

Ep #98: How to Borrow a Baby



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Devon Clement

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Do you want to have your niece, grandchild, friend's baby come stay with you, but they won't let you? Do you keep getting asked to have your baby go stay with other relatives or friends or whatever and you don't feel comfortable with that yet? Then this episode is for you. Stay tuned.

Welcome to *Parenthood Prep*, the only show that helps sleep-deprived parents and overwhelmed parents-to-be to successfully navigate those all-important early years with their baby, toddler, and child. If you are ready to provide the best care for your newborn, manage those toddler tantrums, and grow with your child, you're in the right place. Now here's your host, baby and parenting expert, Devon Clement.

Hello and welcome back to the *Parenthood Prep* podcast. This episode today is not really for parents. Well, it sort of is, but keep listening if you're a parent because this is going to be really relevant to you. You're going to want to send this to your family members and your friends who have been asking when they are going to get to take your baby.

This episode is called How to Borrow a Baby. And it's geared towards family members, grandparents, aunts, uncles, friends that you know really want to spend time with your kiddo and they want to you know be responsible for them during that time, have them come to their house, have them stay over, all those things. And it can be a really complicated question. It can be a really complicated issue. We take our niece Audrey pretty regularly, and one of the questions we get all the time is like, they just let you take her? Like, they just let you keep her for like days at a time or like a long weekend or whatever, since she was pretty small.

And the answer is yes, they do. And I think there's a lot of reasons for that. I mean, they own a business and they're pretty busy with work, so they're pretty grateful when they get, you know, some extra childcare and they can focus on their job. But also like, there's a lot of reasons why I make the "give me your baby" experience a very positive one. And I think there's a lot of pitfalls that some family members can run into that can make it more difficult for you to want them to take your baby or for you to be willing for them to take your baby.

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So, if you are a family member, a friend, a grandparent, somebody like that who wants to have your precious baby come stay with you, this episode is for you. I am going to tell you how to do that and how to make the experience so positive for the parents so that they are just so excited for you to take their baby time and again.

Number one, most important, if you get nothing else out of this episode, get this: Safety first. Parents are very nervous and for valid reasons. There's a lot of ways that bad things can happen. And when you are becoming a parent for the first time, you are being fed this information constantly. Here's how you can kill your baby. Here's how you can, you know, let your baby get in an accident. Here's how you can damage them forever, emotionally, spiritually, mentally, whatever. You know, a lot of it is alarmist, but a lot of it is real.

So, learn how to use the car seat properly. Show them that you're going to keep their baby safe. Show them that you know how to follow safe sleep guidelines and you are not going to let their nine-month-old take a nap on the couch where she can very easily roll off onto the floor.

Show that you are aware of potential allergies, of choking hazards, just making sure that you're watching them so that they're not going to, you know, get into any trouble. And when the baby's four months old, maybe they're rolling a little bit, they're not really going to get into anything. But when they're one, one and a half, even like eight, nine, 10 months, like Audrey's at an age where she needs to be constantly supervised so she's not sticking her finger in an electric socket or falling and hitting her head on a table or going up the stairs and then falling back down.

There's just so much potential for bad things to happen, and you want to show these parents that you are diligent and that you are concerned about safety. Always put them on their backs to sleep. You know, take a CPR class, take a CPR and first aid class and tell the parents that you've done this so that if something happens while you're there, God forbid, you know what to do in that situation.

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Along a similar line, stick to their schedule. Show that you're willing to keep the baby on whatever routine or schedule the parents are following because whether you agree with it or believe in it or not, they do. And there is nothing worse than being away from your baby for a few hours and being handed back a child that is under-slept, under-fed, completely exhausted, just completely off their game, cranky and miserable because they're totally off their schedule.

And that can be really easy to do, especially when you're not familiar or you want to do fun activities like go to the park or go out to eat or whatever. But just, you know, if the parents are being pretty rigid about the schedule, show that you are able to follow it and that you are able to keep that baby on their schedule.

Tip number three, make it easy for them. First of all, plan around them. You know, what makes the most sense for you in terms of when we take the baby, when we pick them up, when we drop them off. This is part of making it easy. You do the pickup and drop-off. Don't expect your grown child to pack their baby up for the weekend and then drop them off at grandma and grandpa's house and expect them to come pick their kid up. Like, I always pack for her, first of all, because I love it. I just love picking out her clothes. I'm like, please don't pack because I want to pick out what she's wearing while she's with me. But I also know that it makes it easy for them.

And then I pick her up, I drop her off. When I'm picking her up and dropping her off, or when I'm dropping her off, I will unpack her suitcase. I will do her laundry while she's with me so that I'm giving them back clean clothes and not a suitcase full of dirty laundry. You know, I'm making the process really easy for them. I know what she eats. I know how to prepare, you know, all of her food. I knew how to, you know, do her formula and everything. Like I would get all of those things so that they didn't even have to think about it.

So ask yourself, how can I make this easy for the parents so that they look forward to it and it is a delight and a joy for them to have their baby stay with me, rather than, "Oh my God, I have to deal with all this stuff and it's going to be a nightmare. And I have to pack her food for the weekend, and I have to pack her clothes, and I'm going to have to do all this laundry when we get back." And

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meanwhile, you know, my parents are just having a grand old time with her while I was working or doing chores at home or whatever. Make it exciting and easy for them to want to hand your baby off.

Part of that process, you know, and back to sticking to the schedule and following the safety guidelines, don't roll your eyes at them when they tell you, you know, be careful with the car seat. Don't say, "Oh, I know," when they tell you, you know, not to let her choke on a grape. All those things, don't roll your eyes, show that you're understanding.

Don't whine, "When are you going to stop breastfeeding so that I can take the baby overnight?" Like that's not going to get you anywhere. Be supportive. Like, okay, I understand that you're not ready yet, but when you are, you know, I'm here. Or if you want some help with sleep training or getting them onto a schedule or whatever, so that it's easier for you to hand them off, then do that.

Be supportive, understand that it's going to be difficult, and understand that it might take time. And that during that time, you want to be building up your credibility as someone who can safely take their baby. Maybe one day she lets you babysit for a couple of hours and you do such a good job that she's like, you know, next time I'll drop them off at your house. Maybe say, "Oh, I watched some videos on baby proofing and made sure that my house was baby proofed so that whenever you're ready to have the baby come here, I'm going to be ready to take them."

You know, you can get your own stuff so that they're not having to schlep like the pack-n-play, the monitor, tons of like diapers, all that stuff. Like we have a pack-n-play at our house that I got on Facebook Marketplace. We had, you know, a baby chair when she was little that I got on Facebook Marketplace. Like, you can get these things cheap. You don't have to get like all this brand new stuff.

And also, it was important to me that it be stuff that we could easily pack away when she wasn't with us. So I got things that were, you know, collapsible and packable and put-awayable so that we can make that easy for them. But, you know, build up over time. "Oh, hey, I got a pack-n-play. So if you guys ever want

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to come over and you need a place to put the baby down for a nap, we have that."

So just really think about how can I make this the easiest and most enjoyable for the parents, not how can I make this the easiest and most enjoyable for myself or for us, the grandparents or the aunt and uncle or whoever. And I think in no time, you will be getting that baby dropped off to you so much you won't even know what to do with yourself and you'll be like, "Oh my God, I can't babysit this weekend. I want to be an adult and do my own thing." Not that anybody would ever say that when they had the option of keeping a baby for the weekend.

Would love to hear your stories of taking a baby or what it would take for you to let your baby go stay with someone else, any frustrations you're having around it. You can share them with us on our website, happyfamilyafter.com, or on our Instagram @happyfamilyafter. DM, email, leave a voicemail. We're excited to hear from you.

To be sure you never miss an episode, be sure to follow the show in your favorite podcast app. We'd also love to connect with you on social media. You can find us on Instagram @happyfamilyafter or at our website HappyFamilyAfter.com. On our website you can also leave us a voicemail with any questions or thoughts you might have, and you can roast your baby. Talk to you soon.

Thanks for listening to this week's episode of *Parenthood Prep*. If you want to learn more about the services Devon offers, as well as access her free monthly newborn care webinars, head on over to www.HappyFamilyAfter.com.