

## Hiring a Nanny or Babysitter

Choosing a nanny or babysitter can make even the most confident parents/guardians worry. We have compiled a few simple steps to make the hiring process a little less worrisome and a lot more fun. Give this process ample time and energy.

**Hiring a nanny or babysitter requires lead time to check references and ensure that the choice you are making is a sound and positive one.**

**Consider various types of caregivers.** What type of caregiver suits your family best? Do you need a live-in nanny if your children are older? What about a shared nanny? Identifying your options now may save time, money, and a change later.

**Clarify your needs and wants.** Create a list of needs and wants, in that order. What level of childcare training, experience, security or police clearances, or first aid do you require? What personality traits, values, and lifestyle would you like the ideal candidate to have?

**Calculate your budget.** Your budget regulates the process to a great extent—the cost difference between a part-time university student and a live-in nanny/housekeeper is huge. Consider your list of needs and match them to your budget. If you have money left over, add in the characteristics you want.

**Conduct interviews.** Avoid having your children meet candidates until you have a short list. It is much easier to focus on the screening questions without the children involved.

- Ask to see photo ID at the time of the interview to verify identity.
- Don't be afraid to ask tough questions to help you understand the candidate's history, personality, beliefs on discipline, and knowledge of child development and acceptable caregiver practices. You will base your decision on the answers.
- Watch the candidate for signs of evasion or nervousness beyond natural interview nervousness. If your intuition tells you not to have this person in your home, listen—don't ignore even the smallest doubt or concern.

**Check references and credentials carefully.** Check all references, credentials, security clearances, and expiry dates on first aid certificates.

- First aid training at a standard first aid/CPR level is always recommended.
- Request six references, complete with addresses, and check them. It's hard to find six people to give you positive references if you are an undesirable character.
- Take a few minutes to get to know the candidate's friends. What types of people are in this person's life? Personal references tell a lot about someone.

**“Prevention Is the Key to Safety”**

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