

## Agencies provide babysitting referral

## By Lori Demo

Hoping to better meet the need for babysitters in Lincoln, the Open Door Health Center at 1915 U St. has started a babysiting referral service.

"We are trying to provide contact for those people who want to do babysitting outside of their homes with those who need babysitters in their homes," Linda Ritchie, a volunteer at the center, said. "We are doing this in conjunction with the Lincoln Child Care Home which provides babysitting for people who want to do it in their home."

Ritchie said anyone who is at least 13 years old can register to become a sitter by filling out a form at the center.

The center will keep a list of the registered sitters and their qualifications.

"People who want sitters can call us and tell us if they want an older or younger sitter," she said. "We will give them a list of names and telephone numbers. It is up to the client to decide if he wants to use any of the sitters and to get in touch with them. The sitters then set up their own fees."

Location of the job also is considered when giving clients a list of sitters.

"Transportation can be a problem, so we don't want people to have to move too far," Ritchie said.

Volunteers at the center man telephones 24 hours a day to receive calls and refer clients to sitters.

"Later we hope to put the sitters in contact with babysiting courses, but these will not be compulsory," Ritchie said. "We just started this program a month ago so as of yet we haven't set up the course."

Because it is new, the program does not have very many registered sitters.

"We hope to get as many people involved in this as possible, especially University students," Ritchie said. "The need is here for this centralized system in Lincoln."





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daily nebraskan

friday, august 31, 1973