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Choosing a Nanny Placement Agency

When looking for in-home child care, many parents turn to a nanny placement agency for help. An agency can help you find a full-time, part-time, temporary or emergency caregiver for your child. It's important to carefully choose the agency you work with. Not only will you be investing your time and money in their services but you'll also be trusting them to find the right nanny for your family.

Questions to Ask about the Screening Process

- ◆ What does the agency look for in a nanny candidate? What qualifications do they require?
- ◆ Does the agency meet each nanny candidate in person?
- ◆ Do they perform a full background check? What does that include? Do they perform the background check before you meet the candidate or after the candidate has been offered a job?
- ◆ Do they verify and check all references including non-childcare employment references?

Questions to Ask About the Placement Process

- ◆ How long will it take to find a nanny through the agency? About how many candidates will they present to you?
- ◆ Will they match candidates to your specific job description or will they send you all available candidates and let you decide who to interview?
- ◆ What information will you receive about each candidate?
- ◆ What is their placement fee? What is their guarantee period? If the nanny leaves or is fired during that time, do they offer a full refund, a pro-rated refund or a replacement nanny? If they only offer a replacement nanny, what happens if they can't find a suitable replacement or you don't want to work with the agency any longer?

Questions about the Business

- ◆ Have you talked to any other parents who've used the agency? What is the agency's reputation in the community? Will they provide you with references?
- ◆ Do they have any complaints registered at the Better Business Bureau?
- ◆ Can you easily communicate with them? Do they return calls and emails quickly? Can they answer all your questions? Do you feel at ease with your placement counselor?
- ◆ Do they provide training and support for their nannies?
- ◆ Do they provide a nanny / family work agreement? Will they help you resolve any disputes between you and the nanny?

Please visit NannyCredential.org >> Business Members to find placement agencies, tax services and other nanny-related businesses that support quality in-home childcare.

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How to Choose the Right Nanny

Finding the right nanny for your family requires patience and perseverance. Remember that one of the most important factors in choosing a nanny is finding a candidate who fits in well with your family. Evaluating your family's needs and preferences provides essential information for hiring the right caregiver.

Things to Consider

- ◆ Does the nanny seem to really love and connect with children? Does she/he love being a nanny?
- ◆ Does the nanny communicate well with children? Does she/he use appropriate language and get down on their eye level? Do the children respond well to the nanny?
- ◆ Can the nanny describe clearly a philosophy on discipline? Is it consistent with your own views?
- ◆ Is the nanny trained in Infant/Child First Aid and CPR? Is she/he knowledgeable concerning children's health issues including common childhood illnesses?
- ◆ Does the nanny demonstrate an understanding of children's developmental stages, especially the stages your children are in and are moving toward?
- ◆ Can the nanny give examples of age appropriate activities that he or she will do with your children? Do these activities meet the emotional, social, intellectual and physical needs of your children? Can the nanny outline a typical day's schedule for you that will meet these needs?
- ◆ Does the nanny have relevant child care experience?
- ◆ Will the nanny follow your parenting guidelines? Will you respect and appreciate her professional opinions?
- ◆ Can the nanny address the safety issues that are involved with caring for your children?
- ◆ Can the nanny provide the kind of atmosphere you want your children to be in on a daily basis?
- ◆ Does the nanny have the ability to plan and prepare nutritious, balanced snacks and meals?
- ◆ Is the nanny reliable, responsible, nurturing and professional? Does the nanny display the kind of maturity needed to do the job you are asking of him/her?



- ◆ Do you match expectations in regards to salary, hours, job duties and other basics?
- ◆ Has there been a complete background and employment screening? This should include a criminal background check, driving records check, reference screenings and sexual offender registry searches as well as any other screening needed for that particular nanny.
- ◆ Have you disclosed all relevant information to the nanny about your family and what you are looking for in a caregiver? Does the nanny seem comfortable with all that you have shared?

Compatibility

Now that you have found a qualified candidate, you need to make sure she matches your family as closely as possible in the following areas:

- ◆ your family's level of organization and neatness
- ◆ the level of involvement you need in the children's schedules
- ◆ your need for flexibility
- ◆ both the nanny's and your family's need for privacy
- ◆ sense of humor
- ◆ communication style

Trust your instincts. The nanny and family relationship is key to long-term, consistent care. Don't underestimate the importance of good chemistry. Keep searching until you find a candidate that "feels right".

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