

How to Select a Nanny or In-Home Child Care Provider

Nannies, babysitters, or in-home child care providers provide child care in your home on a regular or occasional basis. The most important thing in selecting this person is to find someone you feel comfortable with. Even if you are satisfied with the first contact you make, it is suggested that you go ahead and interview several people. You will probably find that several interviews will help you make a clearer choice. Remember to use your common sense and also go with what your gut-level feelings tell you.

The first contact you will probably have with someone is over the telephone.

The following is a suggested list of what to tell the person about:

- The age of your child(ren).
- The hours, days and length of time the provider will be needed.
- The expected job duties.

If the person sound interested, ask some initial screening questions such as:

- Ask about past experiences with children and what they enjoy doing with children.
- What is the person's current situation? Why is the person looking for an in-home child care position? What are the person's long range plans?
- Ask if the person has other responsibilities that may cause problems.
- Ask for references – get names and phone numbers.

Remember to listen carefully “between the lines.” Think about the following:

- Did the person seem vague?
- Did the person sound organized?
- Does it sound like the person is the type to take initiative and responsibility?

The second contact should be at your home.

After giving the phone interviews some thought, and checking references, invite the people you liked best to your home. Have your child(ren) there to meet them. You should allow time to observe the person with your child and discuss the following:

- Discuss your child's personality, routines for eating, sleeping and playing.
- Talk about child-rearing issues such as:
 - How does the person handle a crying baby?
 - What does the person do to discipline a child?
 - Get the person's opinion on toilet training.
 - Ideas for activities to do with the child.
- Review with the applicant what would be expected of her/him and be clear about any special rules you have regarding smoking, food, visitors, phone use, etc.
- Talk about money matters and the rate of pay and discuss a cancellation policy – meaning a reasonable amount of notice to be given by you or the provider if arrangements need to be changed.

After you have hired the person, develop and sign a copy of the written arrangements. The first time the person works at your home:

- Show them the house again, and reemphasize your safety rules, where the bathrooms, bedrooms, and first aid supplies are. Go over your established exit procedures in case of fire. (Your child may enjoy showing the house with you and this is a good way for him/her to get comfortable with the person).
- Leave the phone number where you can be reached and all other emergency number such as police, fire, ambulance, doctor, friends and relatives.
- Leave a medical release form so that emergency medical treatment can be obtained if necessary. Include on it: the provider's name, child's name, parent signatures and medical insurance information.

Payment

Full time providers (more than 20 hours per week) are covered by the minimum wage law. Also, as this person's employer, you are responsible for deducting Social Security (FICA) from their pay – using IRS Form 942 – although "household employees" are exempt from income tax withholding. If the provider earns more than \$1000 in three months, you must file an IRS Form 942 at the end of the year for Federal Unemployment Insurance. For your own taxes, you can claim a tax credit for Child or Dependent Care expenses such as babysitting, by using IRS Form 2241. More details can be found in IRS Publication # 503.

If someone works under 20 hours a week, it is suggested that when you decide a rate of pay, you should keep in mind that this job may be the person's only source of income – not just pocket money. The going "market rate" will depend on the age and experience of the person, but it is a good idea to check with other parents in your area and ask what they pay.

IN-HOME CHILD CARE PROVIDER INTERVIEW
POSSIBLE QUESTIONS

Name _____

Address _____

Phone Number _____ Age _____

What type of experience have you had with children? What ages?

What kinds of things do you like to do with children?

Why do you like working with children?

What do you do if a child disobeys? How do you believe children should be disciplined?

Have you had any education/training about caring for young children? Do you know first aid/CPR?

What other types of work experience have you had?

What hours and day are you available? Do you have reliable transportation?

Names and addresses of previous employers/personal references.

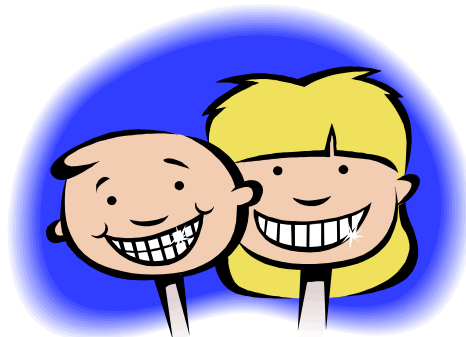
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Suggested Questions to Ask References

A good, reliable in-home caregiver should be more than willing to provide the names of current or former families that have used their services. The following are some suggested questions you might want to ask the references.

- How long did _____ care for your child(ren)?
- What were some of the characteristics you found in this person that you did not find in other people you interviewed?
- Did you ever have any concerns about anything the person did or did not do while caring for your children? Was the provider open to your concerns and willing to discuss them?
- Did you feel the provider had good organizational skills? Were your household rules adhered to? Was there adequate follow-through of your requests?
- Were the person's discipline policies consistent with yours at home?
- Did you feel she/he took careful safety and health precautions?
- Is there anything else you would like to tell me about?

REMEMBER: YOUR CHILD MAY SPEND UP TO 2000 HOURS A YEAR IN CHILD CARE. DON'T SPEND TEN MINUTES MAKING YOUR DECISION.



In Home Child Care Resource List

MESC Employment Office (517) 319-6020

College Placement Offices

Lansing Community College	(517) 483-1172
Washtenaw Community College	(734) 677-5155
Oakland Community College – Orchard Ridge	(248) 471-7556
Schoolcraft Community College	(734) 462-4421
Oakland University	(248) 370-3250
Eastern Michigan University	(734) 487-1708
Michigan State University	(517) 355-9510
University of Michigan	(734) 764-7460
Delta College	(517) 686-9417
Madonna University	(734) 432-5623
Concordia College	(734) 995-7314
Adrian College	(517) 265-5161
Sienna Heights College	(517) 264-7614
Hillsdale College	(517) 437-7341
Spring Arbor College	(517) 750-6309
Monroe College	(734) 242-7300

Home Health Care Services

Advanced Professional Home Health Care Inc.	(800) 439-0840
Chelsea Home Health Care of America	(734) 973-6877
Family Home Care	(810) 229-5683
First American Home Care	(810) 229-0300
Gentiva Health Services	
Ann Arbor	(734) 677-1661
Flint	(800) 861-4267
Innovations Home Health Care Nursing	(800) 765-7544
McPherson Home Health Care	(517) 545-6161
Metro Home Health Care Services	(517) 545-4084
Metro Staff	(800) 878-2338
Michigan Visiting Nurses	(800) 842-5504
Oakland Livingston Human Service Agency	(517) 546-8500
Specialized Child Care	(810) 227-6779

*These agencies or the persons employed by these agencies are not required to be licensed or registered by the Family Independence Agency (FIA). 4C provides this list for information purposes only and cannot warrant information concerning any agency. The Livingston County (4C) Council does not license, endorse or recommend any particular agency.

Livingston County (4C) Council (517) 548-9112



Nanny Services

Nanny Network	(586) 739-2100
Nanny Corporation	(248) 344-9596
Child Care Solutions LLC	(734) 668-6882
Nannies Plus, Inc. (Nationwide Placement)	(800) 752-0078
Maids, Nannies and More	(248) 932-1965
Not Just Sitters	(248) 546-4596
Family Care Solutions Inc.	(734) 459-6930
International Nanny Association	(888) 878-1477
Aupair in America	(800) 727-2437
Aupair Care	(800) 428-7247
EP Aupair	(800) 333-6056
Aupair Homestay USA	(248) 645-0386
goAupair	(248) 766-9123

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Conducting a Criminal Background Check

In order to conduct a criminal background check on an individual, you must first obtain their permission. Have the person sign a form which is legibly printed or typed, and includes the applicant's:

- Name
- Date of Birth
- Sex
- Current Address
- Social Security Number
- Maiden Name or Recent Name Changes

There is a \$5.00 charge for each individual you would like a background check run on. Make a personal check or money order payable to: State of Michigan.

Send your completed request and check to the following address:

Criminal Justice Information Center
Michigan State Police
General Office Building
7150 Harris Drive
Lansing, Michigan 48913

The information returned to you will let you know if the individual has been convicted of a crime. You will not receive notice of any past accusations.

If you have any questions regarding the process, you can reach the Criminal Justice Information Center of the Michigan State Police at (517) 322-5531.

Sample Advertisements

Baby-sitter Needed: For an active 8 yr. Old boy. Occasional evening and weekend hours. Needs to enjoy outside play. No experience necessary. References required. Own transportation. Call 123-4567

Live-In Nanny Needed: Loving person to care for newborn. Requirements include infant work experience, valid driver's license, and 2 personal references. Own living quarters provided. 40-50 hours a week. Use of family car. No weekends. Occasional travel with family. Call 123-4567

Child Care Provider wanted to care for 3 yr. old twins. Schedule is Monday – Friday from 1:00-5:30pm. Will be required to pick child up from preschool. Own transportation and experience with preschoolers a must. Must be enthusiastic and understanding of how children develop through play. Personal references required. Call 123-4567

Loving Person to care for a mildly impaired Down Syndrome child. Three year old girl who loves to be cuddled. 30-40 hours a week and no weekends. Special Education Background preferred but not required. References required. Walking distance to downtown. Call 123-4567

Flexible person needed to provide child care for 6 yr. old during school vacations. Will have access to family car to do special activities. Willing to care for child's friends on an occasional basis. Experience working with children and references required.