



February 1, 2005
Reporter Jill Scott

Sitter City Offers Parents, Babysitters Chance To Click

*If you're a parent you know how long it can take to find a qualified baby sitter. Well, one service is helping to speed up the process. Home Reporter **Jill Scott** explains.*

It may look like speed dating, but these people aren't looking for love or even a date, they're looking for a different type of commitment.

"I'm looking for a Saturday night babysitter," says one Sittercity.com participant.

That's right: it's worked so well for singles, that now couples are trying it to find that perfect match for their child.

Through a company called Sittercity.com, 30 parents and 40 sitters had a date at Dylan's Candy Bar.

"You come in; there are lots of sitters and lots of parents sitting on either side of a table and they talk for five minutes and then we ring a bell and they switch up and talk to the next person on the line," says Sittercity.com founder Genevieve Thiers.

Sitter City is a babysitting matching service very much like match.com or any other dating site. It introduces more than 3,000 New York City babysitters to parents. But at this event members to get more than a profile and a picture. It's a chance to meet face to face to see if there's enough chemistry to for a full interview.

"There is a definite dating feel to it, no doubt about it," says parent Gordon Strause. "It's a little bad because as I am thinking about this, I am starting to realize some of these people I am not going to follow up with and I feel like, oh no I have to figure out a way to let them down easy."

As for the sitters, some have long history in childcare, while others are students looking for a little extra money.

So if the parents are here, what about the kids? Well in order to find a babysitter, you need a babysitter and at this event they hook you up with that too.

That way parents don't have to miss a minute.

This is the first time Sitter City has brought the speed sitting to New York, but they hope to make it a regular thing. The events are free, but to be a member of the website parents pay a \$40 initiation and then an addition \$5 a month. It's free for babysitters, but each sitter must fill out a detailed profile and provide references.

But remember: the site is a liaison service, not a screening service. For more information you can go online to www.sittercity.com.

So if finding a babysitter has been a slow process, why not speed it up? Make a date with sittercity.com and see if you can click.