

## Care.com 2017 Babysitter Survey

1. Do you have child(ren)?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	93.8%
No	6.2%

2. How old are your child(ren)? Please select all that apply.	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than a year old	28.1%
1	19.5%
2	21.0%
3	14.2%
4	14.7%
5	12.0%
6	10.1%
7	10.1%
8	10.0%
9	8.2%
10	7.6%
11	4.7%
12	3.7%
13	4.0%
14	2.2%
15	1.5%
16	2.3%
17	1.0%
18	0.9%
Older than 18 years old	4.0%

3. What is your age?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Under 18 years old	1.0%
18 to 24 years old	4.9%
25 to 34 years old	46.5%
35 to 44 years old	38.0%
45 to 54 years old	8.1%
55 to 64 years old	1.2%
65 to 74 years old	0.3%
75 years or older	0.0%

4. What is your sex?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Female	87.3%
Male	12.7%

5. What is your marital status?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Single, never married	12.2%
Married or domestic partnership	75.8%
Widowed	0.7%
Divorced	9.0%
Separated	2.4%

6. How would you best describe the area which you live?	
Answer Options	Response Percent
Urban	28.5%
Suburban	59.9%

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Rural	11.6%
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### 7. What is your household income?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$25,000	9.2%
\$25,000 to \$49,999	17.9%
\$50,000 to \$74,999	17.2%
\$75,000 to \$99,999	14.5%
\$100,000 to \$149,999	21.4%
\$150,000 to \$199,999	8.5%
\$200,000 or more	11.3%

### 8a. How often does a babysitter watch your child(ren)?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Several times a week	26.8%
Once a week	7.9%
Several times a month	12.0%
Once a month	12.1%
A few times a year	18.3%
Once a year	2.1%
Never	20.8%

### 8b. How often does a babysitter watch your child(ren)?

*Out of respondents who have sitters watch their children (removing those who said "never"):*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Several times a week	33.8%
Once a week	10.0%
Several times a month	15.1%
Once a month	15.3%
A few times a year	23.1%
Once a year	2.6%

### 9. What age sitter do you usually prefer to hire?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Teenager (15 to 19)	6.6%
Young adult (20 to 25)	44.6%
Adult (26 to 55)	37.8%
Older adult (55+)	2.3%
It doesn't matter.	8.7%

### 10. Why types of sitters have you hired? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Date night sitter	65.2%
Overnight sitter	13.1%
Daytime sitter (for a few quick hours while you get things done)	60.6%
Before school sitter	9.7%
After school sitter	25.9%
Mother's helper (watches your child(ren) while a parent is home)	18.8%

### 11. How many different sitters have watched your child(ren) in the past 12 months?

Answer Options	Response Percent
0	3.5%
1	27.4%
2	36.7%
3	17.6%
4	7.7%

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5	3.1%
More than 5	3.9%

### 12. In general, how many sitters do you have on rotation?

Answer Options	Response Percent
1	48.0%
2	37.6%
3	11.1%
More than 3	3.3%

### 13. Who usually handles hiring a sitter in your family?

Answer Options	Response Percent
I do, completely.	51.3%
I do, but my partner helps a little.	26.3%
We're both equally involved.	18.5%
My partner, completely.	0.9%
My partner, but I help a little.	2.9%

### 14. Please select the top three ways you hire a sitter when you need one.

Answer Options	Response Percent
I use an online service (e.g. Care.com).	72.9%
I ask extended family members to babysit.	81.1%
I ask friends and neighbors for recommendations.	87.6%
I post on local message boards or my neighborhood's parents group for recommendations.	23.3%
I ask my child(ren)'s teacher if they're available.	11.6%
I ask my child(ren)'s nanny if they're available.	23.5%

### 15. What has stopped you from hiring a sitter in the past? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
It costs too much.	59.0%
I don't want someone else watching my kids.	20.8%
I'm too tired or too busy to go out.	16.9%
It's too stressful to find someone I like and trust.	63.9%
I only leave my kids with family members.	14.6%
Other (please specify)	10.1%

### 16. One of the reasons you haven't hired a sitter in the past is because "it costs too much". How much less per hour would it need to cost for you to not think "it costs too much" to hire a sitter?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$1	0.0%
\$1	1.4%
\$2	16.9%
\$3	20.9%
\$4	7.7%
\$5	37.2%
More than \$5	16.0%

### 17a. What would make it less stressful to find a sitter you like and trust? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
If I knew the sitter had a comprehensive background check.	61.2%
If friends and family members personally recommended the sitter.	77.2%
If I had a security camera (AKA nanny cam) so I could periodically check in on the babysitter.	38.4%
If my kids were older.	37.4%
If I could find a more affordable sitter.	34.9%
N/A - I don't find it stressful to find a sitter I like and trust.	3.6%
Other (please specify)	2.8%

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**17b. What would make it less stressful to find a sitter you like and trust? Please select all that apply.**

*Out of respondents who didn't respond N/A.*

Answer Options	Response Percent
If I knew the sitter had a comprehensive background check.	63.5%
If friends and family members personally recommended the sitter.	80.1%
If I had a security camera (AKA nanny cam) so I could periodically check in on the babysitter.	39.9%
If my kids were older.	38.8%
If I could find a more affordable sitter.	36.3%
Other (please specify)	2.8%

**18. How far in advance do you usually book a sitter?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
The same day I need a sitter.    The same day I need a sitter.	2.0%
The day before I need a sitter.	5.9%
The same week I need a sitter.	31.0%
One week in advance.	34.7%
Two weeks in advance.	14.5%
More than two weeks in advance.	11.8%

**19a. Would you ever share your primary, go-to sitter's contact information with friends?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes, always. I like to be helpful.	46.8%
Sometimes, I worry the sitter won't be available if I give their contact information to everyone.	28.8%
No, I want to keep a good sitter to myself.	6.0%
N/A - no one has asked for my sitter's contact information.	18.4%

**19b. Would you ever share your primary, go-to sitter's contact information with friends?**

*Out of respondents who didn't respond N/A.*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes, always. I like to be helpful.	57.3%
Sometimes, I worry the sitter won't be available if I give their contact information to everyone.	35.3%
No, I want to keep a good sitter to myself.	7.4%

**20. Would you steal a babysitter from a friend?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	19.2%
No	80.8%

**21. How much do you trust your primary, go-to sitter?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Completely	58.0%
Mostly	40.2%
Not at all	1.8%

**22. Did you do any of the following when hiring a sitter? Please select all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Interviewed the sitter in-person.	77.5%
Interviewed the sitter via phone.	38.9%
Called references.	43.0%
Introduced the sitter to your child(ren) to see how they interacted.	77.3%
Asked about CPR and First Aid training.	48.9%
Ran a background check.	25.1%

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Other (please specify)	6.4%
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### 23. Please select the top 3 things you look for when hiring a sitter.

Answer Options	Response Percent
How much the sitter charges.	57.8%
Whether the kids will love the sitter.	60.3%
The sitter's experience.	66.3%
The sitter's availability whenever you need them.	48.0%
They are in my area or know someone in my network.	19.2%
They are certified in CPR & First Aid.	25.8%
They have a background check.	22.6%

### 24. Would you pay more for a sitter with the following education or training? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
College degree	31.0%
High school degree	11.6%
Safety training (e.g. CPR and First Aid certification)	66.2%
Early education degree	40.7%
Water safety certification	14.6%
Special needs care	12.8%
Infant care certification	30.9%
State-level child care certification required for preschool teachers	33.0%

### 25a. How much more per hour would you pay a sitter with additional education and training?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$1	2.5%
\$1	15.0%
\$2	28.9%
\$3	18.7%
\$4	2.8%
\$5	14.2%
More than \$5	4.0%
N/A - I wouldn't pay more money for a sitter with additional education and training.	13.9%

### 25b. How much more per hour would you pay a sitter with additional education and training?

*Out of respondents who would pay more per hour (removing N/A responses):*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$1	3.0%
\$1	17.4%
\$2	33.6%
\$3	21.7%
\$4	3.3%
\$5	16.4%
More than \$5	4.6%

### 26. How do you determine how much to pay a sitter? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
I ask friends what they pay.	44.5%
I use a babysitter pay calculator.	13.9%
I find a sitter I like and pay what she charges.	40.1%
I determine the amount and pay what I feel is right.	39.0%
I find a sitter I like and negotiate her hourly pay rate.	42.9%
Other (please specify)	4.4%

### 27. Do you think you pay your sitter too much?

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Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	23.4%
No	76.6%

### 28. Why do you think you pay your sitter too much?

Answer Options	Response Percent
My sitter overcharges me.	12.8%
I offered an hourly rate that I think is too high.	28.7%
The local average hourly rate is too high.	47.0%
Other (please specify)	11.6%

### 29. The federal minimum wage is \$7.25 per hour. Do you think sitters should be paid above minimum wage?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	83.2%
No	16.8%

### 30. Why do you think sitters should be paid above minimum wage?

#### Sample Answers Written In

\$7/hr is very hard to live off of!

It's a difficult responsible and stressful job.

They are taking care of your little ones. Pay them well.

They are caring for another human being.

I have never paid \$8 for a sitter to watch my children. My kids' safety is paramount, and I want to ensure it is worth the sitter's while to take the job and that they feel that they are well compensated.

Because it's the minimum wage and is only fair.

I pay mine more because it is the only way to attract good people. Also, I only ask them to work a few hours, so higher pay entices them and doesn't really hurt me.

They are providing a priceless service.

Flexibility.

They are not usually booked for full 8 hour days, so the pay should be worth it for them when working less hours.

But it should not be much above minimum wage - a few dollars.

Child care can be stressful. I am in child development myself and am well aware of its challenges.

It's hard work to take care of kids, especially young ones.

### 31. Why don't you think sitters should be paid above minimum wage?

#### Sample Answers Written In

Because my kids are old enough to be somewhat self sufficient.

It is an easy job to sit at home and watch TV while my children are sleeping or even just playing. If I wanted them to feed the kids or put them to bed then I would pay more.

Unless the sitter is offering to do other things around the house, such as watch over animals-light housekeeping, or has a college degree in a related field (or pursuing) I don't find it necessary. I don't expect sitters to go above and beyond caring for my children so therefore I don't expect them to get paid above and beyond.

Hiring sitters for longer duration becomes expensive.

Depends on the hours needed. If child and sitter are sleeping for most of the shift I do not want to pay \$15 an hour.

I think it depends on the situation. If they are only watching the kids after bedtime, they shouldn't.

It is not a full time job.

So it can be affordable.

Most parents can't afford to pay more. If they can they should.

Many factors affect how much a sitter should be paid. How many kids, what are their ages, what's the experience level/age/education level of the sitter?

Unless a sitter has an extensive background in child education, why would more than min. wage even be required?

Then if a sitter does has certificates and degrees in childhood education, why are they not employed by a school?

I don't make enough money per hour to justify paying a sitter more than that.

This a not a job that traditionally get paid based off min wage.

I think the pay should be dependent on number of children, age of children, hours needed and responsibility.

Because they are not needing to cover the expenses of a business when they come to your home so have zero overhead.

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**32. How much more would you pay per hour for a last-minute sitter?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$1	11.3%
\$1	15.3%
\$2	24.0%
\$3	18.5%
\$4	3.7%
\$5	18.7%
More than \$5	8.6%

**33. Besides the holidays, do you tip your sitter in general?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	34.0%
No	66.0%

**34. How much do you generally tip your sitter?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$5	14.8%
\$5	41.8%
\$10	27.4%
More than \$10	16.0%

**35a. Have you ever done any of the following to save money on a sitter? Please select all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Share the cost of a sitter with a friend to watch all the child(ren) together.	22.7%
Ask a friend to babysit your kids, then return the favor.	54.8%
Hire a sitter with less experience.	13.0%
Work out a deal with the sitter to work a certain number of hours per month for a lower hourly	12.7%
Cut an outing short to get home to a sitter so you don't have to pay for an extra hour.	29.2%
Go out when the kids are sleeping to get a lower hourly rate.	12.5%
N/A - I haven't done anything to save money on a sitter.	27.4%
Other (please specify)	2.6%

**35b. Have you ever done any of the following to save money on a sitter? Please select all that apply.**  
*Out of respondents who have tried to save money on a sitter (removing N/A responses):*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Share the cost of a sitter with a friend to watch all the child(ren) together.	31.3%
Ask a friend to babysit your kids, then return the favor.	75.5%
Hire a sitter with less experience.	17.9%
Work out a deal with the sitter to work a certain number of hours per month for a lower hourly	17.5%
Cut an outing short to get home to a sitter so you don't have to pay for an extra hour.	40.2%
Go out when the kids are sleeping to get a lower hourly rate.	17.3%
Other (please specify)	3.6%

**36a. Would you ever do any of the following to save money on a sitter? Please select all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Share the cost of a sitter with a friend to watch all the child(ren) together.	52.5%
Ask a friend to babysit your kids, then return the favor.	63.3%
Hire a sitter with less experience.	13.0%
Work out a deal with the sitter to work a certain number of hours per month for a lower hourly	31.8%
Cut an outing short to get home to a sitter so you don't have to pay for an extra hour.	31.8%
Go out when the kids are sleeping to get a lower hourly rate.	28.0%
N/A - I wouldn't do anything to save money on a sitter.	15.2%
Other (please specify)	1.6%

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**36b. Would you ever do any of the following to save money on a sitter? Please select all that apply.**

*Out of respondents who would try to save money on a sitter (removing N/A responses):*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Share the cost of a sitter with a friend to watch all the child(ren) together.	61.9%
Ask a friend to babysit your kids, then return the favor.	74.6%
Hire a sitter with less experience.	15.3%
Work out a deal with the sitter to work a certain number of hours per month for a lower hourly	37.5%
Cut an outing short to get home to a sitter so you don't have to pay for an extra hour.	37.5%
Go out when the kids are sleeping to get a lower hourly rate.	33.0%
N/A - I wouldn't do anything to save money on a sitter.	17.9%
Other (please specify)	1.9%

**37. Do you pay your sitter a lower rate if your child(ren) are sleeping rather than awake?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	24.2%
No	75.8%

**38. Have you ever asked your sitter to work for a lower rate if your child(ren) are sleeping?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	16.3%
No	83.7%

**39. Why haven't you asked your sitter to work for a lower rate if your child(ren) are sleeping while they're working? Please select all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent
I feel embarrassed asking.	25.3%
I worry that the sitter won't want to work for me at a lower rate.	26.8%
I don't think they should work for a lower rate while the child(ren) are sleeping.	46.2%
Other (please specify)	24.0%

**40. If your favorite sitter asked for a pay raise, would you give it?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes, she's worth it.	77.2%
No, I'd find a new sitter.	22.8%

**41. Overall, how much do you think you spend on a sitter per calendar year?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Less than \$500	36.4%
\$500 to \$999	22.8%
\$1,000 to \$1,999	19.3%
\$2,000 or more	21.5%

**42. Did you know you're supposed to pay taxes for a sitter if you pay them \$2,000 or more per calendar year?**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Yes	50.5%
No	49.5%

**43. What tasks do you usually ask a sitter to do? Please select all that apply.**

Answer Options	Response Percent
Bathe the child(ren).	19.0%
Feed the child(ren).	86.7%



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Put the child(ren) to bed.	61.9%
Cook meals.	21.3%
Do laundry.	7.2%
Help with homework.	19.4%
Read to the child(ren).	60.6%
Pick the child(ren) up from school.	18.7%
Bring the child(ren) to activities and playdates.	14.3%
Play games and sports with the child(ren).	47.3%
Clean the home.	8.7%
Run errands.	3.3%
Offer parent-approved media choices (e.g. TV shows, movies, apps)	37.2%
Use their discretion to offer age-approved media choices (e.g. TV shows, movies, apps)	32.8%

### 44a. What do you ask a sitter to do during any downtime (e.g. when the kids are sleeping or at an activity/school)? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Cook.	3.6%
Clean the house.	7.5%
Pick up after the child(ren).	33.9%
Organize.	10.9%
Laundry.	9.1%
Run errands.	1.3%
Care for pets.	10.1%
Wash dishes / unload dishwasher.	18.2%
I don't ask a sitter to do anything during their downtime.	56.7%

### 44b. What do you ask a sitter to do during any downtime (e.g. when the kids are sleeping or at an activity/school)? Please select all that apply.

*Out of respondents who have asked sitter to do something during their downtime:*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Cook.	8.3%
Clean the house.	17.2%
Pick up after the child(ren).	78.3%
Organize.	25.2%
Laundry.	21.0%
Run errands.	3.1%
Care for pets.	23.4%
Wash dishes / unload dishwasher.	42.1%

### 45a. Beyond child responsibilities, do you ask your sitter not to do any of the following? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Post photos of your child(ren) on social media.	37.5%
Be distracted by their phone (e.g. texting, playing on social media).	43.9%
Watch television while your child(ren) are up.	25.5%
No, I don't ask my sitter to not do anything specifically.	42.5%
Other (please specify)	2.1%

### 45b. Beyond child responsibilities, do you ask your sitter not to do any of the following? Please select all that apply.

*Out of respondents who have asked their sitter not to specifically do something:*

Answer Options	Response Percent
Post photos of your child(ren) on social media.	65.2%
Be distracted by their phone (e.g. texting, playing on social media).	76.4%
Watch television while your child(ren) are up.	44.4%
Other (please specify)	3.6%

### 46. How do you check in with your sitter while you're out? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Text	90.2%
Phone call	47.1%
Nanny cam	10.6%

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FaceTime / video chat	6.0%
I don't check in.	3.5%

### 47. Have you ever caught a sitter doing any of the following without your permission while watching your child(ren)? Please select all that apply.

Answer Options	Response Percent
Excessively texting.	14.0%
Excessively talking on the phone.	7.5%
Watching TV.	10.0%
Eating your food.	5.9%
Having a friend over.	5.0%
Snooping through your home.	2.6%
Playing on social media (e.g. Facebook, Instagram, etc.)	10.9%
Taking suggestive photos.	0.6%
None of the above.	73.2%
Other (please specify)	4.1%

### 48. What role does your sitter play in your life?

Answer Options	Response Percent
I consider my sitter a member of my family.	30.8%
My sitter is important, but replaceable.	61.8%
I go through sitters regularly so I don't get attached.	7.4%

### 49. Which celebrity would you most want as a sitter?

Answer Options	Response Percent
Emma Stone	33.5%
Meryl Streep	10.3%
Ryan Gosling	3.0%
Viola Davis	11.5%
Ellen DeGeneres	31.8%
Aziz Ansari	2.7%
Jimmy Fallon	7.2%

#### About the Care.com 2017 Babysitter Survey

The Care.com 2017 Babysitter Survey captured responses from more than 800 parents in the United States during the month of February 2017. Respondents were recruited from Care.com membership.