

Parent Safety Checklist

- Establish house rules and safety procedures and write them down.
- Make a list of play rules. Is it okay to play outside? When? Where?
- Determine who, if anyone, is allowed in the house.
- Create computer/phone/texting rules and limits.
- Discuss snack and cooking rules.
- Create and rehearse safety plans for fire, tornadoes, power outages, etc.
- Have flashlights with fresh batteries in easily accessible places.
- Practice how the phone should be answered and how to make a 911 call.
- Make sure your child knows basic first aid and where the first aid kit is located.
- Establish a “code word” to use if you need to communicate with your child through another person.
- Be sure that medications and dangerous chemicals are out of reach.
- If you have a gun in your home, be sure it is unloaded and safely locked in a secure place. Store ammunition separately from firearms.



Stark County Job & Family Services

Division of Human Services

221 3rd St. SE, Canton, OH 44702
Cash, food, & medical assistance applications
Customer service: 1-844-640-OHIO (6446)
Child Care: 330-452-4661

Division of Children Services

402 2nd St. SE, Canton, OH 44702
Report child abuse and neglect: 330-455-KIDS
Foster care and adoption: 330-451-8789

Division of Child Support

221 3rd St. SE, Canton, OH 44702
Customer service: 330-451-8930
Payment information: JFS.ohio.gov/ocs

Executive Offices

221 3rd St. SE, Canton, OH 44702
Customer service: 330-452-4661

Visit our website at
StarkCountyJFS.gov



Home Alone

Is your child ready?

Division of Children Services



Stark County Job & Family Services
221 3rd St. SE, Canton, OH 44702
Phone: 330-451-8033
StarkCountyJFS.gov



Home Alone - Is your child ready?

In Ohio there are no specific laws that define the age at which a child is old enough to be left alone. Parents, however, are responsible for the safety and protection of their child, and must decide their proper care and supervision. As a parent, you will decide when your child is ready to be home alone.

There is no magic age at which a child is ready to stay home alone. Children must have the maturity to know how to follow directions and rules, be self-sufficient, stay safe, respond to emergencies and be comfortable being alone. If a child is not able to do these things, he or she is not ready to stay home alone. The following information is provided to help you with that decision.

General Guidelines: Staying Home Alone

These are general recommendations and you must decide if they are right for your child, or if your child is not yet comfortable with staying home alone.

Age 6 and Under

Children under the age of six should never be left without direct supervision, even for a short period of time. They should never be permitted to cook.

Ages 7 to 10

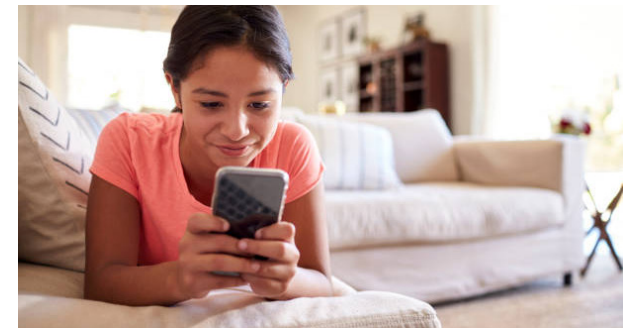
Rarely, if ever should children between the ages of seven and ten be left unattended. Children in this age range who exhibit greater maturity and dependability may be left alone for a very short time, generally 20 minutes or less. In general, children under ten should not be allowed to cook without supervision.

Ages 11 to 14

Children in this age range generally do not need a sitter if the parent is absent for a few hours. However, if the parent is regularly gone for long periods, such as with a regular work schedule, adult supervision is advisable.

Age 15 and Over

Most children do not need a sitter by the time they are fifteen years old. Some children in this age range still need direct supervision, however, particularly if they have developmental delays or require specialized care of any kind.



Readiness Factors

When deciding if your child is ready to be home alone the following are important to consider:

Physical Readiness

Is your child able to:

- Lock and unlock doors and windows
- Make a phone call
- Safely operate appliances such as a microwave or stove top

Intellectual Readiness

Is your child able to:

- Understand concepts such as “stranger” and “emergency”
- Answer a phone and take a message and give appropriate information
- Read a written note or instructions from you
- Follow and give directions
- Know how to tell time and understand its meaning. For example, if you tell your child you will be home in an hour, will he or she understand what that means?
- Understand safety/emergency procedures
- Assess a situation and decide if help is needed

Social/Emotional Readiness

- Is your child comfortable with being home alone, or with younger siblings?
- Does your child feel confident in his/her ability to take care of him/her self?
- If the thought of being home alone causes your child anxiety/nervousness, then he/she is not ready.