

Remember your  key. Use a pack of frozen peas as a quick ice  for bumps and bruises.

HOUSE RULES

Kids

Have a flashlight  and fresh batteries handy in case of bad weather or a power outage . Stay in the kitchen at all times when cooking  or using appliances.

If your clothes catch on fire stop, drop and roll . Plan meals  and snacks  a week in advance. Know where the  first aid supplies are located.

SECURITY RULES

What to do right after school _____

AT HOME

Keep the doors locked at all times.
Do not let anyone in unless it has been cleared with _____

If a person you have not been told about – a delivery person or even someone you know – comes to the door, DO NOT OPEN THE DOOR. Speak through the door to the person and check with _____

to see if you can let the person in.

DO NOT MENTION THAT YOU ARE ALONE if you get a phone call or if someone comes to the door. NEVER GIVE YOUR NAME OR ADDRESS to a stranger. Say that your parent cannot come to the phone or door and ask if you can take a message.



THINGS TO DO

Homework _____



Responsibilities around the house

Activities

Indoors _____

Outdoors _____



Television Time

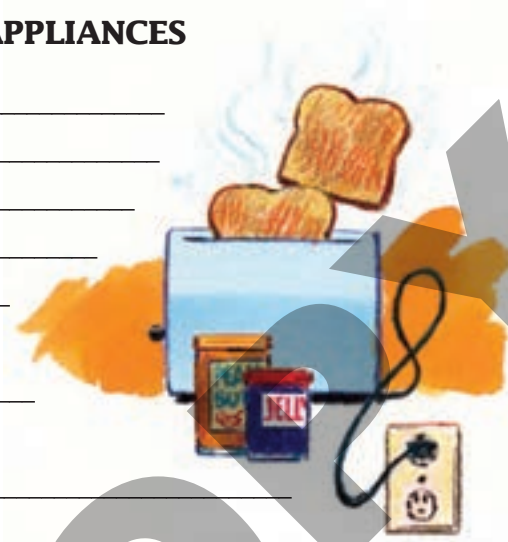
Important:



Keep a small amount of money  put aside for emergencies. Test your smoke detector every week.

APPLIANCES

To use _____



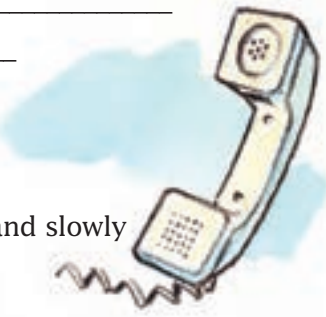
DO NOT USE _____

PHONE NUMBERS

Parent's Work _____
Relative _____
Neighbor _____
Friend of the family _____
Latchkey hotline _____
Others _____

EMERGENCY PHONE NUMBERS

Police _____
Fire Department _____
Doctor _____
Ambulance _____
Poison Control _____
Others _____



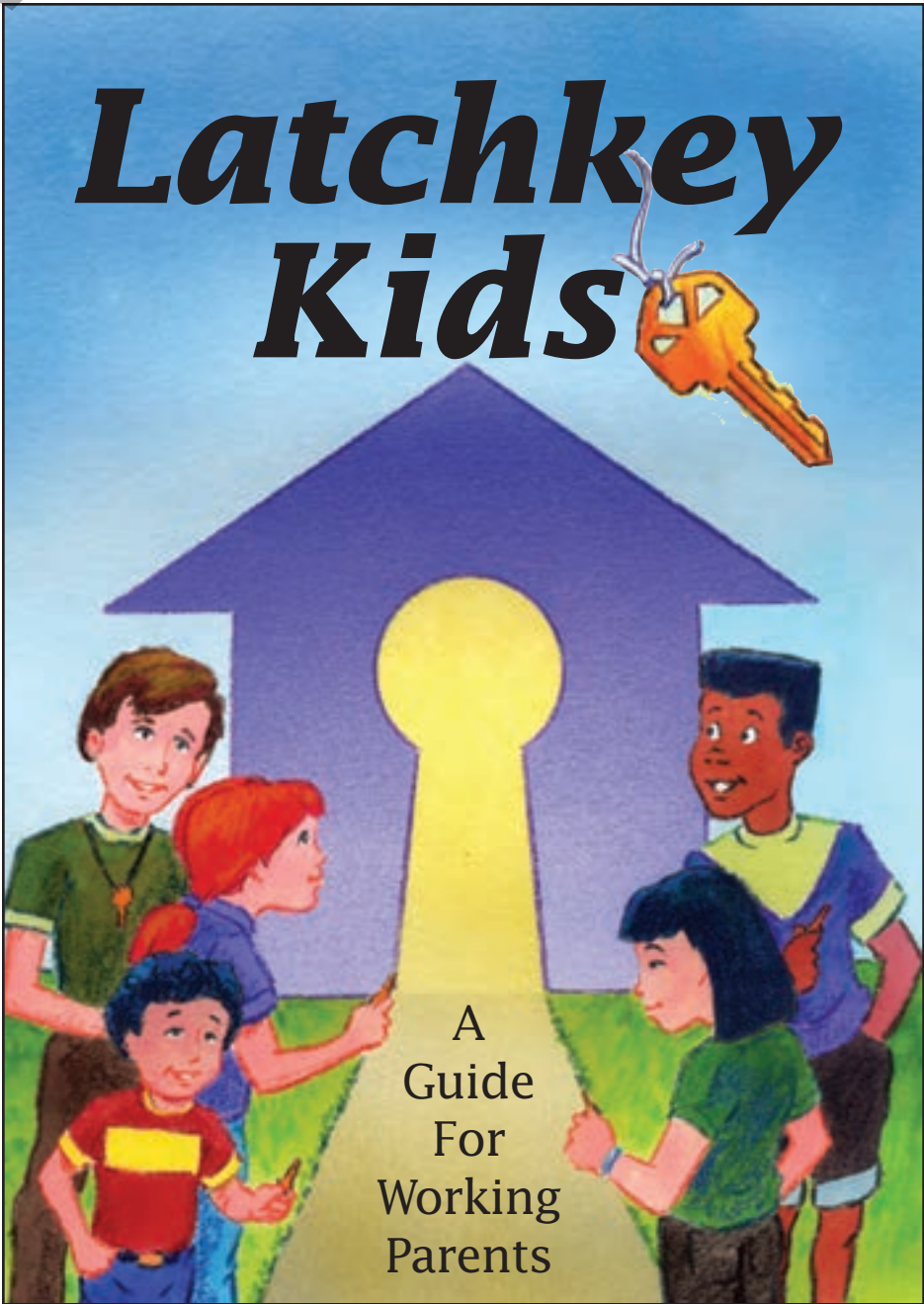
When you call for help speak clearly and slowly and give your name and address:

Your name _____
Your address _____

Your phone number _____
The nearest major intersection _____

Remember
Your
Key!



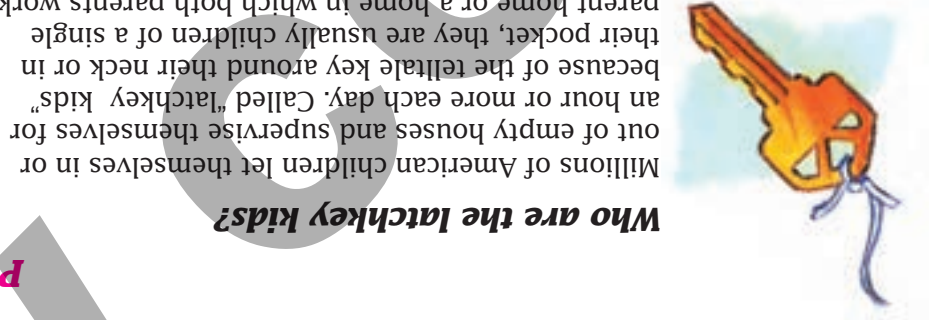


And Kids Who Stay Home Alone



Who are the latchkey kids?

Millions of American children let themselves in or out of empty houses and supervise themselves for an hour or more each day. Called "latchkey kids" because of the telltale key around their neck or in their pocket, they are usually children of a single parent home or a home in which both parents work. The number of latchkey children is expected to increase as more women enter the work force and as more families experience separation and divorce.



How old should a child be?

Although it is generally agreed that a young child in primary school should not be left alone, age is not the only consideration. Some children might function well at home alone, while others might not be ready to assume the responsibility of self-care. Parents must make an informed decision based on their own child.

In order to be left alone, a child should want to assume the responsibility, and should be able to solve problems independently. Factors such as the amount of time the child will be alone, the accessibility of a parent or another adult in case of emergency and how safe the neighborhood is, should also be taken into consideration.

How can a parent know if a child is ready to be left alone?

The simplest way is to ask the child if he or she wants to stay alone. Most children will answer truthfully. Signs of a child's fearfulness about being left alone include turning on all the lights, having the radio or television on full volume and suffering from nightmares.



How long can a child be left alone, The time should be kept to a minimum. For older children, three hours per day is probably the absolute maximum. Parents should come home as soon as they can and postpone errands until they can take the child with them.



How can a family get organized for the latchkey arrangement?

Some families have an initial family conference to discuss the set up house rules, discuss expectations, write down a daily schedule, divide chores, prepare a master phone list, and choose a contact person such as a neighbor or a relative to call in case of emergency. After the conference, the house is organized so that the latchkey child can take care of needs such as meals, snacks, homework, entertainment, laundry, and other personal needs. Have regular meetings to discuss changes in schedules, to plan television time and talk about fears and concerns. Don't hesitate to change the rules or a planned schedule that isn't working.

What should a parent do to make the latchkey kid experience work?

The experience should be a positive one, reinforcing the child's sense of independence and competence, and minimizing fear and anxiety. Above all, it should be made clear that the parent is still in charge, whether physically present or not. A carefully considered set of rules and back-up systems should be developed and discussed with the child so that he or she is aware of what is expected by the parent. The main issue for a parent in deciding if a child can function as a latchkey kid is whether he or she is capable of following agreed rules, completing homework, and accomplishing chores.

Can a child be left with an older brother or sister?

Most child development experts agree that no child younger than ten can effectively supervise other children. It is recommended that when an older child is left in charge, all children in the family should be instructed about self-care and be made individually responsible rather than relying on the oldest child to carry responsibility for the others.



Special Instructions

What should I do...

If I get locked out or forget my key I should _____

If I miss the bus I should _____

If my parents are not home on time I should _____

If I get scared I should _____

If I get invited to my friend's house after school I should _____

If I smell smoke or see fire, I should get out fast and go to _____

_____ house to call the fire department.

(neighbor's name)

If the power goes out when I'm home I should _____

**SKILL
BUILDER**



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5801 River Road, New Orleans, LA 70123

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ISBN 1-56230-056-3