Choose Your Partner Carefully

Very few people believe that someone they love or trust could ever hurt their child. But it happens.

A TRAGEDY IN NEVADA
The Story of Baby Addison

On March 31, 2010, a mother took her 16-month-old daughter, Addison, to the hospital saying she had fallen from her crib, but police said the severity of her injuries were inconsistent with that explanation. The mother told police her boyfriend was babysitting Addison when her injuries occurred. While the boyfriend offered various explanations for Addison's injuries, police said none were credible. Additionally, he did not call 911 or make any attempt to get Addison medical help. While in surgery, doctors discovered that her skull above her right ear had been shattered; she suffered hemorrhaging in her brain, and died from her injuries two days later. The boyfriend pleaded guilty to the second-degree murder of baby Addison. This arrest came just eight months after a separate arrest for injuring his own six-week-old son who was treated for skull fractures, a broken nose, bruises, and abrasions after being left alone in his care. A background check may have prevented Addison from being entrusted in the care of an offender.

Addison is just one example of several child deaths in Nevada that have resulted from children being left in the hands of an inadequate caregiver.

WHAT CAN YOU DO?

- Get a background check on all roommates, partners, & care providers (e.g. family of partner). Also you can search Google, check social media, or check references for potential warning signs.
- Get to know your partner & pay attention to how they act with your child before leaving your child alone with them.
- Create a back-up plan with in case you suddenly need a caregiver.
- When you need to hire childcare, use a professional service who has screened potential caregivers.
- Ask your partner/caregiver what they did while you were gone.
- Teach your child(ren) that it is okay to talk to you about any problems or concerns they may have about your partner/caregiver.
- Teach your child(ren) the name of a trusted neighbor close to home who they can call or go to if they think they are in danger.
- Teach your child(ren) how and when to call 9-1-1.

IS YOUR CHILD AT RISK?
TAKE THE SAFETY TEST

CHOOSE YOUR PARTNER CAREFULLY
YOUR CHILD’S LIFE DEPENDS ON IT.

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To Report Suspected Child Abuse or Neglect Please Call:
Emergency: 9-1-1 OR
Child Protective Services: 1-800-992-5757

NEVADA’S RESOURCES

LICENSED CHILDCARE LOCATIONS:
health.nv.gov/childcare/ChildCareFacilityList.pdf

CHILDCARE SUBSIDY PROGRAMS:
Clark & Nye Counties: www.lvul.org
All other counties: www.childrenscabinet.org

DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HELP & LOCAL SHELTERS:
nnadv.org
National Domestic Violence Hotline:
1-800-799-7233

DIRECTORY FOR COMMUNITY RESOURCES:
Nevada 2-1-1
Call 2-1-1 or visit the website: www.nevada211.org

FREE PHONE APP:
Alert ID - Provides local crime and hazard updates
Most single parents never think that someone who cares about them, especially a boyfriend or girlfriend, could hurt their child.

Take the Safety Test:

Does your partner...

1. Enjoy spending time with you and your child?
2. Say nice things about both you and your child?
3. Talk to you and your child in a respectful way?
4. Give your child positive attention?
5. Listen to and respect you and your child's feelings?
6. Understand that children do different things at different ages?
7. Use positive discipline, like time-outs?
8. Take interest in your child's school work and activities?
9. Make you and your child feel special?
10. Make you and your child laugh and feel happy?
11. Make you and your child feel safe and secure?
12. Treat other women/men in his/her life with love and respect?
13. Treat other children (nieces, nephews, friends' children, etc.) with love and respect?

If you answered “YES” to these questions, the person is likely to be responsible and a great support to you and your child.

If you answered “NO” to even one of these questions, your child could be at risk.

Choosing the right person to care for your child is one of the most important decisions you can make.

You should know...

- Children living in a home with a mother and boyfriend are **11 times** more likely to be physically, sexually, or emotionally abused than children living with married parents.
- Children under five, who live with their mother's boyfriend or other non-relatives are **50 times** more likely to die from abuse.

**WARNING SIGNS:**

Know how to identify a potential abuser

**BEFORE** introducing him/her to your child:

- Initially charming
- Isolates you
- Controlling
- Jealous
- Unpredictable moods
- Extremely critical of you
- Cruel to animals
- Insists they are the victim

It’s not always easy to detect an abuser as some signs may not emerge right away.

Therefore, keep looking for warning signs.

**AFTER** introducing him/her to your child:

- Angry or impatient when children have tantrums, cry, or misbehave.
- Violent with you.
- Abusing alcohol/drugs, including marijuana.
- Using prescription medications that have negative side effects or make the person drowsy.

**WHEN CHOOSING SOMEONE TO CARE FOR YOUR CHILD, THEY SHOULD:**

- Have experience caring for babies and young children.
- Be patient and mature enough to care for an excited or crying baby.
- Understand that young children must always be watched.
- Never shake, hit, yell at, make fun of, or withhold food from a child as punishment.
- NOT abuse alcohol or drugs or illegally carry a weapon and will not surround a child with others who may be drinking, using drugs, or carrying weapons illegally.

A partner or caregiver should know what to do when your child won’t stop crying, such as...

- Check to see if he or she is hungry, wet, cold, hot, etc.
- Walk around holding the baby close in his or her arms or in a carrier; try talking, or singing to the baby.
- Call a trusted friend, relative, or neighbor who is able to come over and talk to him or her.
- If all else fails, put the baby in the crib on his or her back, making sure the child is safe—check in every five minutes or so... it is much better to let the baby cry than to do something to stop the crying that may be harmful.
- Never shake the baby—shaking a baby can cause bleeding in the brain, which can injure or kill a child. It takes only a few seconds of shaking to seriously hurt a baby's brain.