



BETTER SITTERS TODAY. BETTER PARENTS TOMORROW.®

Founded by Patricia A. Keener, M.D.

SAFE SITTER® AT YOUR YMCA

Over 30 Y's have found a match between the mission of the YMCA and the mission of the Safe Sitter® program, a competency-based, highly structured babysitting preparation course designed for young adolescents 11 to 13 years of age. "I have a firm belief in the compatibility between the mission driven programs of the YMCA and the mission driven cause of Safe Sitter®," said Tom Neibauer, Program Director at the Sheridan County YMCA in Sheridan, Wyoming. "Recognizing, appreciating, and advocating a solid youth program is always a special discovery. Safe Sitter® is just such a program."

The Safe Sitter® Teaching Site

YMCA's become Safe Sitter® teaching sites by paying a one-time fee (which provides lifetime support) and sending staff to a one-day workshop. After becoming a registered teaching site, YMCA's usually offer the course as part of their after school programs, during school breaks, or on Saturdays. Pairing Safe Sitter® students with younger children in their Leaders in Training, the Hamilton County YMCA in Fishers, Indiana, advertises their after school courses by saying, "This program is designed to provide youth with practical experience mentoring and working with younger children. It's a great leadership opportunity!" Instructors at the Baxter YMCA in Indianapolis, Indiana, teach Safe Sitter® in several local schools, saying, "The existing format of the after school program offers a launching board to recruit students."

YMCA teaching sites not only impact the lives of the families, but also enjoy increased visibility and enhanced relationships in their community. "Offering the Safe Sitter® program has opened up a whole new avenue for us to reach our members," said one, Safe Sitter® Instructor at the Cooper Street YMCA in Arlington, Texas. "I not only get to connect with the young adolescents in our community, but I also get to work with parents on building a solid family network. We're proud that Safe Sitter® allows us yet another chance to build strong families!"

The Safe Sitter® Instructor

Almost 5000 Safe Sitter® Instructors are working hard to keep children safe and sound. "I took Safe Sitter® when I was 13 and babysat all through my teenage years. I loved it and believe it was a large part of choosing a career working with kids. I want to help make it safe for children to be alone because I've seen too many preventable injuries," said Kelli Hanratty, New Tampa Family YMCA in Tampa, Florida.

Instructors typically become passionate about the need for Safe Sitter®. They remember when they babysat and weren't always sure what to do. Instructors frequently say they like giving young sitters more confidence and knowledge on how to deal with problems. "When the Y and Safe Sitter® partner, the youth involved, the children that will be cared for, the parents of the children to be cared for, and the parents of the Safe Sitter® graduates are all winners – four cornerstones for success!" exclaimed Tom Neibauer.



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The Safe Sitter® Student

“By offering Safe Sitter® at the YMCA, we are enabling young people to be more equipped to serve their family and community by teaching them valuable skills to help provide safe care for younger children,” said Theresa Whittington, YMCA of Central Ohio-Hilltop Branch in Columbus, Ohio. “It empowers the teens and gives them confidence to use their skills when babysitting, taking care of younger brothers and sisters, or volunteering in our youth programs.”

For Sherry Mercer, Instructor for Sheridan County YMCA, Safe Sitter® is more than life-saving, it is life-affirming. “Two organizations making a difference – concerned with the well-being of youth and families – bonded by missions believing in the inherent worth of everyone – paired in the hope that by caring, the world will be a better place now and in the years to come. What better partners than the YMCA and Safe Sitter®?”

For more information on becoming a Safe Sitter® teaching site, contact:

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