ForeWord Reviews

YOUNG ADULT NONFICTION

Don't Sit on the Baby: The Ultimate Guide to Sane, Skilled, and Safe Babysitting
Halley Bondy
Zest Books
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If every job had a guidebook as easy to read yet informative as *Don't Sit on the Baby*, we would all be choosing our careers more wisely. Author Halley Bondy helps readers decide whether child care is the right path for them, then outlines the main issues babysitters face and offers advice on getting the job done with professional flair.

The title may have tipped you to Bondy's sense of humor, which is an asset when talking about spit-up and diapers. She keeps the tone light and engaging while making important points about first aid, the need for cleanliness when handling food, and what to do in emergency situations. She encourages sitters to be flexible and ready for anything. Younger kids may adore you, or they might scream for mom and dad all night. Older kids might resent your presence, or they might feel free to open up to you in a way they don't with their parents. All these scenarios are manageable with preparation.

There are true stories from sitters here, labeled "Tales from the Crib," that drive these points home. One young woman was persuaded to use TV as a reward for getting the kids to eat their veggies by her toddler charges, despite it being forbidden by the parents. They may not be able to dress themselves, but kids can argue a point like political strategists, so stay alert.

Bondy includes advice on growing a few occasional gigs into a babysitting business, ways to get professional credentials like Red Cross CPR training, and offers useful tips on negotiating a contract, getting paid, and leaving a job tactfully, as well as basic tax information (yep, sitters have to pay tax on earnings if they exceed $400 in a year). Much of this information would be useful to job seekers in any field. For would-be child-care providers, though, it's an absolute goldmine.

Heather Seggel