



Letter to Student's Family

Dear parents and family:

Our school is fortunate to have the Baby Think It Over® Program under way. I hope each of you will take full advantage of the experience this Program can offer to the whole family.

The core of the Program is a parenting simulation using RealCare® Baby. The parenting simulation is designed to help young adults understand three important facts about infants:

- 1) Infants' demands are unpredictable and must be met promptly.
- 2) Infants require a great deal of time and attention.
- 3) Infants change a parent's life profoundly. The Program helps young adults explore the emotional, social, and financial consequences of parenthood.

RealCare Baby will require care throughout the day and night. Baby's schedule is based on the schedule of a real infant. When Baby cries, it will be the student's responsibility to attend to Baby's needs. The student responds to the cry by touching an ID to the contact point in Baby's back. The student must then figure out what kind of care Baby needs. Baby needs to be fed, burped, rocked, or have its diaper changed. Baby will also make "happy" and "fussy" noises for brief periods of time that do not require care or use of the ID.

Baby will also cry if it is roughly handled, held in a position it does not like, or if the head is not properly supported. Although Baby may disrupt your household for a few days, just as an infant would, I am sure you will agree the valuable lessons your son or daughter will learn far outweigh a few days of minor inconvenience.

It will be your son's or daughter's responsibility to keep Baby safe and cared for. You can help by providing emotional support and treating Baby as if it were real. Call Baby by the name chosen by the "parent." Help make arrangements for Baby in advance (anticipation should be a positive experience, just as it will be someday for a real infant). Be a coach for this event, not a player. Offer advice, but remember, whenever possible, your son or daughter should do the actual work of caring for Baby.

Also, expect the experience to offer many opportunities to discuss issues such as parenting, marriage, and dating. These are conversations all parents try to have with children, but often parents and teens are too busy, the topic isn't easy to approach, or it sounds too much like lecturing. Now is a perfect time for those discussions. Tell stories about your child as a baby, or discuss what your feelings would be if your child were to become a parent right now.

It is important for you to read and sign the *Parent/Student Safety Precautions Sign-off* form with your son or daughter. Discuss the safety precautions that should be taken while your student has Baby. The student must return the *Parent/Student Safety Precautions Sign-off* form along with the *Parent/Guardian Permission Form* to participate in the parenting simulation.



Parent/Guardian Permission Form

As the parent or guardian of a student who is eligible to participate in the Baby Think It Over® Program, I have read and understand the following:

The Baby Think It Over Program will require my son or daughter to be the sole caretaker of the Baby Think It Over® infant simulator, whose sounds and behaviors replicate those of an infant. The experience is intended to demonstrate to my son or daughter the full-time commitment required for parenting an infant.

RealCare® Baby will require care throughout the day and night. When Baby cries, it will be the responsibility of my son or daughter to attend to Baby's needs.

Baby's crying and need for care may cause my son or daughter to lose sleep, and may possibly disturb other family members. Lack of sleep may cause drowsiness. I will not allow my son or daughter to drive if overly tired.

I have been made aware that my son or daughter should follow safety instructions for the ID and wristband to avoid injury.

I have read and signed the *Parent/Student Safety Precautions Sign-off* form with my son or daughter. I understand all safety precautions.

I agree to reimburse _____ up to \$ _____ for any damage to the infant simulator, and any equipment that is issued with it.

Other charges may be assessed for damaged or missing accessories:

Having read all of the above, I agree to allow _____ to participate in the Baby Think It Over Program.

Signed _____ Date _____

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No, I do not wish _____ to participate in the Baby Think It Over Program. I understand that if I do not allow my son or daughter to participate in this project, he or she will not receive a lower grade because of my refusal. I understand that an assignment requiring an equal amount of work will be given as a substitute for this project.

Signed _____ Date _____



Parent/Student Safety Precautions Sign-off

Read this list together with your student. *Signing this form indicates that you have read and understand all safety precautions that should be observed while your student is caring for Baby.* The student must return this form along with the *Parent/Guardian Permission Form* to participate in the parenting simulation.

Driving

- Baby may cry while the student is driving. Please be aware that the crying may start unexpectedly, and the student should be prepared.
- Do not feed, burp, rock, change diapers, or otherwise care for Baby while driving.
- The student must bring his or her vehicle to a complete stop in a safe location before caring for Baby, or to retrieve a piece of Baby's equipment that falls.
- Failure to install Baby in a car seat in a motor vehicle could result in Baby or supplies becoming projectiles in the event of a sudden stop or accident.

Location

- Never leave Baby unattended in a public place, given the potential for Baby to be mistaken for a real infant.
- Do not place Baby in or near water.
- Do not place Baby on or near a stove, especially while cooking.
- Baby should sleep somewhere close to the student's sleeping quarters, but not in bed with the student. Baby may fall out of the bed or the student could roll over on it, causing damage to Baby and discomfort to the student.

Interaction with others

- Loud crying near people with potentially serious physical conditions, such as those susceptible to heart attack or stroke, should be avoided.
- Do not allow small children to play with Baby. Baby's hands and feet are small enough to be a choking hazard.
- Baby's crying or other sounds may cause pets to become agitated or aggressive. Keep Baby out of the reach of pets or other animals.

Physical precautions

- To avoid straining your arms, use an infant car seat or carrier to transport Baby, rather than holding Baby at all times. Holding techniques are listed on the Student Care Card that accompanies Baby.
- Baby weighs 6.5 to 7 pounds and could cause discomfort for individuals with back pain.
- Do not operate any type of equipment or attempt tasks requiring the use of both hands while holding Baby.

Simulation rules

- The student must never take his or her wristband off. Not only will he or she be deducted points, but the ID may be lost, or the student may stumble around in the dark looking for it if Baby cries during the night.
- The student should make a note in his or her diary where, because their safety or the safety of others may have been compromised, they had to delay caring for Baby.

Parent name (please print) _____

Parent signature _____ Date _____

Student name (please print) _____

Student signature _____ Date _____