

NEWS from the North Dakota Department of Human Services 600 East Boulevard Avenue, Bismarck ND 58505

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 15, 2014

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Letting Kids Stay Home Alone; Publication Offers Tips for Parents Making Summertime Child Care Decisions

BISMARCK, N.D. - As parents and caregivers begin making summertime child care decisions, many questions may arise about whether or not their children are ready to stay home alone or babysit siblings or neighbor children. 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.

"Children mature at different stages and there is no magic age when they are ready to stay home alone," said Marlys Baker, children protection services administrator for the N.D. Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division. "This resource helps parents make decisions on safe child supervision practices."

The *Home Alone: Is Your Child Ready?* brochure highlights guidelines and factors parents should consider including the age, maturity, 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 excellent source for information on supervised summer activities for kids."

The "*Home Alone: Is Your Child Ready?*" brochure is online at www.stopchildabusend.com/images/stories/Home_Alone_Brochure_lowres.pdf. Other child abuse prevention resources are available online at www.pcand.org or by calling Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota at 701-223-9052 or toll free 800-403-9932.

N.D. Department of Human Services' Children and Family Services Division together with Prevent Child Abuse North Dakota, North Dakota State University Extension Service, and other public and private partners work to strengthen families and promote child well-being.

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