

With schools being temporarily closed, we know that many parents are faced with finding alternate childcare for their child. Alliance For Children recommends that before leaving your child with a caregiver, put some safety measures in place.

Check the sex offender registry. Visit the following website: <https://www.nsopw.gov>. It is important to keep in mind that while this can be a helpful tool, people who have not been caught would not be on this list. Stay vigilant with anyone you chose to watch your child.

Create a Plan of Action. One of the best tools we have at our disposal in preventing child abuse is arming our children with knowledge. Talk to your child about personal body safety and create a plan of action for your child if he/she is faced with an unsafe situation. For more information on how to navigate these conversations with your children, please visit www.allianceforchildren.org/prevention.

Set boundaries with the caregiver. This may seem uncomfortable to do at first, but having these proactive conversations and setting expectations can deter inappropriate behavior. A safe caregiver should not challenge or test the boundaries you set for your child.

Set rules to prevent isolated situations. We know isolated situations between an adult and a child can put children at risk, so our recommendation is to limit these interactions. This could look like setting limits to where the caregiver and child can go in the house or might include requiring all siblings stay in the same place while the caregiver is there.

Make situations observable or interruptible. This could mean having cameras in the home, having more than one adult watching your child, having trusted adults that can stop by unexpectedly or calling to check-in frequently.

Listen to your child. If your children tell you that they are uncomfortable around their caregiver, take that seriously and ask them to explain. This could be something minor like the caregiver makes them eat broccoli, or it could be a serious situation that requires you to act.

If you are beginning to feel overwhelmed while taking care of your children with no reprieve, we encourage you to reach out to have a trusted adult/caregiver come to watch your children. It is okay to ask for help during this time, we all need it.