

This Baby-Sitter Is Sympathetic To Young Parents

To the Editor: The articles on "Baby Sitting" which have appeared recently in the Birmingham Eccentric have interested me intensely, and despite the fact that I am somewhat of a novice at this work, and probably not entitled to any opinions on the subject, because of that fact, the urge to put in my two cents' worth" is too strong for me to resist!

So, here's how I feel about it: I feel that when young parents call upon me to stay with their small fry, they are reposing in me a great trust, a great responsibility, and even tho' the services I render may be too cheap (or too expensive) at 60c an hour, nevertheless I may accept or decline to do so, whichever I choose.

This decision is strictly up to me, and if I accept it I must also accept whatever responsibility is entailed.

It is difficult to put a price on "service." One can't be too amenable to the bill, expecting and hoping to collect a dime, yet if one does have a smattering of protection has proved worth the cost.

TO ME "baby sitting" comes to some extent under the insurance classification. If Junior has a convulsion during mama's and papa's absence, I call the doctor and keep things under control as best I can, until the parents of Junior return. If the furnace blows up, I call the fire department, or if some night prowler attempts to jimmy the basement window, I call the law. See what I mean? It is a part of insurance we baby-sitters supply, isn't it?

To be sure the enumerated incidents rarely happen, but one never knows!

CHILDREN ARE precious possessions, just as precious or more precious than anything else in the world and I really and truly do believe that no price is too high to pay for their protection and care, and even tho' one an hour does not indicate a professional belief, it is my sincere belief that the profession of "baby-sitting" does have some claim to that cognation.

I have not yet been called upon to bathe the baby and if such a request were made I would decline. I do not wash the dinner dishes (unless I have parakeets in the meal, along with the children) but if the spirit moves me to do so, if the table has been left standing with the dishes on it, I may, (if the spirit moves me) clear it off, rinse the plates, and wash and stack them so the tired young mother will find it easier to wash next morning.

I HAVE been known, too, to go so far as to brush the crumbs off the table! Probably if I had been asked to do this myself (1) labor time and that necessary food is in the house for the children.

See that your children are well enough to leave because your sister should not be expected to give medication. She is not a trained nurse.

See that your home is comfortable warm since your sister is a warm home only to find a cold, chilly one.

Be sure and provide ample meals or lunch when the sitter is obliged to remain through a meal time and that necessary food is in the house for the children.

Keep your appointment with her or give her simple notice in case of cancellation. Be fair if this cannot be done and pay her a minimum fee of \$3, so her entire night's work is not lost.

See that your home is ready so that she will not have to carry a large amount of cash to make change. Have her fee agreed on before you engage her.

DO NOT ask your sitter to do extra cleaning. She is there to care for your children and is not charging you with a cleaner's salary. She should not be expected to cook meals for maids and adult members of the family.

Giving children their baths may become very uncomfortable since sitters do not carry extra clothing and so may be obliged to remain in wet clothing for the balance of the evening.

So I repeat—be fair to your sister who comes into your home to care for your most precious sessions—your children. We will be glad to do whatever is necessary to look after them properly while they are in our care.

I want to give good service and find we must have the cooperation of the parents who employ us. For one, enjoy children and love them.

Instruct your children that the sitter is placed there to look after them and they, in turn, are to obey and respect her judgment while they are in her care.

VOICE OF EXPERIENCE

Instead merely of saying: "Thank you" when another does something for you... why not try: "That was a fine thing you did for me. I don't want you to know that it has helped me very much." Show appreciation in the spirit of gratitude.

PEOPLE'S COLUMN Suggests Baby-Sitters Refuse Abnormal Jobs

To the Editor: Baby sitting was born not out of the need of middle-age women to gain a little extra money, but out of the desperate need of tired mothers to gain a few hours per week (maybe per month) from their exhausting 24-hour-a-day labor of love.

The recent letter from a baby sitter in your People's Column denouncing the working conditions of baby sitters aroused my concern for the children with whose care this woman has been entrusted, for its whole tone was from the adult and monetary point of view.

First of all, a baby sitting job, like a social invitation, may be turned down at will. When children are left in bed, a sitter should never accept a job there again. Why should the complain—rather, save her pity for the youngsters growing up in that atmosphere.

SECONDLY, I cannot sing the praises loud enough for the high school girls I have had as baby sitters. Some have come ahead of time to learn how to care for the baby who was small enough to need special attention; their playtime with the children has prompted the children to beg for their frequent return; they have tucked the children in bed at their regular hour of 8:00 P.M.; and (Phase note) their appreciation for their wages earned them an extra tip we could ill afford.

They did not feel abused and we were confident these girls could meet any emergency and reach us by phone if necessary.

THIRDLY, of the middle-age baby-sitters I had, none have had the attitude of the sitter writing in your column. Rather, they enjoyed this type of work as their love for youngsters as well as need for money and (believe it or not) weighed the challenge of a child's misbehavior, even when I, the worried mother, wondered if she could handle the situation adequately.

Now have any parents that I know of ever expected their sitters to do more than the duties listed during their time of duty, and this is why older women unable to do heavy work can enjoy baby sitting.

Recently, it appears that women are entering this type of work because the wages have steadily mounted along with every other rising cost and without a natural love and interest in children. It would be a sad way to earn a living that is the case, and they would be wiser to look for part-time work elsewhere.

PARENTS WITH small or medium income cannot afford to lose every extra penny into the "baby sitter's hat" when they are faced with saving for these young-ster's future education. Many a mother will have to forego her few hours of pleasure if all the sitters charge over \$6 an hour and feel as this woman does.

So if a mother can find a young girl who is trustworthy and happy with the children, how happy she Three cheers for the baby sitters who love their jobs and try to do it well! We parents are so grateful!

MOTHER OF FOUR (1 little girl and 3 Indians)

Another Sitter Has Her Say on the Situation

To the Editor: I wish to address this to "An Understanding Sitter," the lady who wrote the article about baby sitters as I am a sitter as well as a nurse. I did so appreciate her article as I have gone through each and every little instance she mentioned. Many times I have wished I could

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Troop B-4 Scouts Plan Honor Court

An advancement program featured the first 1953 meeting for Troop B-4 Scouts. The meeting was held at the Metamora campsite, B-4 on Jan. 5. Under the direction of Robert Silber, advancement chairman, three were advanced to Second Class rank; two became Star Scouts and three received Life Scout rank. Silber announced that at the annual Court of Honor, scheduled for Feb. 9, four Scouts would receive Eagle honors, Scouting's highest honors. Harold Chalk, outdoor commit-

Asks for Facts Regarding Special School Bond Vote

To the Editor: You would kindly give me the following information: (1) How many registered voters are there in the Birmingham school district? (2) What percentage of them voted in favor of the \$3,300,000 bond issue? (3) How many registered voters are there in the Birmingham school district for the purpose of November, sites and additions).

BEATRICE MILLER

EDITOR'S Note: (1) The Birmingham B of E office estimates the district has about 28,000 registered voters. (2) On the basis of unofficial returns, 3,553 voted in the special November school election. On the question of increasing the millage, the vote was 2,764 yes, 100 no; regarding issue of the bonds, 2,673 voted yes, 726 no. The percentage of those voting in favor of the bond issue would be 93-plus per cent. (3) There is no proof of property ownership required in order to vote on a bond issue. All that is demanded by state law is a signed statement (at the time of voting) that the person so signing does own property.

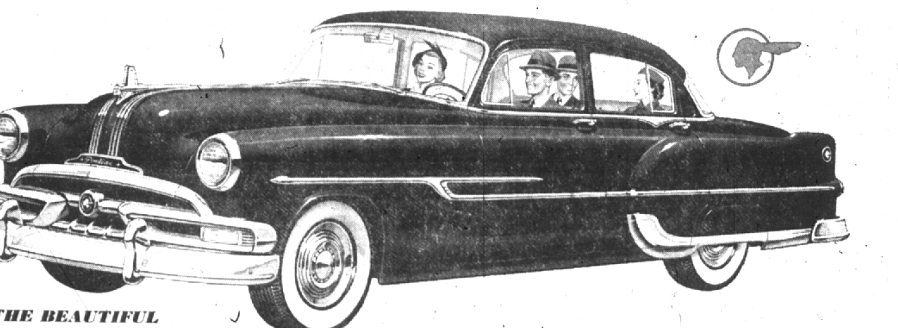
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