

# Is Your Child Ready For Self-Care?

NEWARK, Del. — Sooner or later, there comes a time in almost every family when an elementary school child is left home alone. Self-care may be for a half-hour while a parent goes to the store or for several hours after school if both parents work outside the home.

Before considering self-care, parents need assurance that a child knows basic safety and security rules, said Maria Pippidis, cooperative extension home economics

agent at the University of Delaware. Children need to feel confident and competent about being in charge of themselves and their home.

If you can answer "yes" to the following questions, you can feel more secure about leaving your child at home for awhile. If your answer is "no" to any question, turn it into a "yes" before leaving your child alone, says Pippidis.

• Can your child recite his/her name, telephone number and

address readily, even under stress?

- Can your child accurately take a telephone message?
- Can your child accurately tell time?
- Does your child know how to use the telephone to call you or a neighbor?
- Can your child manage the tasks involved in preparing a snack, such as opening the refrigerator, opening a can, pouring milk or juice, using a toaster or getting water from the tap?

- Does your child know the name, telephone number and home of a friend whom he or she could contact in case of emergency?
- Does your child understand the following concepts: stranger, emergency, late, later?
- Can your child read and understand a written message or instructions you might leave for him or her?
- Does your child feel confident about being home alone?
- Does your child have good

judgement about which problems he or she can handle alone and when to ask for adult help?

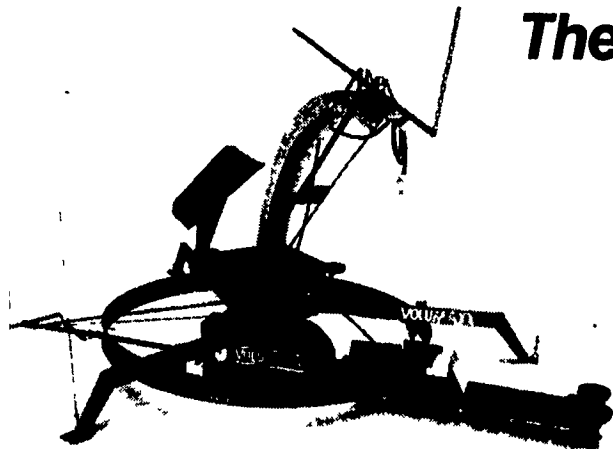
• Do you feel confident that your child will be safe while you are away?

Pippidis offers tips for parents of self-care children:

- Make your home as burglar-proof as possible.
- Remove fire hazards and install smoke detectors.
- Introduce your child to a neighbor who can be called if difficulties arise.
- Post emergency telephone numbers and familiarize children with them.
- Teach children not to display house keys or let a person at the door or on the phone know they are alone.
- Discuss what to do if a child loses a key.
- Call home at specified times.
- Encourage your child to discuss feelings about being alone.
- Consider a pet for companionship and security.

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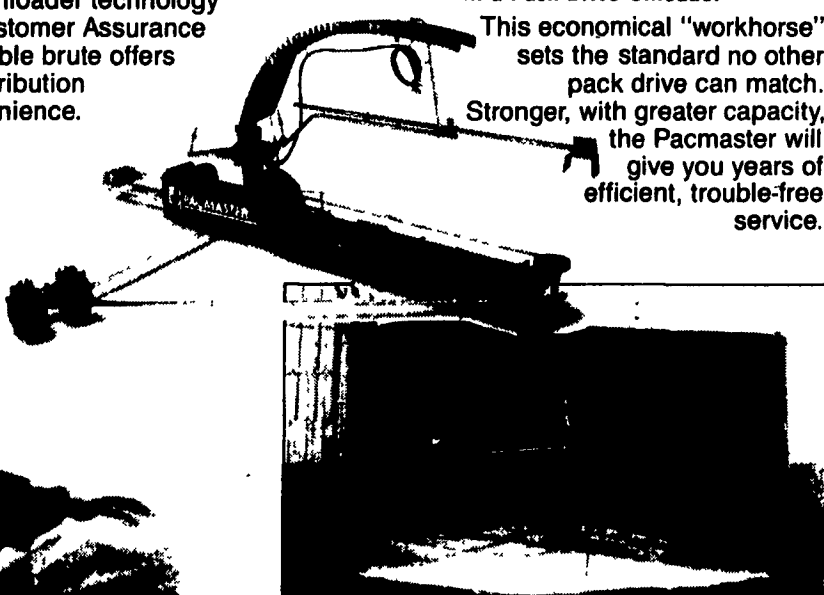


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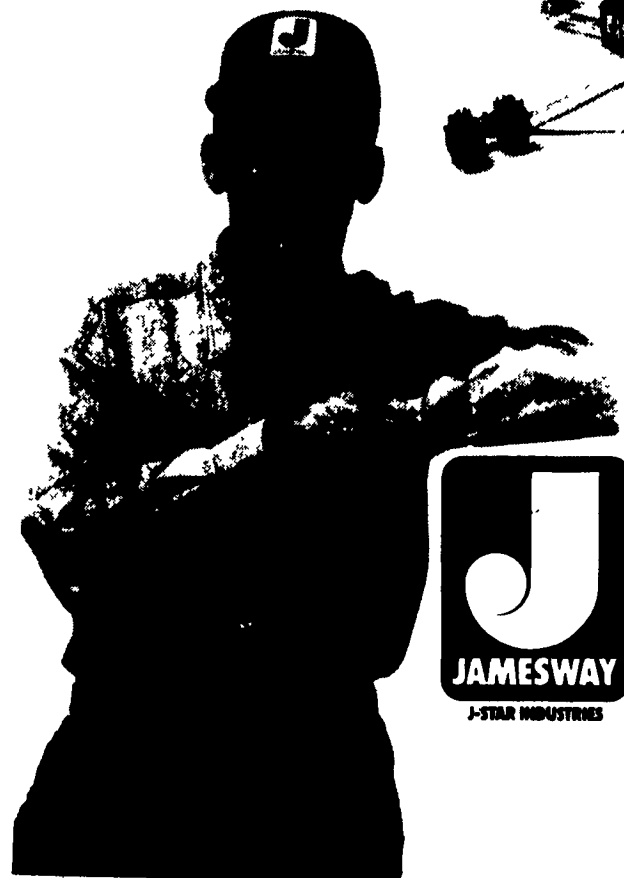
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ELIZABETHTOWN (Lancaster Co.) — Nationally-renown rug maker Pat Hornafius will lead three rug hooking clinics at the Winters Heritage House Museum, 43 East High Street, Elizabethtown. The special sessions will be held on the first Saturdays of the following months from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m.: March 4, May 6, and June 3.

The clinics will be open to experienced rug hookers at a cost of \$15 per session, and museum members \$10 per session. Rug hooking students who attended the fall rug hooking classes at the Winters Museum may participate for a special fee.

A member of the Directory of Traditional Craftsmen, sponsored by "Early American Life," Hornafius has designed and hooked rugs featured in that publication for eight years. Her hooked rugs have appeared in many national magazines including Country Living, Country Home, Rug Hooking, Piece-work, and Time-Life "Country Crafts."

To register for the rug hooking sessions, call (717) 367-4908.

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