

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services and Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota

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Resources Available to Help Parents Make Summertime Child Care Decisions

BISMARCK, N.D. – When is my child old enough to stay home alone? What is the appropriate age to let my child babysit siblings or neighbor children? What community resources and activities are available that could benefit my children this summer? These are some of the many questions parents and caregivers have when deciding on the appropriate level of care and supervision for their children during the summer months.

The N.D. Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division and Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota have created an informational brochure called "*Home Alone: Is Your Child Ready?*" to provide guidance and answers to some of the most commonly asked child supervision questions.

"It can be a challenge for parents when deciding whether their child is ready to stay at home alone because kids mature at different stages and there is no 'magic' age," said Marlys Baker, children protection services administrator for the N.D. Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division.

The brochure highlights guidelines and factors parents should consider when making child supervision decisions including the age and emotional well-being of their child, self-care readiness, home safety strategies, and environmental conditions. There are also tips that can help make staying home alone a positive experience for both children and parents.

"When parents have decided that their children are not old enough to stay home alone during the summer, there are numerous other resources available that can help keep their children busy in fun and safe ways," said Tim Hathaway, executive director, Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota. "School newsletters, local parks and recreation offices and community recreation centers can be an excellence source for information on supervised summer activities for kids."

The "*Home Alone: Is Your Child Ready?*" brochure and other resources are available online at <http://www.stopchildabusend.com/resources/publications.html> or by calling Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota at 1-800-403-9932.

N.D. Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division together with other partners such as Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota work to strengthen families and promote child well-being.

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