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QUESTIONS FOR PARENTS TO ASK A POTENTIAL

babysitter



- 1** What do you like about working with children?
What do you dislike?

Listen for how natural, comfortable and engaging they appear with kids.

- 2** Are you comfortable giving me three references and doing a background check?

It is a red flag when someone is hesitant to do so.

- 3** How many families have you babysat for?
How many children have you watched in a home?

If they don't have any experience, some parents may find that preferable so they can more easily train someone to work with their individual family needs. Some may find lack of experience a detriment.

- 4** What behaviors annoy you?

Pay attention to the answer, but follow up with, "How do you handle those behaviors?"

- 5** How would you discipline a child?

This will give insight into how strict, lenient or unprepared they are for discipline issues. It also provides a context to share how you would like your children to be handled when discipline is needed.

- 6** Have you ever dealt with an emergency?

Tell me about it and how you dealt with it. If they struggle to come up with a situation, share some possible issues they could face with your children and ask them to tell you how they would respond.

- 7** Are you comfortable bathing, helping dress or changing a child who has an accident?

This allows you to talk about the guidelines you have in your home and how you expect them to treat your child when it comes to issues of privacy and respect for their bodies. It also puts the issue of abuse on the table, should you want to express that you take seriously any risks to your child and expect them to as well.

- 8** What activities do you do with children?

As a parent, you want to know how engaged and nurturing they will be with your kids. Do they have creative ideas, enjoy walks and trips to the park, or would they stick your children in front of screens? It is good to talk about your expectations.

- 9** Are you comfortable staying off your phone or keeping it plugged in one room?

As a parent, it is important you have someone whose attention is undivided while babysitting. Establish ground rules for how you'd like them to handle technology for both themselves and your children. It also is an opportunity to discuss your rules about inviting people over or being online with friends while babysitting.

- 10** Tell us about past babysitting jobs.
What went well and what did not?
What other jobs have you had?
What did you like or dislike about them?

- 11** Have you ever suspected a child was being abused? How did you handle it if so, or how would you handle it if such a concern arose?

Though it is equally valid to ask a babysitter if they have ever abused a child, most parents feel uncomfortable asking such a blunt question. This allows you to get a sense of how this person handles the topic and it puts it out there as an issue you are willing to face.

- 12** How do you handle disobedience and discipline?

You want to discern both how they handle discipline and how they would speak to your kids about their behavior or encourage good behavior.

- 13** Have you had situations where you disagreed with a parent (and/or their rules)? How did you handle it?

- 14** What will you do if my children won't get along with each other?

It's always helpful to see how they handle conflict.



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This list of questions for parents to ask a potential babysitter was shared with you by Awana, using text from the book Safeguards: Shielding Our Homes and Equipping Our Kids, by Julie Lowe. To access more resources like this for your home and church, visit childdiscipleship.com.