

## “Home Alone” Child Tips

Children are sometimes home alone while parents are working or away for some other reason. It is generally believed however that children under the age of 12 should not be left home alone.

Here are some suggestions to increase the safety of your older child and ease your mind while he or she is home alone:

- Agree on ground rules for those times when you are not home, for example, rules for cooking, leaving the house, having friends over, etc.
- Assign your children tasks to accomplish while you're gone. Try to keep them busy!
- Be sure to have telephone numbers posted where you can be reached. Also, make sure you list numbers for fire and police, neighbors, and relatives.
- If your children arrive home to an empty house, be sure to call and check in with them.
- Enroll your children in a course on safety procedures. Their safety is related to their knowledge of how to protect themselves. Check with the Girl Scouts, Boy Scouts, your local hospital, or the YMCA for courses.
- Talk to your children about their concerns when they are home alone. Make sure everyone understands each other.
- Remember, with the proper guidelines, being home for limited periods of time can increase independence, responsibility, and confidence in your children!