



*Monday, July 27, 2009*

## **Interview with Natalie Morales**

### **Summer Sitter Safety Tips**

**Natalie Morales:** This morning on Today's Family, summer sitter safety. With summer comes a new set of concerns for children and safety, and if you're a parent, you know that making sure you have the right sitter and supplies needed to prevent emergencies is imperative.

Genevieve Thiers is the founder and CEO of Sittercity.com and iVillage's Babysitting Expert. Good morning, Genevieve.

**Genevieve Thiers:** Hi Natalie, thanks for having me.

**Natalie Morales:** Nice to have you here. Now, you actually say the first form of protection is making sure you have the best babysitter for your children. First of all, what are some of the things you should be looking for and asking a person who is coming for the job?

**Genevieve Thiers:** Well, first of all, make sure your sitter has a lot of energy. They should be asking you more questions than you're asking them and have a general sense of responsibility – they should show up, should be on time, should look presentable. And I usually recommend that parents ask, "Do you know CPR, first aid and the Heimlich maneuver." That's a really important question.

**Natalie Morales:** So they know the basics, obviously.

Now, going through some of these safety products here, tell me first how you chose them.

- Genevieve Thiers:** Well, I am the oldest of seven kids, I've logged over 2,500 babysitting jobs in my life --
- Natalie Morales:** Wow! And you kept your sanity!
- Genevieve Thiers:** And I kept my sanity, I'm still here! And these are products parents really need to transmit to their sitters to be safe this summer.
- Natalie Morales:** Okay, so we have a lot to get to here and the first being sun protection. You like – and I know I use these as a mom too, with a young child, they're great – to help with the SPF, these towelettes.
- Genevieve Thiers:** Oh, they're great. The Babysilk Sunscreen Towelettes. What I love about these is that they're SPF 30 and obviously, these are very different. It's almost like a diaper wipe and you can just apply it to the area that you're interested in. I also think these travel incredible well. It's not a spray, it doesn't get in eyes or noses or anything like that.
- Natalie Morales:** Yeah, you don't have to worry about it dripping into the eye.
- Genevieve Thiers:** Yes, and you can go right through the airport as well – we all know what it's like to take liquids through the airport. The other thing about these is that they're dermatologist-recommended. They've actually got aloe and vitamins in them, so they're really soft. I just love these. They're nice.
- Natalie Morales:** Great. And over here, if your child is getting exposed to too much sun, these little stickers actually can help that.
- Genevieve Thiers:** Right. This is a Sun Signal UV Sensor, it tracks UVB rays. It's great. You can put it on a hat, you can put it on skin. But the idea is that it changes from a yellow to a dark orange when the kids need to be taken inside or taken out of the sun. Really useful.

**Natalie Morales:** Okay, great. Now, first aid. You should always have a first aid kit on hand, but you should also know how to use it. So, this kit tells you all the information you need.

**Genevieve Thiers:** Right, this is Baby MEDBASICS. I absolutely love this kit. It covers CPR, burns, bleeding, poison – pretty much everything. And if you're a sitter, you can get to the information really quickly. Just flip through the tabs. Also, it's got lots of illustrations which in an emergency is really, really good.

**Natalie Morales:** So in a minor emergency, this is the kit for you. And now this one comes with just about everything in it you would need.

**Genevieve Thiers:** Right. This is a Medibag First Aid Kit. I absolutely love this kit. First of all, it's not scary like a lot of first aid kits. Also, it's got over 117 different pieces in it – everything from these great crayon band-aids to cold packs, so it's really got what you need.

**Natalie Morales:** Okay, and now, to stop the bleeding – that's what scares kids the most – you've got these gauze pads. Tell me about these.

**Genevieve Thiers:** So when the bleeding stops, so do the tears. ABC Gauze is really neat. You take a piece of the gauze, you put it on a cut and what it does is it forms a protective gel over the clot that both promotes clotting and decreases infection. In the end, you just rub it off with water. It's not like you have to pull a band-aid off, which nobody loves!

**Natalie Morales:** Perfect. And now to bug repellent. Really important to have these products on hand as well. Tell me about them.

**Genevieve Thiers:** BugBand Towelettes are like the towelettes we just looked at for sunscreen. What I love again is it's not a spray. There are a lot of chemicals in bug spray, it gets in the eyes, gets in the nose. These you can just apply directly to the skin. What I also like is that these are based on a natural plant insect repellent, so they're a little more natural and green than other kinds of bug sprays.

**Natalie Morales:** Without that terrible smell, I'm sure, too.

**Genevieve Thiers:** Right.

**Natalie Morales:** Okay, now, water safety. This we cannot stress enough. And here you actually have an alarm. This is sort of like a watch or safety band that a child can wear, right? So what happens if your child gets in the water with it?

**Genevieve Thiers:** Well, it's the Safety Turtle Pool Alarm and this [base] is placed in your house within a hundred feet of this sensor, which you place around your child's wrist. And if the child falls into a body of water, this is what you hear...

*Genevieve dips the sensor into a tank of water. A loud alarm goes off.*

...Which is pretty obvious!

**Natalie Morales:** And that will keep going and going, right?

**Genevieve Thiers:** Right.

**Natalie Morales:** We're going to unplug it here, not to kill us!

*The alarm stops.*

**Genevieve Thiers:** Isn't that a lovely sound? But, you know, exactly when your kids get into the water, it means they're in trouble.

Another thing that I think is great for the water is the Original Konfidence Jacket. It's kind of like swimmy, almost, but it's a little more intense. It's got eight different floats that you can add or take away depending on the buoyancy.

**Natalie Morales:** So you can help them build their confidence while they're in the water.

**Genevieve Thiers:** Absolutely. And finally, this magna lock is a great example of a pool lock. It's one of the more popular locks and, you know, you should have a pool lock with any pool! Make sure that it's up out of kids' reach and make sure the sitter checks it before she begins her job so that it's closed properly before she takes the kids out there.

**Natalie Morales:** I'm in this phase now, with the baby gates!

Genevieve Thiers, thanks so much. Great information. And by the way, you can find out more information on our website at [todayshow.com](http://todayshow.com) and visit our iVillage community.