Keep half of the diaper under the baby's backside, pull the other half up and fold over the front of the baby (for a male, tuck his penis down so urine won't seep over the top)
- Attach the two ends in place
- Throw all used baby wipes into the dirty diaper before wrapping the diaper together
- Close the diaper tightly with the sticky tape and dispose where you have been directed
- Remember to wash your hands
- Remember, **DO NOT** leave the baby unattended on table

Toileting

Young children who have been toilet trained recently will still require your help when using the toilet. They will most likely need you to stay with them while they use the toilet. They may need help with the following:

- Undressing
- Wiping
- Redressing

Dressing Infants

- An infant is completely dependent upon you to dress them
- Ask the parents or guardian what they prefer that the baby wears
- Most often they will choose a onesie that is easy to put on

Toddler

- A toddler will still require that you either dress them or help them dress
- You will need to help them tie and zip even if they are in the “I can do it myself” phase
- Ask the parents or guardian what they wish them to wear

Preschool and School Age

- Most preschool children are able to dress themselves
- They enjoy making the choice of what to wear
- Help them with colors or outfits
- Help them with their hair and grooming
- Help them brush their teeth
- Ask parents or guardian what they prefer them to wear (the child may choose to wear a party dress to the park) and what is acceptable

Sleeping or Bedtime

Ask parents or guardian about the child’s bedtime routine, no matter what the age! It is important to follow their usual routine and bedtime rituals. This will help the child feel secure and get to sleep easier.

Infants

- It is not always easy to put an infant to sleep, so do not be surprised if it takes a lot of time and patience
- Younger infants will usually sleep when tired
- If an infant gets overtired they may have difficulty settling down to sleep
- If there is a rocking chair, the motion will calm fussy babies

- If no rocking chair is present, rock the baby in your arms; gentle rhythmic motion helps
- Fresh air also helps to put the baby to sleep. With permission, take the baby for a walk in the carriage or stroller
- Play calm music or gently pat the baby on the back and hum softly
- If the baby cries a little but remains fairly calm in bed, leave quietly
- Do not let the baby cry for more than a few minutes; help the baby relax and try to settle him/her down
- Place the baby on its back to sleep

Toddler

- Ask the parent or guardian what the child’s bedtime routine is; it is important to be consistent and follow rituals
- Toddlers would rather play than sleep so be sure to help them calm down by reading a story or book to read
- Once they are relaxed, they should sleep

Preschool

- Ask the parent or guardian what the child’s bedtime routine is (It is important to be consistent and follow whatever ritual the child is used to)
- Engage the child in calm, quiet time activities before bedtime: read a book, play imaginary games, help them close their eyes and pretend
- Keep watching the child (If unsupervised, they may get into an unsafe situation)

School-Age Children

- Ask the parents or guardian if there are any bedtime rituals to follow
- Be sure to ask what time the child is to be put in bed, and what time is “lights out”
- Older children may choose to relax by themselves by reading in bed

- If the child has had a very active day or is over tired you may need to help calm them down, listening to music, reading to them, or playing imaginary games
- If they can't sleep at night because they miss their parents, reassure them that when they wake up their parents will be home

Play Activities (Keeping the Child Occupied)

Children of different ages have different needs. These needs are based on different levels of growth and development. No two children of the same age are the same, but they may have similarities. Each child has unique traits and characteristics for the caregiver to try to understand. The single most important gift we can give to any child is to help them feel good about themselves.

There are two important things to keep in mind when planning activities for a child. First, ensure the activity is age appropriate. Secondly, always try to plan activities that are developmentally appropriate for the child. If one follows those two important factors then children will not only have fun with the planned activity, but it will also prove as a positive learning experience.

There are some activities that are appropriate for children of all ages. With parent or guardian permission, children may enjoy the playground or just playing in the yard. Encourage children to use their imagination no matter what age they are and they will have fun.

Children need supervision at all times and may never be unattended. It only takes a small amount of water or taking your eye off the child for a moment to turn a fun activity into a tragedy. Never let children out of your sight, not even for a moment. You must be responsible and attentive at all times.

Infants

- Young babies will respond to singing, being rocked, and being held
- Young babies will enjoy your talking to them; as you go through the day keep explaining what you are doing
- Babies are attracted to brightly colored toys
- Babies like to be outdoors on a nice day (bundle them up appropriately)
- Babies enjoy playing with rattles or any toys that they can hold and make noise with
- Babies will respond to music that you play to them
- Babies are tactile and enjoy holding soft stuffed animals or small blankets
- If the baby is crawling, have a clean space for them to do so; put bright toys around so they can reach out for them or try to crawl to them
- Babies love to be read to and especially like books with brightly colored pictures
- Keep in mind that babies will put everything in their mouths, so be sure to keep their toys clean, and only offer toys that are large enough that they cannot swallow them

Toddlers

- Toddlers are very curious
- Toddlers like to put things inside of other things
- Find a box or a can and let the toddler put a variety of objects inside
- Toddlers love to play with clay and play dough
- Toddlers will enjoy reading books and playing ball with you
- Toddlers like to draw and paint; give them short, fat, unwrapped crayons and paper bags and they will have fun drawing on them
- Toddlers often like to play with boxes that toys or other household goods come in; let them draw, paint and pretend with them
- Playing house with dolls, dishes, spoons, and any other housekeeping items is a favorite of many toddlers

- Since toddlers are just mastering walking and running, they love to go for walks (but be sure to hold their hand)
- Toddlers may be able to use child safe swings with special seats and may even enjoy low slides, however you must watch them carefully and help them when needed

Preschool

- Preschoolers like to pretend; they are learning how to share and are developing imaginations — there are many play activities that you could do with them to help them pretend and imagine (e.g., you could set up a grocery store, an ice cream store, or even make a pretend beach)
- Preschool children like to run, jump, ride tricycles, play ball, and color with crayons
- They will enjoy playing in the sand, they can have fun with muffin pans, rolling pins, and any other container or utensil that the parents or guardian say they may use
- Preschoolers love bubbles, whether they are store bought or homemade
- Blocks, Legos, or anything else that can be piled or built will be a favorite

School-Age Children

School-age children will enjoy many of the same activities that toddlers and preschool children like. These activities may include singing, dancing, pretending, running, and jumping. To make activities more age appropriate, add more toys and let them play by themselves with supervision.

- School-age children are very active
- Older school-age children will like games that are competitive like kickball or basketball
- This is the stage when girls like to play with girls and boys prefer playing with boys
- School-age children may enjoy playing alone

Television

Parents or guardians must always be consulted regarding television and movie watching. They need to let you know what shows children are allowed to watch and if there is a time restriction on the length of time permitted. The television should be used only as a learning tool while the children are in your care. At no time should you watch any adult programs or entertainment while you are caring for children.

Home Computer Systems

Since most homes have computers most children are familiar with them. You must ask the parent or guardian about their rules regarding computer use. Always supervise children when they are on the computer, even if they are playing a computer game. This is not an opportunity for you to check your e-mail. There is no reason that you should use the computer.

Attending to Mildly Ill Children

- Having accepted a mildly ill child care request, during the introductory call with the parents, discuss the details of the child's illness and the expectations for care. Keep in mind you are not allowed to administer any type of medication. If the parents are expecting this (even if it's just Tylenol), inform them that it is a Bright Horizons policy that caregivers cannot dispense medication. Direct them to contact Bright Horizons for further details while you contact your agency to alert them of the issue.
- Upon arrival to the client's home, review with the parents the child's current condition regarding their illness. Ask if they are feeling any better. How is their mood? How did they sleep? Do they have an appetite? Are there any toileting/diaper changes?
- Write down the care expectations for your reference and be prepared to monitor and discuss the child's behavior with the parents at the end of the care. Ask the parents how best to console the child if they should become irritable or upset.

- If the child will be napping throughout the day and/or for long periods of time, ask the parents how they would prefer you to occupy your time during nap time. It is not acceptable for you to sleep. The child could wake and move around the house without your knowledge. Ask if there are light housekeeping duties you can assist with. Avoid watching television, making personal calls, etc.
- Look in on the child periodically while they nap and take note of any irregularities in their sleeping pattern.
- Keep the child comfortable and engaged in activities that don't over stimulate them for long periods of time. Their bodies are recovering from illness so it is important they do not over exert themselves.
- If the child has a runny nose, wipe their nose regularly, but take care to not rub roughly. Use a damp cloth occasionally to avoid chapping the skin. Be sure to wash your hands and the child's hands afterward. Use a soapy cloth to wipe the infant's hands.

Appropriate Practices When Clients are Working from Home

When clients are working from home, it is especially important to be clear on the routine for the day as to not disturb them.

- It is generally more difficult to occupy a child when they know their parent is home. You will need to engage them in activities that will take their mind off of the fact that mom or dad is in the home. Keeping them busy and occupied will help. Perhaps you can set up times where the parent will come for a few minutes to break up the day for their child.
- Clarify if they will be taking breaks to spend time with the child or will be joining them for lunch. This will prepare you for how to transition with the child for the arrivals and departures of the parent or guardian.
- If you have permission to take the child outside or on a walk, review with the parent that you will be alerting them to your departure time and return time. Inform them of your exact route and ask how long an acceptable time is for you and the child to be out. You are not permitted to take the child out of the vicinity of the home if you do not have an operable cell phone with you. You must leave your phone number with the parent as well as get the best number for you to reach them.
- Inquire with the parents at the start of care how they would prefer you to occupy your time when the child is napping. It is not acceptable for you to sleep at any time. The child can wake at any time and move around the house without your knowledge. Ask if you can assist with light housekeeping duties while periodically looking in on the child.

Child Care Competency Examination

Circle the correct answer for each question. Answer key and verification form located at the end of exam.

1. You have just returned home from a long assignment and are looking forward to eating dinner and going to bed. You remember that your agency booked you for a child care case for Bright Horizons at 8 a.m. tomorrow morning. You know that you need to call the family to introduce yourself and get directions. After eating dinner you go online and map the directions to the house. You decide that since you know the way to the house there is no need to call the family.

True False

2. You have been assigned to a case where you will be caring for two children. The case is supposed to start at 7:30 a.m. As you are on your way you realize that you need to stop at the cleaners to pick up a uniform. This stop is on the way and will only make you ten minutes late. You are sure the mother won't mind as it is right on your way.

True False

3. While you are speaking with the parents during the introductory phone call, the mother asks about your child care experience. You tell her:

- a) "I really prefer taking care of seniors, but told the agency I would do them a favor since no one else was available to do the case."
- b) "I love children and am looking forward to playing with yours tomorrow. The last time I cared for a child we had such a nice day that she cried when I left."
- c) "I haven't done child care for a while but I am sure I will be ok with your 3 year old."

4. It is not that important to listen to the parents and ask questions during your orientation. You have children of your own and know how you want to do everything. When they leave you can do it your way.

True False

5. When the parents return home be sure to have your coat on and be ready to rush out the door. Don't forget to have them pay you for your visit.

True False

6. You are caring for two children ages 3 and 6. The doorbell rings but the client has not informed you that they were expecting anyone to come and visit, nor were you informed of an expected delivery. You should:

- a) Yell "Who is it?" through the door in order to determine if you should let them in
- b) Send the child you are caring for to the door
- c) Ignore the doorbell; you are not expecting any visitors (If the person persists call the client for direction and your agency)
- d) Tell the person at the door that you are alone with the children and are not able to open the door

7. When caring for children, you should let them play video games and watch television for as long as they want. You will only be there for one day and you want them to like you.

True False

8. It is important that babies never sleep on their stomach even if they are more comfortable this way.

True False

9. You are caring for a 6-month-old baby; the baby is napping. It is ok to use the family computer to check your e-mail or to use the telephone to call your family.

True False

10. You are caring for a 9-month-old baby; she wakes up from her nap fussy and with a fever. You should:

- a) Let the baby cry in her crib; perhaps if she goes back to sleep she will feel better
- b) Give the baby Tylenol and rock her to soothe her
- c) Call the parents and your agency for directions while keeping the baby calm

11. You are caring for a 3-year-old boy who loves to play with blocks. After fifteen minutes of building with him he suddenly starts throwing the blocks. You should:

- a) Spank him and send him to his room
- b) Ignore him; he will stop on his own
- c) Use time out as directed by parent or divert his attention away from the blocks and introduce a new activity

12. You are caring for two children ages 2 and 4; it is time for lunch. Their mother told you to feed them macaroni and cheese or a peanut butter and jelly sandwich. The children refuse to eat what you prepare; they want cookies for lunch! You should:

- a) Send them to their rooms with no lunch
- b) Let them have the cookies as the mother will never find out and you want the children to be happy
- c) Explain that they first need to eat what their mother left for them and then they may have dessert

13. You are caring for a 3-month-old baby; the parent told you she does not turn over yet. You have her on the changing table but notice that there are no more diapers under the table. You pick up the baby and walk into the other room to get more diapers. You know it is never ok to leave her unattended even for a few minutes. It doesn't matter that the mother said she does not roll over yet.

True False

14. You are caring for a 10-month-old baby who seems to be fussy. The parents did not tell you to bathe the child but you know through experience that a bath will calm the baby down. You should:

- a) Put the baby in the tub and proceed to bathe him
- b) Put them in their crib and ignore them
- c) Only once you have exhausted all the suggested techniques from the guardian and all common practices (singing, rocking, distracting with toys, etc), call the parents FIRST for permission before bathing the child

15. You are caring for two children ages 6 and 8. They have played video games for two hours. The parents told you that two hours of video games is the limit. You inform the children that they have reached their limit on the video games and they need to find another activity. They ask you "What do we do now?" You reply:

- a) "How should I know? Don't you have other games to play?"
- b) "If you are bored go take a nap."
- c) "Let's find a board game to play. Do you think you can beat me in a board game?"

16. You arrive at the home where you will be caring for a 10-month-old child. The mother informs you she will be working from home and you need to keep the baby occupied. The mother leaves the room and the baby is crying. You should:

- a) Let the baby crawl to the door where his mother is working and cry until the mother lets him in
- b) Knock on the door of the mother's office and tell her this is not working as the baby only wants to be with you
- c) Take the baby into another room and read a book or interest him in another activity to occupy him and take his mind off the fact that his mother is home

17. You are caring for a 3 year old. The parents told you they would be home by 5:00 p.m. It is now 5:15 and they are not home. It is OK to take the baby to the next door neighbor and leave her there until the parents pick her up.

True False

18. You are on an assignment and the phone rings. It is your aunt that watches your children. She is taking your children for a ride and would like to stop over and visit with you and see where you are. You tell her that since the child you are caring for is the same age as your own daughter to bring her over and let them play for a while.

True False

19. You are caring for a 6 year old who has a cold and cannot go to school. You have really enjoyed caring for and playing with this child. At the end of the day when the parents return the child tells them what a great day he had and he wants you to come back and play with him. The parents decide he is still unable to go to school tomorrow, so they ask if you will come back for the next two days. You:

- a) Tell them you would be happy to
- b) Tell them they have to call Bright Horizons
- c) Tell them that you will work out a deal with them, and do it on your own
- d) Tell them you are busy

20. You have just completed your first child care assignment for your agency. You have completed this child care module, passed the test, and have child care training. You were nervous and anxious all day and not very comfortable around the children. You are really glad that the day is over. You have never had any of these feelings while caring for seniors. You should:

- a) Not say anything to anyone because you need all the work you can get
- b) Tell your agency that you are ready for your next child care assignment because you think you will get used to it
- c) Acknowledge the fact that not everyone enjoys child care and tell your agency that you want to specialize in adult or senior care

21. You are caring for a 2 year old. You are playing on the floor when he falls and bumps his lip. It is swollen. You should:

- a) Put ice on it and tell him he'll feel better soon
- b) Scold him for being careless
- c) Call the employee and your agency just to give them a heads-up of the situation