

The Sitter and Grandparent Brief

The one-pager that makes handing off your kids painless

Any good manager knows that handing a project to someone new goes better with a brief than with a rushed hallway explanation. You wouldn't hand a new hire your accounts and say "you'll figure it out." But that's exactly how most of us hand off our kids, a scramble of instructions shouted from the doorway as we grab our keys. A written brief means you say it once, they can reread it, and you get to leave without repeating yourself three times.

What you need: 15 minutes to build the template once, then five minutes to fill in the specifics before each handoff.

The steps

1. **Write the routine, not the philosophy.** (5 minutes) Meal times, nap or quiet time, bedtime steps in order. Specific enough that someone who's never done bedtime with your kid could actually run it.
2. **List the non-negotiables.** (3 minutes) Allergies, medications, screen limits, anything that's a hard no regardless of how much begging happens.
3. **Add the "it's fine if" section.** (2 minutes) This is the part most briefs skip and it matters most. Give explicit permission for the stuff that doesn't need a text: extra dessert, skipping a bath, a later bedtime once.
4. **Fill in emergency info.** (3 minutes) Your number, a backup number, pediatrician, address for the pizza delivery guy who somehow always gets lost.
5. **Hand it over and leave.** (2 minutes) Physically hand it to them, don't just text a link on your way out the door. Give them a chance to ask one question before you go.

The brief

Routine (meals, nap, bedtime steps)

Non-negotiables (allergies, meds, hard limits)

It's fine if...

Emergency contact / backup

Pediatrician / address

When it goes sideways

The sitter or grandparent says “I don’t need a sheet, I raised kids too.” Hand it over anyway, framed as “this is mostly for me, so I don’t have to remember what I told you.” Nobody argues with a page that makes your life easier.

They call you for something that’s already on the sheet. That’s fine, some things need real-time reassurance no matter how well documented. Answer once, warmly, and point to the sheet gently for next time.

You keep rewriting it from scratch every time. Save the base version and just edit the day’s specifics. The routine rarely changes, only the details do.

A good brief means you get to actually leave the house instead of narrating it from the driveway.

