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home alone

HOME ALONE PLAN
FOR PARENTS

Structuring time

An important part of each family's home alone plan is how the children will use their time. Their use of time should be good for their development. Children have different needs for privacy, quiet time, and activity time. Children need to play, read, do homework, and talk with other children and adults for healthy development. Be sure to include some household chores. Researchers who followed children into adulthood found that children who are required to do chores tend to do better in life.

This tool can help you and your child structure time.

What time will the child be home alone?

From _____ to _____

What activities should they to do during this time?

Identify how long these should take and if there is a time by which they need to be finished.

Activity	Suggestions for use of time

Notes about my home alone time:

Tell mom and dad about _____

Things I need to know _____

Problems I had today _____

Today I feel… (Circle all that apply.)

happy lonely interested mad sad

upset scared excited bored glad

Here is a simple tool for your child to use to structure his/her home alone time.

My home alone activity plan _____day _____date

From_____to _____ I'll _____

From_____to _____ I'll _____

From_____to _____ I'll _____

From_____to _____ I'll _____

From_____to _____ I'll _____

From_____to _____ I'll _____

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Media as a home alone activity

In a national education study, students reported spending four times as many hours watching television each week as doing homework. Children who are heavy TV viewers (more than three hours a day) show the greatest decline in reading ability. Another study found that TV on in the background during homework time interfered with the retention of skills and information. These studies show a need for families to have a discussion about the use of TV and computer games during their home alone time.

Parents need to…

- set a good example with their own TV habits.
- keep the TV in a public part of the home. Monitor violence and sexual content.
- protect family time. Turn TV off during family meals and if no one is watching.
- set and enforce rules for TV and computer. Explain why the rules are important.
- watch TV as a family and talk about what you see, including commercials.

The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that children be allowed no more than two hours of television per day.