

If You Have Decided That Your Child Can Stay Safely At Home Alone, Do The Following First:

1. **Have a trial period**—begin with short periods of time while staying close to home
2. **Role play**—act out possible situations and have your child practice his or her response
3. **Establish rules**—make sure your child knows what he/she is or is not allowed to do while home alone
4. **Check in**—call your child while you are away to see how he/she is doing
5. **Talk about it**—encourage your child to share his/her feelings about staying home alone
6. **Do NOT overdo it**—Even a mature, responsible child should not be left home alone too much

Legal Guidelines

Leaving a young or disabled child home unsupervised can be considered child neglect under the Juvenile Act of Pennsylvania.

For information and guidance on this subject, you can contact:

Childhelp (National)
1-800-422-04453

ChildLine (Pennsylvania)
1-800-932-0313

Montgomery County Office of
Children & Youth (Local)
610-278-5800



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James R. Matthews, Chairman
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Montgomery County Office
Of Children and Youth
Human Services Center
1430 DeKalb Street, P. O. Box 311
Norristown, PA 19404-0311

Eastern Regional Office
Courthouse Annex
102 York Road, Suite 402
Willow Grove, PA 19090-3280

Western Regional Office
364 King Street, 2nd Floor
Pottstown, PA 19464

www.montcopa.org/mcocy

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What To Consider BEFORE Leaving Your Child Home Alone



Tips For Parents Making Difficult Decisions:

- *Child Safety*
- *Security*
- *Legal Issues*

What to Consider ***Before*** Leaving Your Child Home Alone:

- Child's Physical Abilities
- Child's Mental Capacity
- Child's Emotional Maturity
- Child's Intellectual Level



Important Circumstances To Consider ***Before*** Leaving Your Child Home Alone:

1. How long will your child be left alone?
2. Will it be during the day or at night?
3. Will he or she need to fix a meal?
4. How many children are being left home alone?
5. Will the care of younger siblings be necessary?
6. Is your home safe and free of hazards?
7. How safe is your neighborhood?

DO NOT RUSH INTO A DECISION TO LEAVE A CHILD HOME ALONE. CAREFUL PLANNING AND ADEQUATE PREPARATION IS NECESSARY. REVIEW ALL QUESTIONS IN THIS BROCHURE BEFORE REACHING A DECISION TO LEAVE YOUR CHILD HOME ALONE.

Safety Skills:

1. Is there a plan in place in the event of an emergency?
2. Does your child know the safety plan in an emergency?
3. Does your child know his or her full name, address, and phone number?
4. Does your child know where you are and how to contact you?
5. Does your child know how to contact another trusted, helpful adult for assistance if you are not reachable?
6. Do you have emergency numbers posted including police, fire, ambulance and poison control?



Questions to Think About:

1. Is your child physically and mentally able to care for him or herself?
2. Does your child obey rules and make good decisions?
3. Does your child feel comfortable or fearful about being home alone?

