PRUDENT PARENT STANDARDS

SENATE BILL (SB) 358
USE OF OCCASIONAL SHORT TERM BABYSITTERS
LEGISLATION

EFFECTIVE JANUARY 1, 2006

SB 358 ~ authorizes a Caregiver to arrange for occasional short-term babysitting of their foster children without requiring the babysitter to undergo a Criminal Record Background Check, FBI check, Child Abuse Index check, Health Screening or CPR training

All County Letter (ACL) 06-02 March 7, 2006
LEGISLATION

- SB 358 – Eliminated regulatory barriers (Fingerprints / Child abuse Index Check) & allows a caregiver to select a babysitter using the reasonable and prudent parent standard

- If it is determined the caregiver did not provide or make an effort to provide the babysitter with pertinent information they may be cited under 362.04 Welfare and Institutions Code

- 1522(b) Health and Safety Code
OCCASIONAL SHORT TERM BABYSITTERS

- Short Term – not more than 24 consecutive hours
- “Reasonable & Prudent Parent Standards” – the standard characterized by careful & sensible parental decisions that maintain the child’s health, safety and best interest.
Occasional Short-Term Babysitting:

- May be used for, but is not limited to –
  - Medical appointment
  - Grocery Shopping
  - Special Occasions for Foster Parents
  - Adult Social Gatherings (etc. bowling)
  - Training Conferences
MAKING CAREFUL & SENSIBLE PARENTAL DECISIONS

Consider the child’s:
- Age
- Maturity
- Mental & Physical Health
- Developmental Level
- Behavioral Propensities
- Aptitude of the Child
- Ability of the Babysitter to Provide Appropriate Care
INFORMATION FOR THE BABYSITTER

- Information about the foster child’s emotional, behavioral, medical/physical conditions, if any.
- Any medications that should be administered to the foster child(ren) while being supervised by the babysitter.
- Current emergency contact information
MAKING CAREFUL & SENSIBLE PARENTAL DECISIONS

The Foster Parent needs to weigh the foreseeable risks in leaving the foster child with a babysitter.

The Foster Parent may need to discuss their concerns with the child’s social worker if they are still unsure about the use of an occasional babysitter or extracurricular activity.
A foster parent would like to get a babysitter because the foster parent wants to go to a concert. The foster parent contacts his sister and asks if she would baby-sit 2 foster children ages 6 and 4. The foster children have been in the home for 6 months and have some difficulty getting to sleep at night........
YOUR CHOICES ARE:

- Not a reasonable decision to be made by out-of-home caregivers
- Decision that should be discussed with the social worker
- Falls within the reasonable and prudent parent standards
A 16-year old would like to attend a one-day ski class with his high school. The trip requires a permission slip to be signed. The 16-year old has been in the foster home for 3 months and has been doing well.
WHAT ARE REASONABLE DECISIONS?

Foster parents go on a getaway weekend and leave 2 foster children, ages 12 and 15, with the foster aunt and uncle and their children.
WHAT ARE REASONABLE DECISIONS?

A foster parent asks her 17-year old daughter to watch her foster children, ages 4 and 8 for 90 minutes so she can get her hair done. The daughter knows about the children and their behavior and knows how to reach the foster mother in an emergency.
Babysitting Safety Checklist

Address & Phone Number:
Location of Foster Parents if emergency arises
Cell phone number's:
Emergency Neighbor contact:
Child/(ren’s) Doctor & phone number:
Physical Health of child:
Allergies:
Medications:
Behavioral Propensities:
Special instructions or routines to follow:
Difficulty Sleeping or prefers a Night light:
Babysitting Safety Checklist

EMERGENCY INFORMATION

POLICE:
FIRE DEPARTMENT:
EMERGENCY RESCUE SQUAD:
POISON CONTROL CENTER:
The provisions of SB 358 apply only to occasional, short-term care (less than 24 hours), babysitters should not be interpreted or applied to respite care providers who are allowed to care for foster children for more than 24 hours.