



February 14, 2006

ConsumerWatch: Site Helps Parents Find Sitters

OMAHA, Neb. -- Choosing a baby sitter is one of the more important decisions that a parent makes, and it can sometimes be a challenge. But a Web site now promises to help find credible sitters in your neighborhood.

SitterCity.com has a database of more than 100,000 baby sitters nationwide, and 300 of those sitters are in Omaha.

"Friends that have good sitters don't necessarily want to give up their best sitters' names," said Omaha mother Christina Rohling.

Using the site, Rohling found 10 sitters located within two miles of her home.

"That's important to me, especially with two smaller ones," Rohling said.

Each sitter's profile lists information including age, education and a short biography.

Rohling especially liked the symbols that indicate that the sitter is certified in CPR or first aid. The site also requires each sitter to provide at least one reference.

Rohling said that leaving her little ones, Thomas and Marie, with someone else can be scary. But she plans to check references and conduct interviews, and now she's got someplace to start.

SitterCity.com costs \$40 up front, then it's \$5 a month after that. Sitters can list profiles for free.

The creator of the site said her service is an alternative to an agency. Checking references and conducting interviews are up to the parent. Those are steps the American Academy of Pediatrics say are crucial.