

Home Alone

WHAT TO DO TO ENSURE SUCCESS



If you think your son or daughter is ready to handle this new responsibility, use the following steps as a guide.

Talk about what an emergency means. Practice with your child about what to say if calling 911.

Consider acting out some **"what if" situations** with your child to discuss how to respond. For example:

- * **What if the smoke detector goes off?**
- * **What if you lose the key?**
- * **What if an unknown adult at the door says, "Your mother has been in an accident and you need to come with me right now."?**
- * **What if you become injured?**

Help your child adjust to being alone in stages. Leave your child alone for 30 minutes. Gradually increase the time.

Call when you will be late arriving home. Keep your child from worrying.

Be clear about your expectations. Do you want homework done? Can your child cook? Do you want chores completed? Are any activities off-limits?

For safety, consider these rules for your child to follow:

- **Avoid telling callers he or she is home alone.** Keep that information off of social media, too.
- **Never open the door.** This can change if given permission.
- **Exit the house immediately if there is a fire.** Call 911 outside of the home.
- **Stay inside.** Ignore friends tempting you to come outdoors.
- **Always call a parent** or designated adult to check in.
- **Lock the door.** Develop the habit of locking the door and placing your key in the same spot.

**Staying home alone shows your child is gaining independence.
With guidance, your son or daughter can make this transition safely.**