



**Is Your
Child or
Teen Too
Young to
be Left
Alone?**

Information provided by the Georgia Department of Human Resources.

In Georgia, child maltreatment can include **children who are left unsupervised for long periods of time.**

State guidelines administered through the Division of Family and Children Services (DFCS) evaluate situations to determine if a child is old enough to be left unsupervised or can supervise other children.

Parents should use sound judgment to determine the maturity and responsibility of a child before deciding to leave him/her at home alone.

Make sure your children have proper supervision at all time. Do not leave them unattended in shopping malls or other public places, including gas stations.

Always make sure you know where your **small child** is. **Double check your vehicle when you leave it.**

Did You Know?

- **Children under 8 years old should never be left alone.**
- **Children between the ages of 9 and 12 may be left home alone for brief periods of time.**
- **Children 13 and older** (based on level of maturity) **can generally be left as babysitters.** However, it is not recommended that 13-year-olds baby sit infants or small children.
- **Children 15 and older** (depending on their level of maturity) **can be left home alone overnight.**
- Children home alone should not be responsible for food preparation that involves the stove.
- Parents should make a safety plan that includes 911.

If you have questions about a child being left alone, contact your local Department of Family & Children Services (DFCS).

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