



Respite Tip Sheet #004

Evaluating Your Provider

When You Return

You will eventually return from enjoying some much deserved time away. There are important things you must do to make sure this person will help you again in the future so you can get more short breaks.

If at all possible you want to spend some time immediately

when you return talking with the provider about the respite care. Find out what kind of



routine was kept; what activities were enjoyed; and any problems that might have popped up. Find out how any problems were handled. Don't start the conversation with 100 questions that will make your provider uncomfortable or feel like you are questioning their judgment. Just talk. Encourage questions and use this as a way to teach this person more about your family member. Have a conversation. This is a new person in the life of your family member. They have much to learn and you might be surprised to find that you can actually learn from this person as well. It can sometimes be very helpful to get a new perspective on things. If you don't



have time to have this conversation immediately when you return, be sure to have a phone conversation later or better yet, meet for coffee or lunch.

If you have any concerns based on anything your family member reported or you observed when you returned, it is important to say something right away. You might be

tempted to bury your head in the sand and let it go. But avoiding the issue can be a mistake that might lead to bigger problems if you hire this person again to get a break. Be polite but direct. If you never say anything this person will never know they may have done something wrong. It may turn out that they did nothing wrong but they simply poorly communicated something that took place while you were gone. It is also possible that you were not clear enough with your instructions before you left. By talking openly and honestly it can be resolved and this person could end up being a very important person to your family.

If you are paying this person, you should pay them as soon as possible after the respite ends. If you cannot pay them right after you return, you should have made them aware of this before the respite occurred. In some respite programs like MyCare a reimbursement payment is sent to the family after care takes place. Families can ask the provider to wait for this payment to be received. If you do not hand the provider payment immediately upon your return, be sure you pay them as soon as you possibly can. Be sure you pay what you agreed to prior to the respite and that you use the method of payment — cash, check, or online service.



Most importantly, say “thanks.” Your provider has allowed you to have some valuable ME time. Be sure to express your appreciation in words. Money is nice but hearing that you have done a good job and that you are appreciated is just as important.

Thanks

If Things Go Wrong

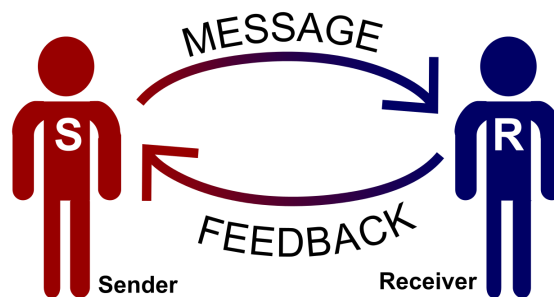


Sometimes things don't go as planned or things may not get communicated as they should. This is not being discussed here so you will panic and refuse to leave your family member with anyone again. You need to get breaks so stay calm and think about how you might handle some of these situations:

- You find out your provider let your family member do something that is not allowed or was dangerous.
- Your loved one has a bad bruise or cut/scratch when you return.
- Your provider begins telling you how to take care of your loved one.
- Your provider forgets to tell you something important that happened during the respite.
- Your provider allowed her boyfriend to come to your home while you were gone.
- Your provider smoked, drank, had drugs, or had a party in your home.
- Your provider used language you feel is unsuitable.
- Your loved one did not receive medications correctly or on time.
- Your loved one did not receive the care or supervision they needed.
- You find something in your home missing when you return.



You need to make your provider aware if you found something that was not acceptable. Ask if they were aware of the situation. Ask questions to find out if you failed to make them aware of what was expected. Understand that communication is a two way process. They may have failed to understand what you



expected OR you may have failed to communicate what you expected in a way that they understood. You need to decide how important the issue is. If it is serious enough; if your family member was harmed; or if things were stolen; you may need to fire the provider. If you think the provider can still be a good resource for your family, talk it out. Get to the bottom of the misunderstanding. Clarify what you expect.

Your family member will be a valuable source of information. Ask how they feel about the provider. Observe their reaction when the provider enters the room or when you mention them. Even a young child or someone with limited speech can communicate their feelings about another person. If there are concerns be sure to deal with them right away. It might just be a simple matter that your family member doesn't like the provider you hired. It may just not be a good fit.



Be fair with your provider. Give them feedback after each respite so they know how satisfied you were with the care your family member received. Let them know if you hope to hire them again. Let them know if there is something you would like them to do differently. Be specific and make your family member's wellbeing the focus. Give praise when deserved and always show your appreciation to a provider who does a good job for you.

Updated Oct 2022