

Home Alone Safety

A Guide to Help Parents Decide if Their Child is Ready to Stay Home Alone

There is no magic age when children are ready to be left home alone. Children mature at their own pace, but usually are ready to stay home alone for brief periods of time when they are 10-12 years of age.



CHILDREN WHO ARE READY ARE:

CONFIDENT

They are comfortable staying home alone; they are not afraid.

PREPARED

They know how to answer the phone, who to call for help, and what to do in an emergency.

INDEPENDENT

They get ready in the morning on their own and can prepare simple meals and snacks for themselves.

MAKE SURE YOUR CHILD KNOWS:

EMERGENCY NUMBERS

- 9-1-1 for emergencies
- Parents' work and cell phone numbers
- Poison Control 800-222-1222
- The phone number of an available back-up adult such as a relative or neighbor

SAFETY RULES

- Keep doors and windows locked and don't open for any reason.
- Don't post online that they are home alone, even within their social network of friends.
- Don't go outside without permission.