

# USING CAMP STAFF AS BABY-SITTERS

As professionals in the camping industry, we would like to share some concerns regarding using our staff as baby-sitters. While we fully understand the desire of our parent population to use staff as baby-sitters, the practice can create some real problems that parents may not have considered, and we would like to share.

1. Think about what happens when a teacher chooses to baby-sit for one family yet refuses to baby-sit for another. How might that dynamic affect the interpersonal relationships?
2. Friendships between parents and staff can lead to inappropriate discussions concerning other children and other staff members. Discussions and comments about other children of Camp Doodles employees are not professional and reflect poorly on everyone. Parent concerns, complaints or questions need to be brought directly to the attention of the site administrators. These are the correct people to address worries or problems. **Privacy and confidentiality need to be respected at all times.**
3. Parents should not put a staff members name down on Emergency Contact Lists as people to contact. Imagine the level of discord if a staff member is expected to leave camp to take just one child home.
4. **Parents should not ask teachers to take care of children when they are away or out of town.** It places the staff member in an unfair position if they must choose between their responsibility for a group of 8-15 children and the one child at home. This is not fair to the other children and staff members who rely on their attendance.
5. **Camp staff members are NOT to drive children to or from camp** or on fields trips in their own car or in any other car, so please don't make that request.
6. When a staff member baby-sits for one child or spends time with one child out of the classroom, that child knows the teacher better than the other children. This creates a feeling of "specialness" that often makes the other children feel diminished.
7. While staff members are at camp, there is a set level of supervision where directors and other specially trained staff members are available to assist or take control in difficult situations or in the event of an emergency.

Our staff members also have strict policies forbidding staff members from being alone with campers, to eliminate any possible misunderstandings and restrict inappropriate behavior, language, etc. A staff member at your house does not have the same support structure readily available or the supervision required by Camp Doodles.

8. The Camp Doodles, Inc. administration feels it is inappropriate and asks parents NOT to employ camp staff members for child-care. Despite interviews, reference checks and any other methods used to check backgrounds of our employees, statistics according to the National Foundation to Prevent Child Sexual Abuse (NFPCSA) taken from recent retrospective studies of adults suggest that one of three girls and one of six boys will be subjected to some form of sexual abuse by age eighteen. These studies further indicate that 46 percent of child molesters are non-family members who are known to their victims.

We realize that the baby-sitting situation can be challenging at times and appreciate your help in refraining from using our camp staff as babysitters.