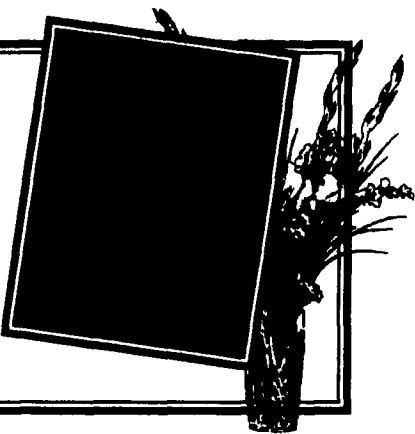


**Family Living  
Focus**  
Chester Co.  
Extension Agent  
**Becky Scotland**



**Children Home Alone?**  
Children of today's families may find themselves at home alone before and/or after school hours. This may occur due to families' schedules not matching one another, inflexible work hours, and situations beyond their control like transportation problems, long errands, bad weather, or poor communication.

Today fewer than 10 percent of our population lives in the "classic" household headed by a male breadwinner. Due to the economic pressure families face, often both parents are working outside the home, their children spend the day in child care. A wide variety of child care services are being offered. Families may select child care settings such as day care centers, family child care homes, "Y" programs, after school care, nanny services, neighbors, or relatives. The arrangements made for young children, infant through pre-school age are often forced to change once children reach elementary school. Families' finances or work schedules may also cause families to look for alternatives.

Changes in day care settings are often difficult decisions for families. As children reach the 8 to 12 year age group, they become more independent and begin to verbalize the need for a change. Some families have selected self care — children alone at home after school. In 1995, it is estimated that 15 million children in the United States cared for themselves or siblings without adult supervision.

For those parents with children home alone without adult supervision, even for short periods of time, the worries are endless. In order to prepare your children for this experience, parents should discuss these questions:

- Can my child take a phone message accurately?
  - Can my child find interesting and/or useful activities?
  - Does my child obey the rules for our home?
  - Can my child prepare a simple snack?
  - Does my child know what action to take in an emergency?
- If parents answered YES to these questions, they can feel fairly confident that their school age child-

**SPRING MILLS (Centre Co.)** — Being stung by a bumble bee or yellow jacket and experiencing a severe allergic reaction certainly isn't one of the most pleasant experiences in life. Dr. Robert Reisman, former president of the American Academy of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology has some suggestions for preventing allergic reactions this summer.

"People who have had a history of allergic reactions may have a venom allergy and should be tested by an allergist. They should be educated on insect avoidance, given an epinephrine kit for emergency use and evaluated for venom immunotherapy, a vaccination program that protects 98 percent of persons against future reactions."

There are more than two million Americans allergic to insect stings, many of whom could benefit from immunotherapy. This treatment not only prevents future reactions, but in doing so, also improves a patient's quality of life by eliminating the fear associated with insect stings.

In a recent article appearing in Modern Medicine, Dr. Reisman suggests that "persons who have had a reaction to a sting, who have

positive skin tests and have not undergone immunotherapy, have a 60-70 percent likelihood of having another reaction the next time they're stung."

He also says that "the more severe the reaction a person has, the greater his chances are of having another severe reaction."

For a free patient information brochure on preventing allergic reactions written by the American College of Allergy, Asthma and Immunology, call 1-800-23 STING.

## Mushroom Festival Parade

**KENNETT SQUARE (Chester Co.)** — Final preparations are being made for the 1996 National Mushroom Festival parade and Tournament of Bands, to be held in Kennett Square, Saturday, September 14, at 4:00 p.m.

The theme for the '96 parade is "A Hollywood Salute to Mushrooms" in celebration of the 100th anniversary of the Mushroom as an agricultural crop.

As always the parade promises to be one of the largest in the Mid Atlantic region and will feature some 20 marching bands, from four states. Included will be the "Reilly Raiders" and "Yankee Rebels" National Champion Drum and Bugle Corps., The Avalon String Band, The Pipes and Drums of the Delaware Valley, and many of the finest high school

bands from the tri-state area. Making their first appearance are recording artists Frank Della Penna and "Cast in Bronze" playing the worlds only traveling carillon. Other guests include perennial favorite Sally Star, Miss USA representatives, Miss Universe 1995, and Susan Richardson from TV's "Eight is Enough" fame.

Floats will be presented from many organizations.

The Parade Route begins at Kennett High School, proceeds North on Broad, left on State, left on Meredith, left on Cypress, right on Union back to Kennett High School. Parking will not be permitted on the Parade Route. For more information contact Phil Krula at the Southern Chester County Chamber Office at (610) 444-0774.

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