

Are pre-teen babysitters able to deal with emergencies?

October 3 2010

Nearly all (98 percent) of 11- to 13-year-old babysitters know who to contact in the event of an intruder or if a child is sick or injured (96 percent) or poisoned (85 percent), according to research presented Sunday, Oct. 3, at the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) National Conference and Exhibition in San Francisco. However, 40 percent of younger babysitters reported that they had left children unattended while babysitting, and 20 percent opened the door to strangers.

In the study, "Babysitter Safety Training: Are [Children](#) Aged 11-13 Years Prepared to Deal with Emergencies While Caring for Younger Children?" researchers surveyed 727 pre-teens who have cared for a younger infant or child as a babysitter.

Fifty-one percent of the children interviewed had taken a first-aid training class; 47 percent, a class in cardio-pulmonary resuscitation, and 19 percent, the American Red Cross Safe Sitter or other babysitter class. Ninety-two percent of pre-teen babysitters were familiar with the location of first aid supplies and 64 percent with the location of a fire extinguisher. Ten percent of pre-teen babysitters have had a personal experience with an emergency requiring 911 activation: 10 respondents called 911 after a child sustained injuries from a significant fall, eight because of a house fire, six because a child had profuse bleeding from a laceration, and six for a significant head trauma.

The study provided a snapshot of pre-teen babysitter strengths and weaknesses, said lead study author Nicole M. Hackman, MD, FAAP, of

Penn State Hershey Children's Hospital. "By identifying the unsafe behaviors, we have the opportunity to design specific educational programs to prepare pre-teen babysitters to safely respond to common [emergency situations](#)."

Provided by American Academy of Pediatrics

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